

**ADDRESS: 2501-61 N 15TH ST**

Name of Resource: Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company's Depot, Car House, & Stable

Proposed Action: Designation

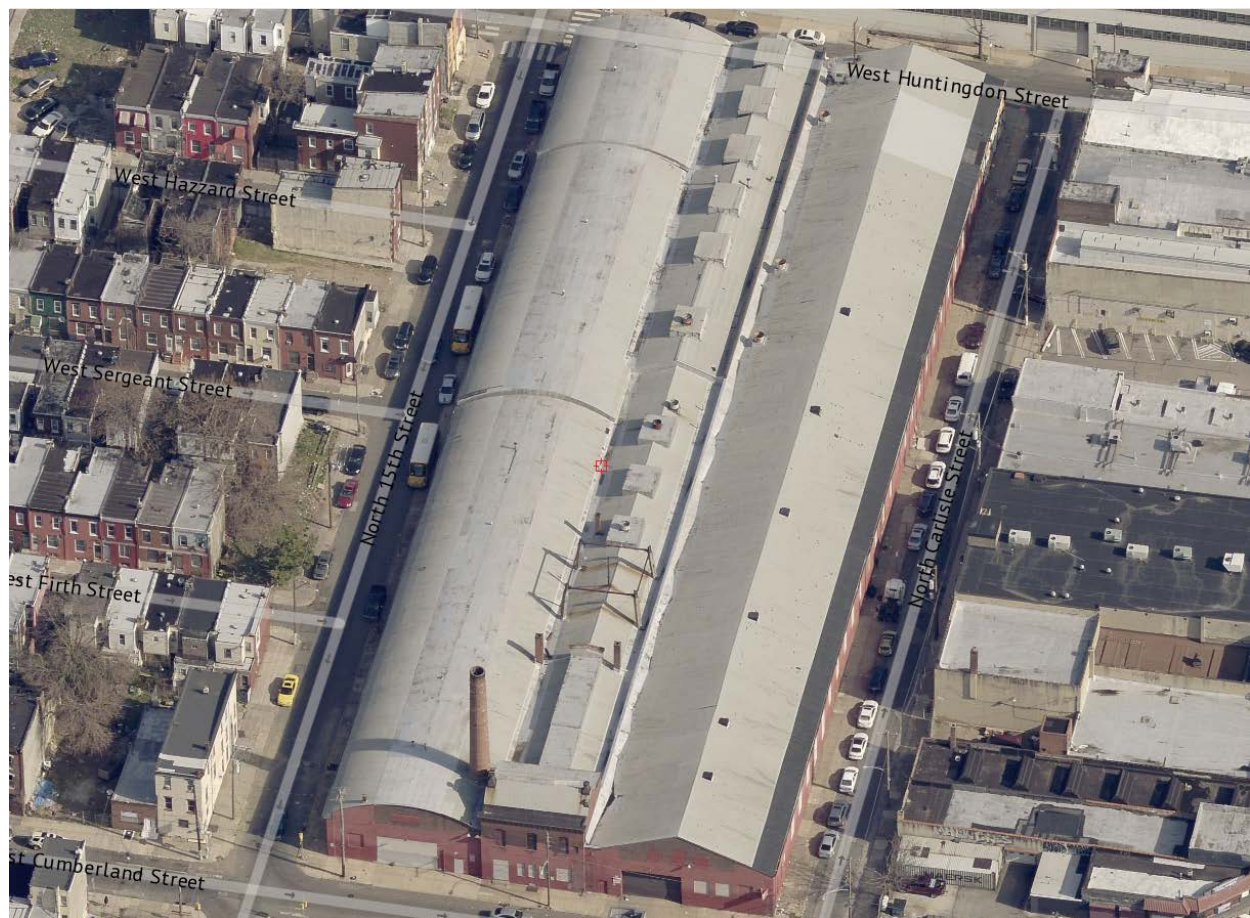
Property Owner: Tag CG Philadelphia LLC

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2501-61 N 15<sup>th</sup> Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company's Depot, Car House, and Stable satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company is an early and significant example of the evolution and development of passenger railway companies, and public transit in Philadelphia. The facility was expanded as public transit moved from horse cars, to cable cars, to motorized buses. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the expansion of public transit was one reason for the residential development of this area of North Philadelphia, exemplifying the historical heritage of the community.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2501-61 N 15<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.



**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**15 JANUARY 2020, 9:30 A.M.  
1515 ARCH STREET, ROOM 18-029  
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.		X	
Bruce Lavery	X		
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.		X	
Douglas Mooney	X		

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director  
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner I  
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II  
Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons were present:

Safiyya Shabazz, MD  
Katherine Missimer, Esq., Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg LLP  
Nadine Yackle, Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg LLP  
R. Smith, Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg LLP  
Jeff Nugent  
Nancy Dickson  
Don Ratchford  
Walter Sommers  
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia  
Sean McCauley, 807-11 Bainbridge Street  
Leah Silverstein, Chestnut Hill Conservancy  
Steven Peitzman  
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society of Philadelphia  
Ian Hegarty, Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
Matt Wysong, Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
David Traub, Save Our Sites  
Lori Salganicoff, Chestnut Hill Conservancy  
James Maransky  
Nancy Pontone

David Olsen, Quintessence Theatre Group  
Heather Baumgardner  
Joseph A. Hirsch  
Deborah Gribbin  
Vern Anastasio, Esq.

## **CONTINUANCE REQUESTS**

### **ADDRESS: 807-11 BAINBRIDGE ST AND 620-24 S 8TH ST**

Name of Resource: Church of the Crucifixion and parish building

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: The Rectors of the Church of the Crucifixion

Nominator: Scott Welden, Bella Vista Neighbors Association

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the properties at 807-11 Bainbridge Street and 620-24 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the Church of the Crucifixion and parish building satisfy Criteria for Designation A, E, and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the buildings are associated with the life of a person significant in the past, Archdeacon Henry L. Phillips, who began his ministry in 1877 and turned the Church of the Crucifixion into a leader for social outreach programs for the surrounding black community. Under Criterion E, the nomination explains that the church and parish building are the work of Isaac Pursell, a prolific Philadelphia-based church architect whose work has significantly influenced the historical and architectural development of the City. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Church of the Crucifixion exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, as an early provider of shelter and refuge for some of the city's poorest black residents, who were able to benefit from the Church's mission work.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the properties at 807-11 Bainbridge Street and 620-24 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A, E, and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 00:04:25

#### **PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Chantry presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation, and stated that the written request from the attorney representing the Episcopal Archdiocese was provided to each Committee member.
- No one represented the nomination or property owner.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

#### **COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- It typically supports continuance requests proffered by property owners.
- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.

**ADDRESS: 2501-61 N 15TH ST**

Name of Resource: Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company's Depot, Car House, & Stable

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: TAC CG Philadelphia LLC

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2501-61 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company's Depot, Car House, and Stable satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company is an early and significant example of the evolution and development of passenger railway companies, and public transit in Philadelphia. The facility was expanded as public transit moved from horse cars, to cable cars, to motorized buses. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the expansion of public transit was one reason for the residential development of this area of North Philadelphia, exemplifying the historical heritage of the community.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2501-61 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:49:20**

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nominator.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Chantry stated that two letters were mailed to satisfy the required notice requirement. The letter addressed to the building was returned as undeliverable, owing to the building being vacant. The letter addressed to the owner's mailing address as recorded by the Office of Property Assessment (OPA) was returned as undeliverable. Ms. Chantry stated that the letter addressed to the mailing address on file with the OPA was returned to the staff on 24 December 2019. The very same day, she acquired the complete address from a deed and resent the letter with the updated address, which included a "care of" line and a suite number which the OPA-provided address had lacked. She stated that the staff, to date, has not heard from the property owner, but the letter sent to the revised address was not returned, to date, as undeliverable.
- Ms. Cooperman opined that the nomination was very good. She commented that the description was excellent, and that she appreciated the history of the traction companies. She commented that she recently worked on a history of the traction companies in Patterson, New Jersey. She acknowledged that a huge amount of research went into the nomination. She stated that, owing to the depth of the understanding of the significance of traction companies and this particular facility, it satisfies Criterion A.
- Ms. Barucco agreed. She opined that the argument in the nomination was well-made, and that the building is an amazing survivor.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company is an early and significant example of a passenger railway company facility and documents the evolution and development of passenger railway companies and public transit in Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion A.
- The expansion of public transit was one reason for the residential development of this area of North Philadelphia, exemplifying the historical heritage of the community, and thereby satisfying Criterion J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2501-61 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J, and that the property should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

<b>ITEM: 2501-61 N 15<sup>th</sup> St</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate, Criteria A and J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Barucco</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Mooney</b>					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen					X
Bruce Lavery	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	4				2

**ADDRESS: 5627-33 GERMANTOWN AVE**

Name of Resource: Rowell Department Store

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Philadelphia Suburban Development Corp.

Nominator: Noah Yoder

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5627-33 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, and J. Under Criteria A and J, the nomination argues that the C. A. Rowell Department Store remained a commercial stalwart in Philadelphia for several decades, and that the store became the first black-owned department store in the country when Curtis Sisco purchased it in 1974. Under Criterion C, the nomination contends that the building's Georgian Revival detailing reflects elements of Germantown's Georgian

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT**  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)  
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: 2501-61 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street

Postal code: 19132 Councilmanic District: 5

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company's Depot, Car House & Stable

Current/Common Name: Philadelphia Traction Co.'s Fifteenth & Cumberland Street Division

**3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

☒ Building      ☐ Structure      ☐ Site      ☐ Object

**4. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Condition:    ☐ excellent    ☒ good    ☐ fair    ☐ poor    ☐ ruins  
Occupancy:    ☐ occupied    ☐ vacant    ☐ under construction    ☒ unknown

Current use: Commercial/Industrial

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Please attach

**6. DESCRIPTION**

Please attach

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1876 to 1940

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: Built: 1876, Enlarged in 1890 and 1893.

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Unknown

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Unknown

Original owner: The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company

Other significant persons: \_\_\_\_\_

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☒ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- ☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- ☒ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Please attach

**9. NOMINATOR**

Organization The Keeping Society of Philadelphia Date September 22, 2019

Name with Title Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian Email Keeper@keepingphiladelphia.org

Street Address 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 320 Telephone 717.602.5002

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19107

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: September 23, 2019

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: December 11, 2019

Date of Notice Issuance: December 12, 2019

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: TAC CG PHILADELPHIA LLC

Address: 2100 Powers Ferry Road SE

City: Atlanta State: GA Postal Code: 30339

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: January 15, 2020

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

# NOMINATION

## FOR LISTING IN THE PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

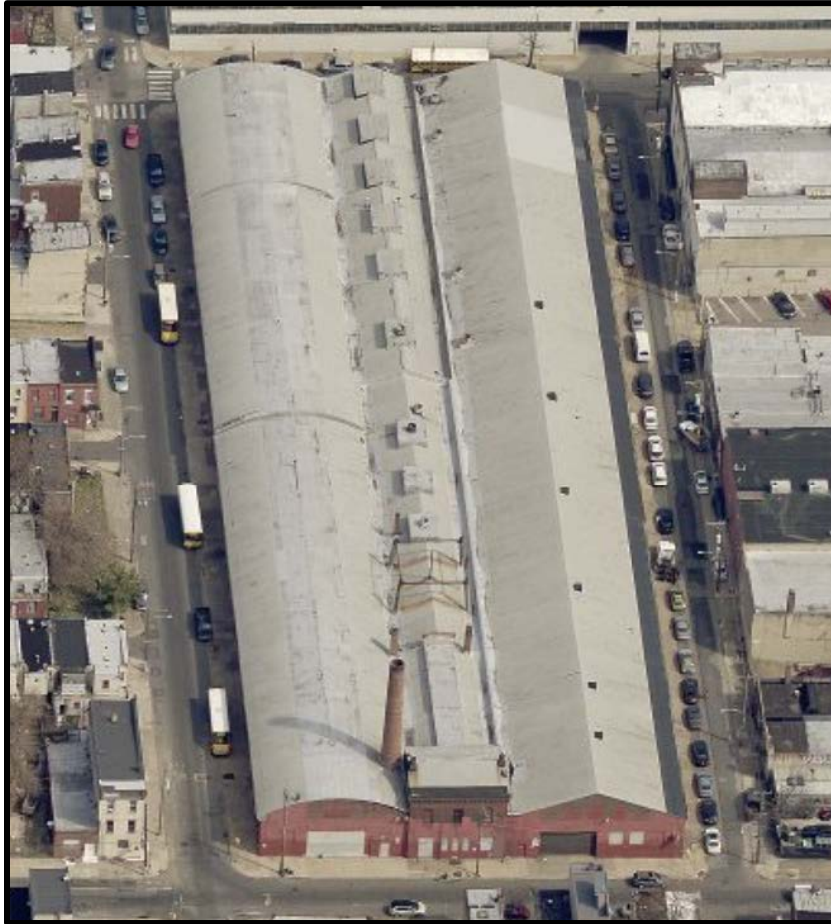


Figure 1. Top: Looking north at the subject property. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

### **THIRTEENTH & FIFTEENTH ST. PASSENGER RAILWAY COMPANY DEPOT, CAR HOUSE, & STABLES**



**2501-61 N. FIFTEENTH STREET  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19132**

*The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Co.'s Depot, Car House, & Stables  
2501-61 N. Fifteenth Street, North Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Fall 2019*



Figure 2. The boundary for the proposed designation is delineated by the purple rectangle. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia.

## 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The parcel and building portion subject to this nomination is limited to the following boundaries:

Beginning at the northeast corner of Cumberland Street and N. Fifteenth Street, extending eastward along the north side of said Cumberland Street one hundred and seventy-seven feet, ten inches to the west side of Carlisle Street, extending northward along the west side of said Carlisle Street for five hundred feet to the south side of Huntingdon Street, thence extending westward along the south side of said Huntingdon Street for one hundred and seventy-seven feet, ten inches to the east side of Fifteenth Street, extending southward along the east side of said N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street to the point and place of origin.

The property is known as Philadelphia Department of Records Plan 56N23 Plot 3, and under the Office of Property Assessment Account No. 884340625.

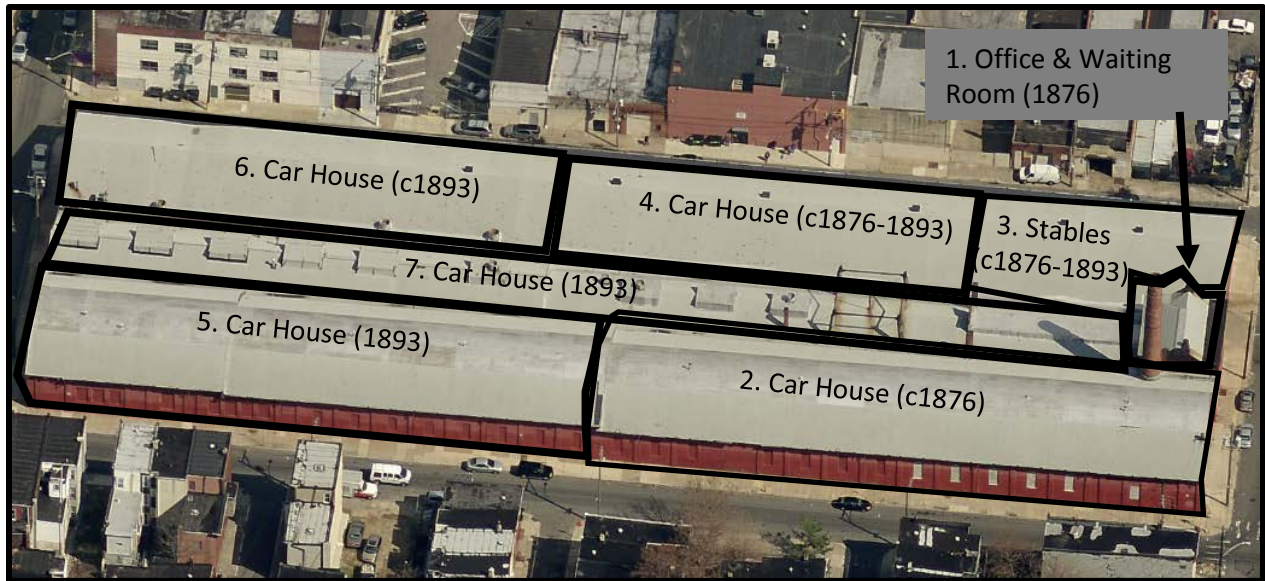


Figure 3. The subject property the contributing building components labeled and enumerated. Source: Philadelphia Atlas.

## 6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Built in phases between 1876 and 1893, the subject property is comprised of seven discernable building components, which are shown in Hexamer General Surveys, Plates 1331 (1879), 1331 (1890), and 2735 (1893): Building 1: Office & Waiting Room (1876); Building 2: Car House (c1876); Building 3: Stables (c1876-93); Building 4: Car House (c1876-93); Building 5: Car House (1893); Building 6: Car House (c1893); and Building 7: Car House (1893), all of which have alterations within the period of significance.



Figure 4. The south elevation of the subject property, including Buildings 2, 1, and 3. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

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Figure 5. Top: The south elevation of the subject property, including Buildings 2, 1, and 3. Figure 6. Center: The south elevation of the subject property, including Buildings 2, 1, and 3. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019. Figure 7. Bottom: The south elevation of the subject property, including Buildings 2, 1, and 3. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2019.

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Figure 8. The south elevation of Building 1. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

### **Building 1: Office & Waiting Room (1876)**

Located at the center of the south elevation along Cumberland Street, Building 1: Office & Waiting Room (Building 1) is a rectangular building that stands two stories, and is constructed of red brick with a side-gable, asphalt-shingled roof. The south elevation features an irregular fenestration with five apertures on the ground floor and three symmetrically placed on the second. From west to east, the first floor features a pedestrian door, three equal-sized windows at center, and another larger window at the east. All of the openings are rectangular in form, feature brick lintels and have been enclosed with cinderblock. Delineated from the first floor by a single tier of brick coursing, the second-floor features three symmetrically placed windows with segmental arched lintels. The building features a corbeled cornice with brackets as part of the continuous brickwork.



Figure 9. The west and south elevations of Building 2. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

### **Building 2: Car House (c1876) and Building 5: Car House (1893)**

Located on the west side of the complex, Buildings 2 and 5 consist of two attached rectangular structures that were built in four major phases. A single story in height, Building 2 stands at the northeast corner of Cumberland and North 15<sup>th</sup> Streets with its primary elevation facing south onto Cumberland Street and has a large barrel vault gable front façade facing south. This elevation features large barrel vault front gable and three apertures including a vehicle entrance at centered flanked by single windows and two pedestrian doors at the east. The infill brickwork of the south elevation of Building 2 is consistent with the infill brickwork on Building 3, which dates to the 1924 conversion of the building from accommodating street cars to buses. The first floor is separated from the gable front section by a string of soldier brick. The barrel vault gable front features one horizontal, rectangular window that has been infilled at center.

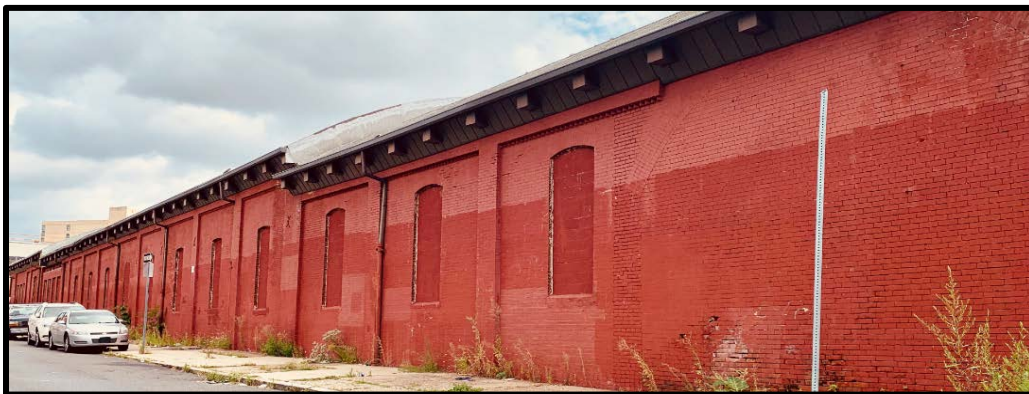


Figure 10. The west elevation of Buildings 2 and 5. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

Facing onto North 15<sup>th</sup> Street, the west elevation of Buildings 2 and 5 consists of a façade that reads as four sections, speaking to the various periods of construction. The west elevation of

Buildings 2 and 5 is characterized by brick pilasters and corbel tables that delineates the four sections, which spans thirty-two bays wide. Building 2 features two sections, as the first two bays were once the east wall of an earlier building component, and later opened to create a large vehicle bay. The section features a blind brick wall that is recessed by a corbel table and pilasters, as well as a larger infilled opening that once accommodated a vehicle bay. The second section of Building 2's west elevation spans thirteen bays, twelve of which feature large, single infilled windows centered in recessed panels created by brick corbel tables and pilasters. The twelfth bay from the south features an arched car bay that has been infilled.



Figure 11. Looking east at the west elevation of Building 2. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2019.  
 Figure 12. Middle: The west elevation of Building 2. Figure 13. Bottom left: The entire west elevation of Building 2.  
 Figure 14. Bottom right: The former vehicle bay at the north end of Building 2's west elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

Building 5 features two sections, the first of which spans ten bays. The eight southernmost bays of Building 5 feature large, single infilled windows centered in recessed panels created by brick corbel tables and pilasters. The remaining bays are comprised of irregular sections of windows and blind brick walls recessed by corbel tables and pilasters.



Figure 15. Top: The west elevation of Building 5. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2019. Figure 16. Center: The entire west elevation of Building 5. Figure 17. Bottom: Looking north along the west elevation of Buildings 2 and 5. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

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2501-61 N. Fifteenth Street, North Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
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Figure 18. The south and east elevations of Buildings 1 and 3. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

**Building 3: Stables (c1876-93), Building 4. Car House (c1876-93) and Building 6: Car House (c1893)**  
 Located on the east side of the complex, Buildings 3, 4, and 6 consist of three attached rectangular structures that face onto Carlisle Street. Building 3 stands at the northwest corner of Cumberland and Carlisle Streets with a large gable front façade facing south. The south elevation of Building 3 features four apertures, including a vehicle entrance at the west followed by three symmetrically placed windows. The gable end of Building 3's south elevation features three symmetrically placed windows with a large opening at the center flanked by slightly shorter openings. The infill brickwork of Building 3 likely dates to about 1924 when the building was converted to a bus garage and is consistent with the infill on Building 2.



Figure 19. The south and east elevations of Building 3. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.



Figure 20. The south elevation of Building 3. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

The east elevations of Buildings 3, 4, and 6 are characterized by brick pilasters and corbel tables that delineate a four-part façade spanning thirty-two bays. Building 3 is two parts in form, as the southernmost two bays were once the east wall of an earlier building component, made evident based on the existing masonry fabric. The first and southernmost two bays features three small window openings defined by segmental arched lintels that are set beneath two recessed, horizontal panels. Each panel is formed by a corbel table and pilasters, all of which occupies the upper third of the masonry façade. The second section of Building 3's east elevation spans five bays wide, each of which features a large window that has been infilled. With the lower two-thirds of each window set within a flush brick wall, the upper third is set within a recessed horizontal panel formed by a corbel table and pilasters that are again limited to the upper third of the masonry façade. The third and fourth sections comprise the remaining twenty-five bays, each of which feature large, single windows centered in recessed panels created by brick corbel tables and pilasters.

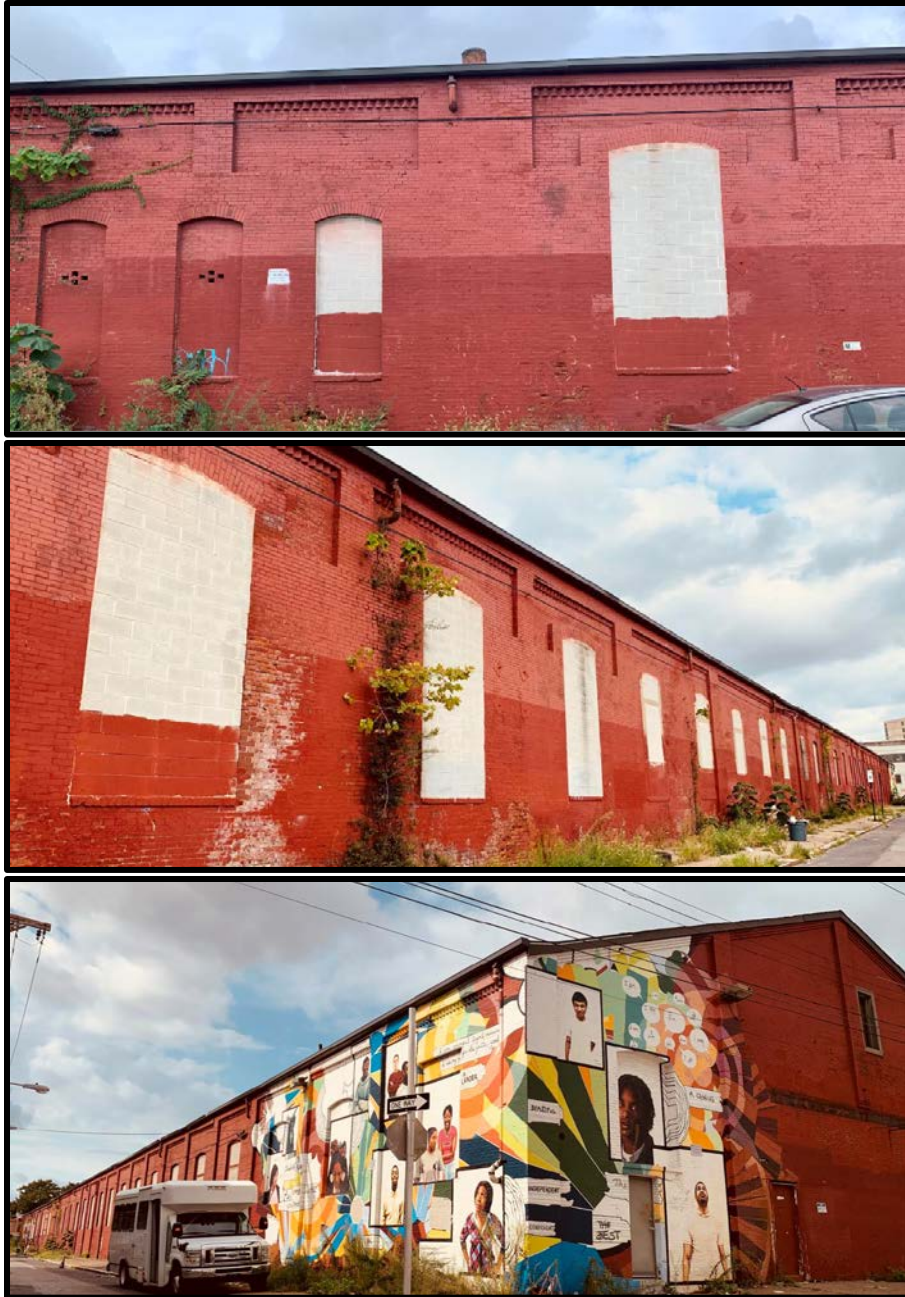


Figure 21. Top: The south end of the east elevation of Building 3. Figure 22. Center: Looking north at the east elevation of Buildings 3, 4, and 6. Figure 23. Bottom: The east and north elevations of Building 6, which includes a mural. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

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Figure 24.Top: The south elevation of Building 7, facing onto Huntingdon Street. Figure 25. Bottom: The north elevations of Buildings 7 and 3. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

### **Building 7: Car House (1893)**

Located at the center of the complex, Building 7 is at the center of the property appending the north elevation of Building 1. This building component is largely obscured, joining the other at the center. The only visible façade faces north on Huntingdon Street.

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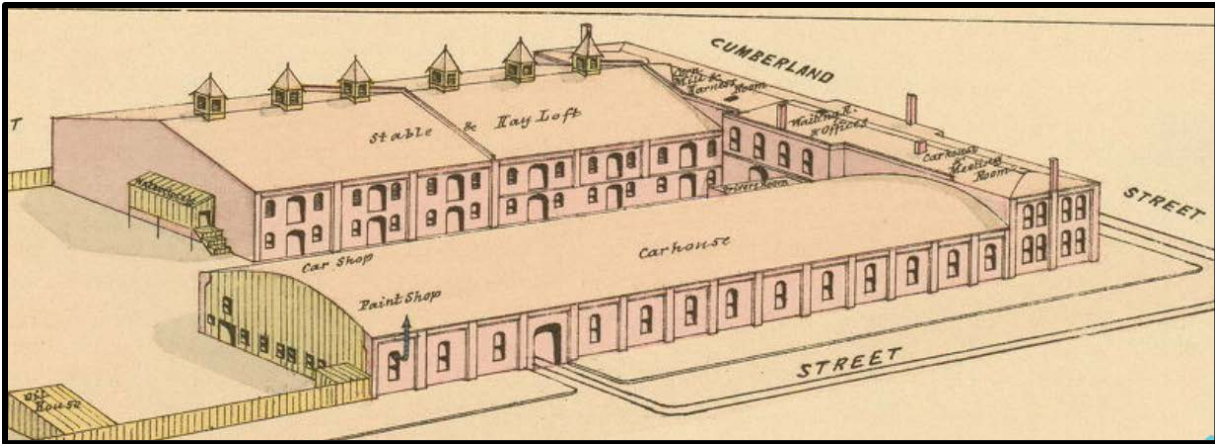


Figure 26. The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street's Car House & Stable, as shown in the Hexamer Atlas, 1879. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

## 7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Later known as the Philadelphia Traction Company's Fifteenth & Cumberland Street Division (PTC Fifteenth & Cumberland Car House & Stable), the original Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company's Depot (Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC), Depot, Car House, and Stable in North Philadelphia is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation according to Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (a) *Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; and*
- (j) *Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.*<sup>1</sup>

The Period of Significance for aforementioned Criteria as related to this complex is 1876, when the facility was first constructed to 1940 when the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) was established and took over the property.<sup>2</sup>

### Criteria A & J: Statement of Significance

The development of both North and South Philadelphia as dense residential neighborhoods in the late nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth is a direct result of the establishment of mass public transportation. The passenger railway cars that operated in the public streets and were

<sup>1</sup> In addition, the subject property may be worthy of designation under Criterion C—"Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style"—representative of the buildings constructed all across the city by passenger railway companies of this early period of development. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, the nominator was unable to explore this area of significance.

<sup>2</sup> The building may possess additional significance post-1940 for its relationship to the Philadelphia Transportation Company, but that would require additional research and evaluation beyond the scope of this nomination.

originally horse-drawn conveyances, providing localized transportation that allowed Philadelphians to commute to work nearby or in other parts of the city. As a result, street railways were perhaps the single-most important element in the development and growth of both North and South Philadelphia. The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC, which eventually became the PTC's Fifteenth & Cumberland Division, was among the earliest and most important companies established during this period. The company's role in providing passenger service between both North and South Philadelphia through Center City constituted an important driver of development in both North and South Philadelphia.



Figure 27. A drawing by Frank Taylor of a horse drawn street car on the Centennial Grounds in the 1870s. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia.

Passenger railway companies like the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC required substantial transportation facilities with adequate space for car storage, a depot, stables, and other support structures. The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC maintained a large transportation facility and hub that formerly occupied the entire block bound by Cumberland Street at the south; N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street at the west; Huntingdon Street at the north; and Carlisle Street at the east. Comprised of Building 1, the original depot; and Buildings 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, car houses and stables, the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC is an early and significant representative of the evolution and heritage of passenger railway companies, and public transit in Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup> The subject property is an important vestige of both the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC and PTC's Fifteenth & Cumberland Division, representing one of the early and successful of the first generation passenger railway companies that took shape just after the Consolidation of the City of Philadelphia in 1854. When the complex was first completed in 1876 and enlarged in 1890 and 1893, passenger railway companies, including the subject company, embodied the original concept of “rapid transit,” even when it was

<sup>3</sup> Ernest Hexamer, *Hexamer General Surveys* (Philadelphia: Hexamer, 1882), v. 17, p. 1624–25.

horse-drawn conveyances that operated in public streets. The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC was a means of mass public transportation in the city.

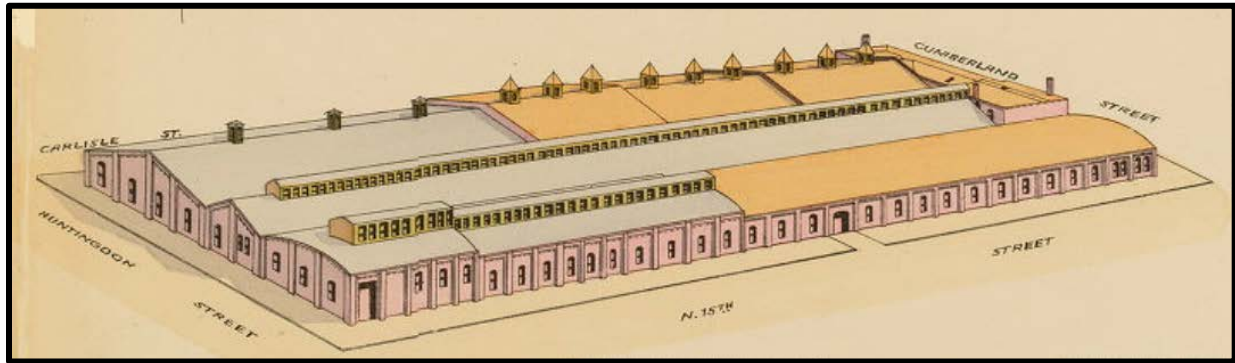


Figure 28. The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC Depot, Car Houses, & Stables, as shown in the Hexamer Atlas, 1893. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

The significance of the subject property continues from 1892 through 1940, as the Thirteenth & Fifteen SPRC undergoes a series of leases. Furthermore, public transit in Philadelphia undergoes a significant change with the electrification of the tracks in 1892 and the employment of buses in the 1920s. Under the lease of the Philadelphia Traction Company, the subject property was brought to its general present appearance in 1892, which was largely to accommodate the increased ridership as a result of the electrification of the tracks and the retirement of the horse car system.<sup>4</sup> The first bus line was introduced by the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company to the larger public transit system in September 1923 with a line on Roosevelt Boulevard. A terminus was at the juncture of North Broad Street and Erie Avenue, just 1.4 miles from the subject property. As the need for buses increased so did the need for bus garages and repair shop<sup>5</sup>. The subject property underwent renovations to accommodate buses in December 1924 and served in that capacity in part until 1942.<sup>6</sup> As a result the subject property is representative of the early period in which buses were introduced by the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company in the larger public transit system.

The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC was leased by the Philadelphia Traction Company in 1892; the Union Traction Company in 1895; the Philadelphia Rapid Transit (PRT) Company in 1902, which, in 1913, came under the oversight of the Department of City Transit; and, in 1940, the Philadelphia Transportation Company.<sup>7</sup> While many of these earlier facilities were sold over time, the subject property was retained, representing the heritage of a long period of development and evolution of public transit in Philadelphia.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Boulevard Bus Service Begun in Philadelphia," *Bus Transportation*, October 1923, 495.

<sup>6</sup> *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 10 December 1924, v. 39, p. 790.

<sup>7</sup> Harold E. Cox and John F. Meyers. "The Philadelphia Traction Monopoly and The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1874: The Prostitution of an Ideal." This is a paper that was published in 1968.

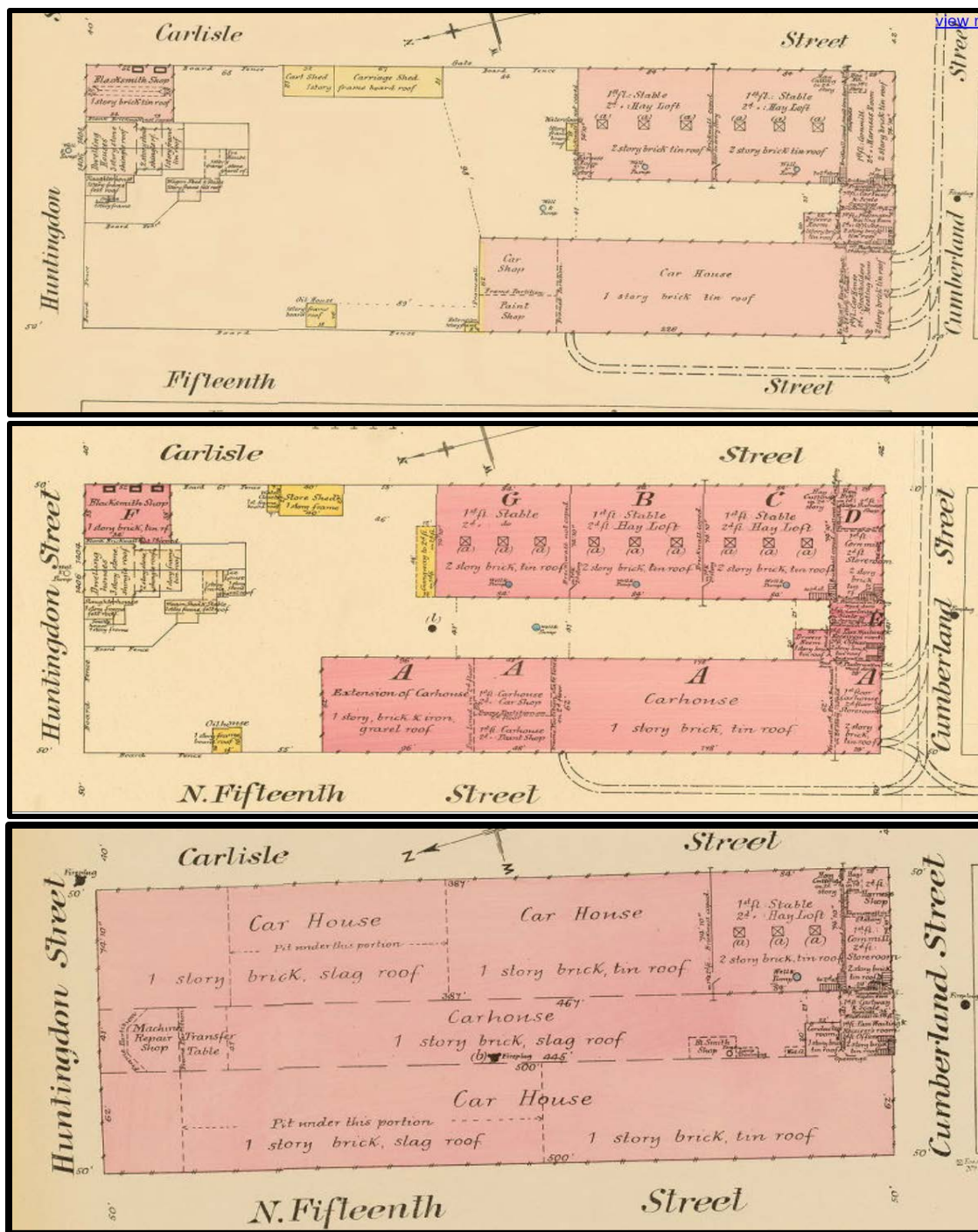


Figure 29. Top: Shown on the Hexamer General Surveys, this 1879 Survey shows the original 1876 depot, car house, and stables. Figure 30. Middle: Shown on the Hexamer General Surveys, this 1890 Survey shows the evolving depot, car house, and stables, built in 1876 and extended in 1890. Figure 31. Bottom: Shown on the Hexamer General Surveys, this 1893 Survey shows the original 1876 depot, car house, and stables; the 1890 additions/renovations; and the 1893 additions/renovations. Source: The Free Library of Philadelphia.

*The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Co.'s Depot, Car House, & Stables  
2501-61 N. Fifteenth Street, North Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Fall 2019*

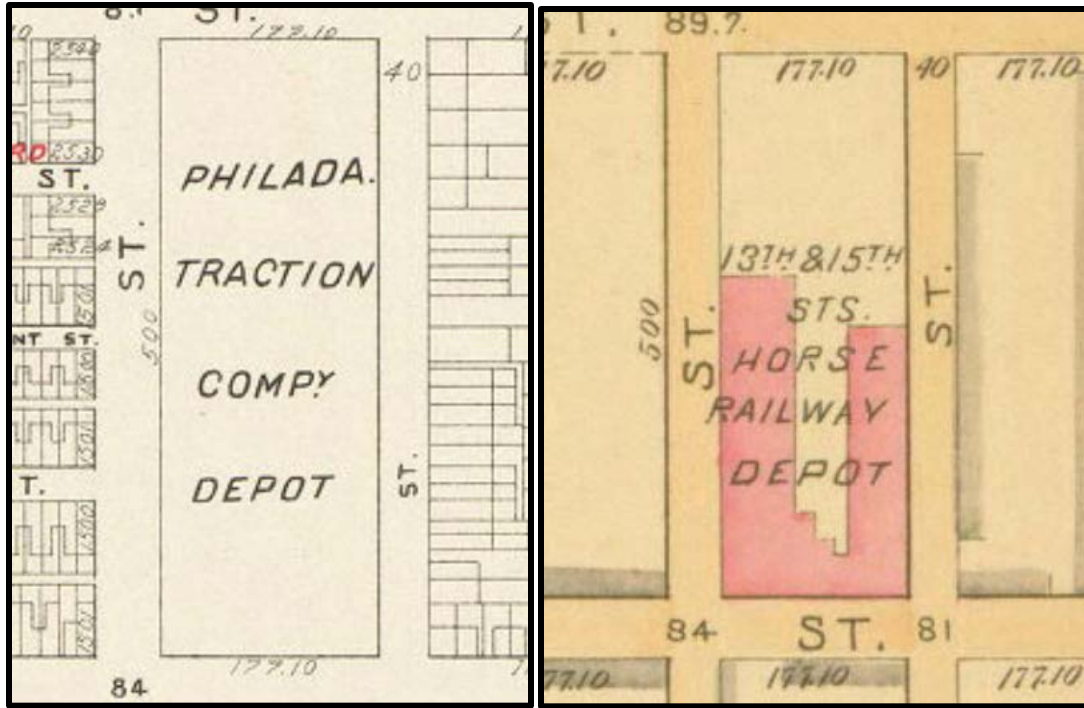


Figure 32. 1885 Baist Atlas. Figure 33. 1888 Baist Atlas. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

**Historic Context: The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Company  
Later the PTC's Fifteenth & Cumberland Division**

On April 8, 1859, “an act to incorporate the Thirteenth & Fifteenth Streets Passenger Railway Company (Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC) of the city of Philadelphia” was approved.<sup>8</sup> This allowed the company to erect a railway from the intersection of “Carpenter and [South] Thirteenth streets [sic.]; thence north along said [South] Thirteenth street [sic.] to Columbia avenue to Fifteenth street [sic.]; thence south along said Fifteenth street [sic.] to Carpenter street [sic.]; thence east along said Carpenter street [sic.] to the place of beginning...”<sup>9</sup> In 1860, the car house of the company was “constructed in Carpenter Street, above [South] Thirteenth, and is 64 by 75 feet.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1863, “The Committee on Railroads reported an ordinance authorizing the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC to extend their road from [North] Thirteenth and Columbia avenue to Diamond street; upon Diamond street from [North] Thirteenth to [North] Broad, and on the south side of Spring Garden from [North] Thirteenth to [North] Broad.”<sup>11</sup> On April 4, 1868, “an act relating to the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC of the city of Philadelphia, authorizing the issue of bonds” was approved. However, it would take several years to accomplish this goal.

While the company was established in the 1860s, its formative period occurred in the 1870s. In 1873, the Pennsylvania Senate passed a bill to allow the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC to lay tracks

<sup>8</sup> “Pennsylvania Legislature,” *Public Ledger*, 31 March 1855, 1.

<sup>9</sup> Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia. (Philadelphia: Dunlap Printing Co., 1895), 211.

<sup>10</sup> “Local Affairs,” *Public Ledger*, 1 November 1860, 1.

<sup>11</sup> “City Intelligence,” *The Evening Telegraph*, 8 June 1866, 3.

on North and South Broad Street.<sup>12</sup> A plan in South Philadelphia of the proposed Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC on the west side of Broad Street from Wharton Street to Moyamensing Avenue was approved on August 2, 1875.<sup>13</sup> Another plan in North Philadelphia of the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC on North Broad Street from Montgomery Street to the Philadelphia, Germantown & Norristown Rail Road was introduced that same year.<sup>14</sup> In 1875, The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC paid \$1,217.12 to the City of Philadelphia in 1874 based on their earnings.<sup>15</sup>

The subject property and its association with public transit began on October 9, 1875, when the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC purchased a lot at the northeast corner of N. 15<sup>th</sup> and Cumberland Streets for \$25,000.<sup>16</sup> The subject property was encumbered with a mortgage of \$15,000, which was held by the Smythe family and payable in a period of five years.<sup>17</sup> Construction of the complex appears to have begun immediately afterwards since company official W.H. Flood was given the keys to the property on Saturday, December 16, 1876, just over a year after the purchase.<sup>18</sup> This included three two-story, rectangular brick buildings on Cumberland Street, where at the center was the proper depot with “waiting rooms and offices.” In addition, a two-story “stable & hay loft” stood on Carlisle Street; and a one-story brick car house along N. Fifteenth Street.<sup>19</sup> The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC finally installed new track on Broad Street to Germantown Avenue in 1877.<sup>20</sup> By 1879 the subject property was owned by “a corporation” with Thomas W. Ackley as president, T.B. Brown as Treasurer, and P. Cooper as Superintendent. The original 1876 car house and stables employed roughly 70 men and accommodated 168 horses, 22 horse cars, and 2 sweepers.<sup>21</sup>

Another plan in South Philadelphia of the proposed extension of the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC from Reed to Jackson Streets was approved on April 22, 1879.<sup>22</sup> The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC ran two horse cars to and one-horse car from the subject property along Broad Street. Soon after, the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC moves their offices from South Broad Street to the subject property.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> “Flood of Private Bills,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 12 March 1873, 1.

<sup>13</sup> 1875 Plan for the Extension of the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC. (Philadelphia: Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC, 1875). [www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-012-c](http://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-012-c) Accessed on 26 August 2019.

<sup>14</sup> 1875 Plan for the Thirteenth and Fifteenth SPRC.

<sup>15</sup> “Taxes on Passenger Railways,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. (Philadelphia: 11 January 1875), 3.

<sup>16</sup> Deed: Amanda G. Smythe Trustees, et. Al. to the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPR Co., 9 October 1875, Philadelphia Deed Book F.T.W., No. 229, p. 286, CAP.

<sup>17</sup> This mortgage was recorded in Philadelphia Mortgage Book F.J.W., No. 290, p. 386. The mortgage of \$15,000 was paid off on October 26, 1880 and given to Elizabeth Hall for a period of seven years. This mortgage was paid off, and a new mortgage was held for \$20,000 by George W. Biddle on January 27, 1883. Source: HSP.

<sup>18</sup> Financial Ledger, Volume 238, Harold Cox Transportation Collection, (Collection 3158), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>19</sup> “Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street City Passenger Railway Co.’s Car House and Stables, Philadelphia. Plate 1331.” Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 14. (Ernest Hexamer, 1879). Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv14.1331>, Accessed on 20 September 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Financial Ledger, Volume 238, Harold Cox Transportation Collection.

<sup>21</sup> “Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street City Passenger Railway Co.’s Car House and Stables, Philadelphia. Plate 1331.”

<sup>22</sup> 1879 Plan for the Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway. (Philadelphia: Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC, 1879). <http://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-012-k> Accessed on 26 August 2019.

<sup>23</sup> Financial Ledger, Volume 238, Harold Cox Transportation Collection.

The “plan and profile of the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC, on Fifteenth St., from Columbia Ave. to Cumberland St. from Broad St. to Fifteenth St” was approved on August 7, 1882.<sup>24</sup> The company then laid track on Fifteenth Street from Columbia Avenue to Cumberland Street. This led to dense residential projects in the mid-to-late-1880s, including the construction of 45 houses at 15<sup>th</sup> and Cumberland Street in September 1886.<sup>25</sup>

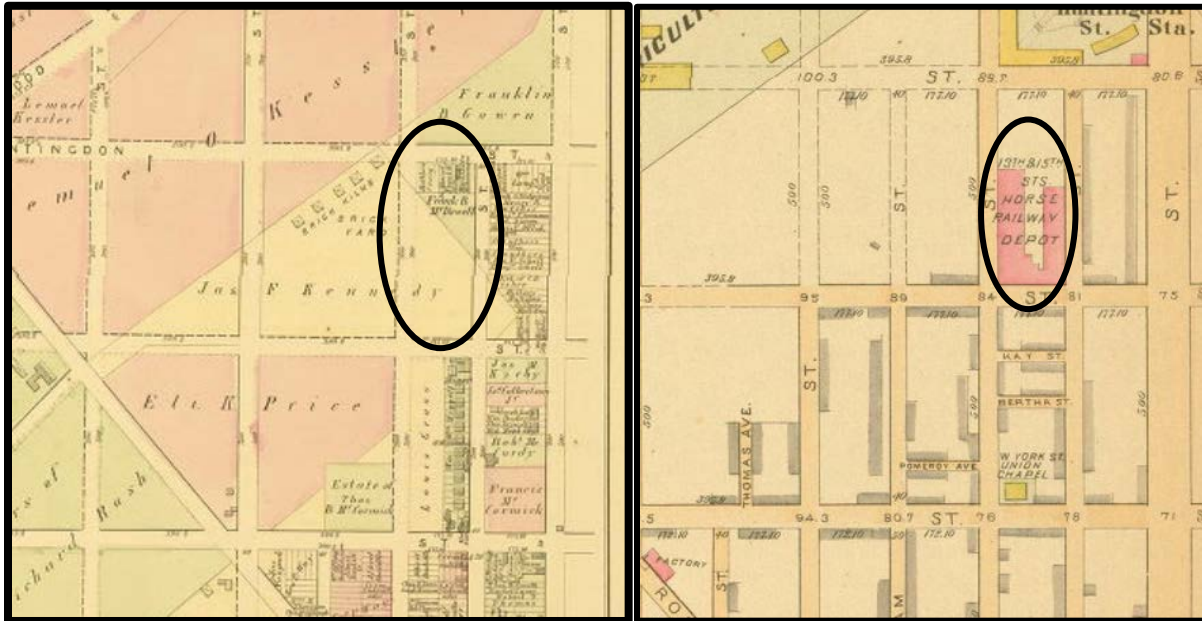


Figure 34. Left: City Atlas of Philadelphia, Vol. 2, Wards 21 and 28, 1875, by G.M. Hopkins. Figure 35. Right: “Baist Property Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Penna, Complete in one volume, 1888, Plate 20,” by G.W. Baist. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

<sup>24</sup> 1882 Plan for the Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway. (Philadelphia: Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC, 1879). <<http://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-012-L>> Accessed on 26 August 2019.

<sup>25</sup> *The Philadelphia Real Estate and Builder's Guide*, 27 September 1886, i.



Figure 36. 1895 Philadelphia Atlas, by G.W. Bromley. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

While development of North Philadelphia was directly stimulated by increased commerce and industry, this great period of urban progress was enabled was the establishment and expansion of public transit. In 1875, the area surrounding the subject property was sparsely built, aside from a few developments in the immediate vicinity of the Huntingdon Street Station of the Reading Railroad, located a few blocks to the northeast of the subject property. The house types were large detached and semi-detached twins of varying sizes.<sup>26</sup> As a result of the construction of the subject property in the late 1870s and the installation of tracks extending north, residential development had filled most of the blocks to the south and east of the subject property by 1888.<sup>27</sup> As the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC enlarged its capacity, the area became entirely developed in less than ten years, the subject property becoming entirely surrounded by dense rows of houses.<sup>28</sup>

The urban density came after many improvements to public transit in the 1880s. In 1883, the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC also installed tracks on South Thirteenth Street from Reed Street to Carpenter.<sup>29</sup> As part of this enlargement, the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC purchased a lot at South Thirteenth & Jackson Streets for the purpose of building a new depot, car house, and stable in

<sup>26</sup> City Atlas of Philadelphia, Vol. 2, Wards 21 and 28, 1875, by G.M. Hopkins.

<sup>27</sup> "Baist Property Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Penna, Complete in one volume, 1888, Plate 20," by G.W. Baist. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

<sup>28</sup> 1895 Philadelphia Atlas, by G.W. Bromley.

<sup>29</sup> Financial Ledger, Volume 238, Harold Cox Transportation Collection.

1883. The company immediately commissioned the construction of the new facility at South Thirteenth & Jackson Streets, and the facility was occupied by December 1883.<sup>30</sup> Further enlargements of the trackage continued in 1885, when the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC built track on South Fifteenth Street from Carpenter Street to Dickinson, as well as from on South Fifteenth Street from Dickinson Street to Mifflin Street. With the increased trackage, the company enlarged the stables at South Thirteenth & Jackson Streets in 1886. Shortly after this expenditure, in March 1887, the subject property was partly damaged by fire, which led to renovations and the enlargement of the stables in 1888.<sup>31</sup>

In 1889, the Mayor of Philadelphia removed the Thirteen & Fifteenth SPRC's track on North Broad Street from Cumberland Street to Glenwood Avenue, leading to a legal battle between the City of Philadelphia and the railway company. Despite this set back, the company continued to install new track on North Fifteenth Street to Glenwood Avenue and along North Broad Street at a cost of \$8,000. Cars of the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC commenced running on North Fifteenth Street north of the subject property crossing the railroad by bridge. In 1890, the subject property was enlarged, nearly doubling the car house capacity, as well as some enlargements to the stables, at cost of \$3,000.<sup>32</sup> At this time, the subject property accommodated 323 horses, 45 cars, 3 sweepers and employed roughly 70 men. The corporation had the following administration: B.S. Kunkel as president; Alex Renick as treasurer; and William P. Cooper as superintendent.<sup>33</sup> Among the 1890 improvements, the company installed new track on North Thirteenth Street from Cumberland to Cambria Street to Broad Street, another of the 1890 improvements.<sup>34</sup>

The Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC was leased to the Philadelphia Traction Company (PTC) in 1892. In turn, the PTC enlarged the subject facility to its present appearance, occupying the entire block. This construction project was completed in 1893.<sup>35</sup> At the time of completion the subject property accommodated 90 horses, 114 new trolley cars, 8 horse cars and employed about 200 men.<sup>36</sup> The enlargement of the subject building was part of the campaign of upgrading the Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC line to cable cars. The company sold their now obsolete "150 street car horses" to West Philadelphia transportation companies as a result. Ending the PTC tenancy, the former Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC line was leased to the Union Traction Company (UTC), beginning on October 1, 1895.<sup>37</sup> UTC had control of the lines for just a few years when it too was leased, becoming part of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company (PRT), officially incorporated

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> "Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street City Passenger Railway Co.'s Car House and Stables, Plate 2366," Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 25. (Ernest Hexamer, 1890). Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, <<https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv25.2366>> Accessed on 21 September 2019.

<sup>33</sup> "Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street City Passenger Railway Co.'s Car House and Stables, Plate 2366."

<sup>34</sup> Financial Ledger, Volume 238, Harold Cox Transportation Collection.

<sup>35</sup> "Philadelphia Traction Co., 15<sup>th</sup> and Cumberland St. Division, Plate 2735," Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network, <<https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv28.2735>> Accessed on 21 September 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Cox and Meyers. "The Philadelphia Traction Monopoly and The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1874: The Prostitution of an Ideal," 1968.

on May 1, 1902.<sup>38</sup> PRT would eventually control “...nearly all operating street railway franchises within the city of Philadelphia.”<sup>39</sup>

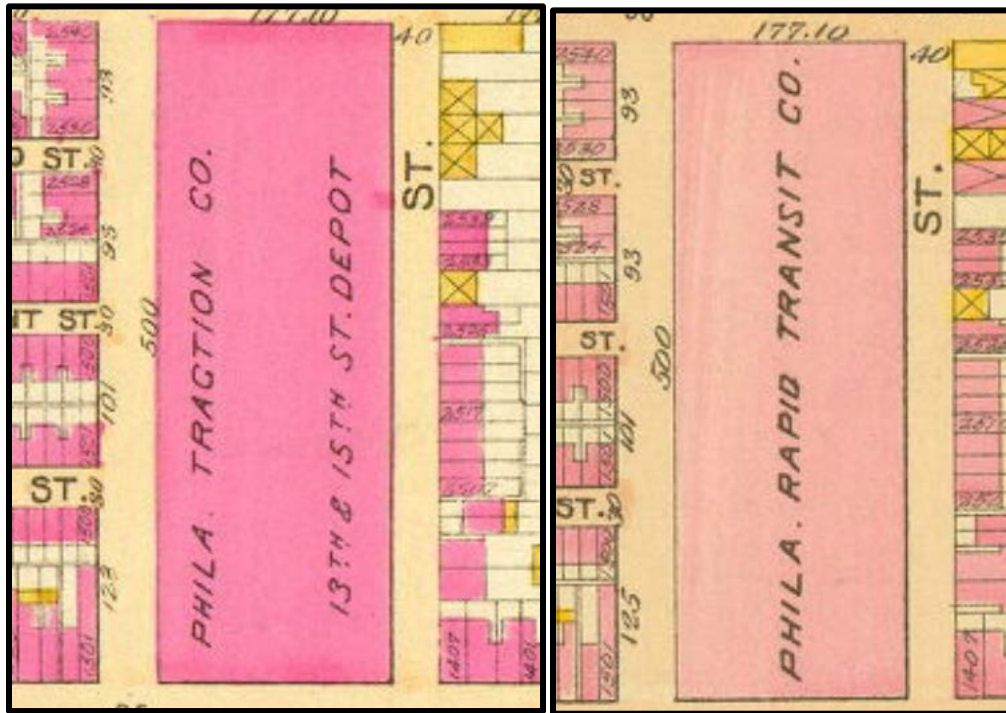


Figure 37. Left: 1901 Bromley Atlas. Figure 38. Right: 1910 Bromley Atlas.

<sup>38</sup> Feustel, *Report On Behalf Of The City of Philadelphia*, p. 93. The information was obtained from Chart 13.

<sup>39</sup> Cox and Meyers. “The Philadelphia Traction Monopoly and The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1874: The Prostitution of an Ideal,” 1968.



Figure 39. The subject property in 1920. Source: <http://www.phillytrolley.org/SIAcarbarns/cumberlanddepot03.html>.

The Department of City Transit (Department) was created in 1913 to oversee the development of rapid transit in Philadelphia and to work with the PRT by creating and maintaining new infrastructure and facilities for public transit. The idea was that any new infrastructure created with city funds would be leased by the PRT.<sup>40</sup> One of the most important advancements of the PRT while overseen by the Department was the introduction of autobuses (motorized buses) to their transit networks. In fact, T.E. Mitten, president of the PRT, announced on November 24, 1922, that a formal plan had been outlined for Philadelphia to gain permission to run buses, establishing two lines to connect Broad Street to Erie Avenue.<sup>41</sup> Gaining a bus line, as well as a trackless trolley, required PRT to face a “stormy siege” in Philadelphia politics. The ordinances enabling PRT to establish and operate a bus line on Roosevelt Boulevard was initially vetoed by Mayor Moore, but the Council over-rode the veto by a vote of thirteen to seven.<sup>42</sup> The first bus line to be operated opened in 1923 with a fleet of five buses to run along Roosevelt Boulevard. The route was from Broad Street and Erie Avenue to Frankford Avenue and Oxford Street, a distance of roughly 4.8 miles. A bus route was selected for Roosevelt Boulevard because of its auto-centric nature, after “the public objected to the thoroughfare being marred by street cars.”<sup>43</sup> When Roosevelt Boulevard’s bus line was opened, the first buses running on Sunday, September 23, 1923, Thomas E. Mitten announced that this was the first of what was “a city-wide system to come.”<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Russell F. Weigley, ed., *Philadelphia: A 300 Year History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1982).

<sup>41</sup> “Philadelphia Plan Outlined,” *Bus Transportation*, Vol. 1, No. 12, December 1922, 668.

<sup>42</sup> “Philadelphia Railway Gets Bus and Trackless Trolley Franchise,” *Bus Transportation*, June 1923, 303.

<sup>43</sup> “Saginaw to Install New Buses,” *Bus Transportation*, August 1923, 402.

<sup>44</sup> “Boulevard Bus Service Begun in Philadelphia,” *Bus Transportation*, October 1923, 495.

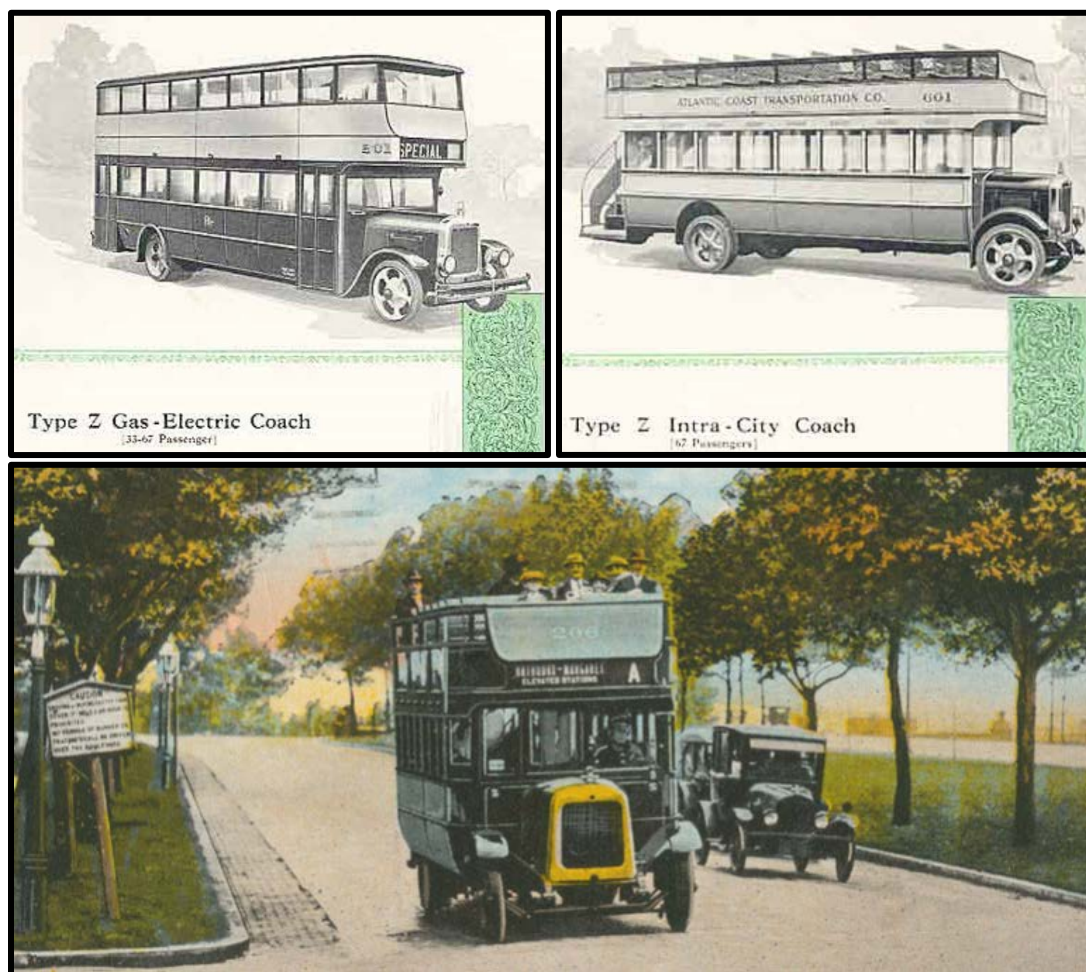


Figure 40. Top right and Figure 41. Top: left: The Type Z Gas-Electric Coach (33-67 Passenger) and the Type Z Intra-City Coach (67 Passengers), as manufactured and advertised by the Yellow Coach Manufacturing Company of Chicago, represent the type of bus ordered by PRT in October 1923.<sup>45</sup> Source: [http://www.coachbuilt.com/bui/y/yellow\\_coach/yellow\\_coach.htm](http://www.coachbuilt.com/bui/y/yellow_coach/yellow_coach.htm). Figure 42. Bottom: The No. 206 bus carries passengers on Roosevelt Boulevard in a Type Z Intra-City Coach. Source 1926 Postcard, via <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/buses/>.

The subject building appears to be one of the early facilities involved with the introduction of buses to the larger city transit system, as it served as both a bus garage and car barn by early 1924, just months after the new line was introduced. It is also important to note that the buses used for service initially on the Roosevelt Boulevard line were provided by a contractor, and that new buses do not appear to have been ordered until October 1923, when PRT purchased ten Type Z Gas-Electric Coaches from the Yellow Coach Manufacturing Company of Chicago, as mentioned and cited in the above caption. In December 1924, the Philadelphia Real Estate & Builder's Guide announced that PRT had commissioned alterations to convert the subject property into a garage for buses, which appear to have served the new Roosevelt Avenue bus line, and, eventually, would supplement service on various lines. As referenced, the new line started at North Broad Street and

<sup>45</sup> "Rolling Stock," *Bus Transportation*, October 1923, 506.

Erie Avenue, a juncture that is just 1.4 miles from the subject property.<sup>46</sup> The project included “Brick work, cement work”...” changing [sic.] (unless you missed a word) into garage, general interior and exterior alterations.” The contract was awarded to H.E. Baton of 713 Sansom Street.<sup>47</sup> Plans of the period show that Building 1 would remain unchanged, but the roofline of Building 3 was to be changed from a barrel vault roof to a transitional gable front. The most substantial renovation of this building was a new brick front in place of the open portal on the south elevation.<sup>48</sup> While the renovations were made to accommodate buses, the facility continued to be used as a car barn as well. The subject property was used as a bus garage through 1942, which is shown on the 1942 Land Use Maps by the Works Progress Administration.

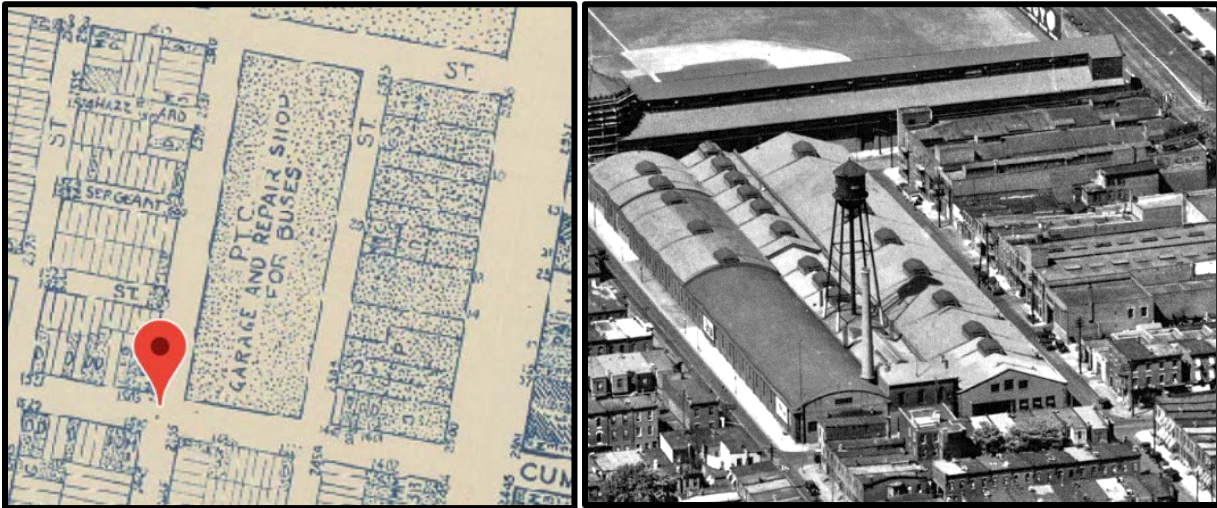


Figure 43. Left: 1942 Land Use Maps by the Works Progress Administration. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Figure 44. Right: Looking northeast at the environs of the E.A. Wright Bank Note Company, 1931. Source: J. Victor Dallin Aerial Survey Collection, Hagley Museum and Library.

In 1940, the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC), the predecessor of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), was established by the merger of the PRT and several independent transit companies.<sup>49</sup> Despite the continued use of the subject property in 1942 as a bus garage, the statement of significance speaks to the subject property’s relationship to the early use of buses in the first years in which the PRT introduced buses into the larger system, making the transition of the PRT to the PTC an ideal end date for the period of significance.

<sup>46</sup> Nepa, Stephen, “Buses,” *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*. [no date]. <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/buses/> Accessed on 22 September 2019.

<sup>47</sup> *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, 10 December 1924, v. 39, p. 790.

<sup>48</sup> Plans for the subject property in December 1924 by the PRT. Source: <http://www.phillytrolley.org/SIAcarbarns/cumberlanddepot03.html>.

<sup>49</sup> Cox and Meyers. “The Philadelphia Traction Monopoly and The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1874: The Prostitution of an Ideal,” 1968.

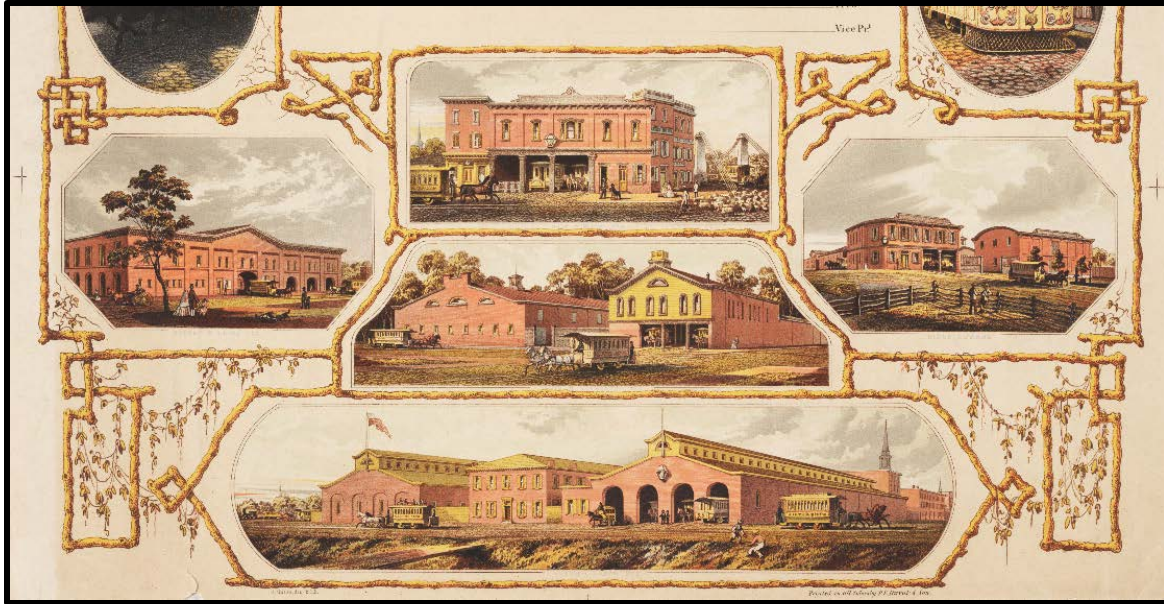


Figure 45. An illustration for the passenger railway companies and their facilities. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia.

### Historic Context: The Development of a Modern Passenger Railway System in Philadelphia

As Frank D. McLain, author of *The Street Railways of Philadelphia*, would later state in 1907, “...by the end of 1859, with nineteen charters granted, the nucleus of the present extensive system was fairly established.”<sup>50</sup> The following companies were officially chartered between 1857 and 1859 (the table below also includes the number of passengers each company carried for the fiscal year ending on October 31, 1864):

Railway Company	Chartered	Passengers/Receipts 1864)
Central Passenger	1858	Unknown/Unknown
Citizens’ Passenger	1858	3,250,000/\$162,367
Fairmount Passenger	1858	1,729,000/\$95,335
Fairmount & Arch Street	1858	1,705,760/\$77,532
Frankford & Southwark	1857	4,900,000/\$251,897
Germantown Passenger Railway	1858	Unknown/\$176,539
Girard College Passenger	1858	Unknown /\$102,861
Green & Coates Streets	1858	2,919,908/\$166,775
Hestonville, Mantua & Fairmount	1859	Unknown/\$59,473
Philadelphia City Passenger	1859	2,631,160/\$133,462
Philadelphia & Darby Railway	1857	334,926/\$32,448
Philadelphia & Gray’s Ferry	1858	1,892,956/\$79,592
Philadelphia & Olney	1859	Unknown/Unknown
Richmond & Schuylkill	1859	Unknown/Unknown

<sup>50</sup> McLain, “The Street Railways of Philadelphia (1908),” 22 (1908), 233–234.

Ridge Avenue & Manayunk	1859	Unknown/\$39,334
Second & Third Streets	1858	7,500,000/\$355,773
Seventeenth & Nineteenth Streets	1859 <sup>51</sup>	Unknown/\$41,296
Thirteenth & Fifteenth SPRC	1859	\$1,750,000/\$116,912
West Phila. Passenger Railway	1857	Unknown/\$220,672

\*By 1864, the above-referenced statistics included the Delaware County Company (Unknown/\$6,876) and the Lombard and South Company (1,200,000/\$54,040).

From the late 1850s through the end of the nineteenth century, passenger service was provided with cars that were conveyed along tracks within the public streets and rights-of-way by horses and mules. Like today's mass transit vehicles, the cars were parked in large facilities where they were also maintained and serviced. However, in this earlier period, the facilities of passenger railway companies included stables for horses and mules. In February of 1864, *The Baltimore Sun* reported that in the previous year a total of 2,325 horses were employed by passenger railways throughout Philadelphia.<sup>52</sup> Unlike later cable and electric cars, horses and mules required care and housing after the line had ceased service for the day. *The Baltimore Sun* also reported "...the cost of hay and feed to a single company with 274 horses amounts to about \$40,000 [per annum]," and another "...with 382 horses, it amounts to \$50,000." Horse-shoeing was said to cost one company over \$7,000 annually.<sup>53</sup>

These early passenger railway companies not only provided basic passenger service, but were also largely responsible for the pavement and continued maintenance of the entire street and/or right-of-way (curb to curb) upon which they operated, including the removal of snow or any other obstructions. Enacted in July 1857 by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, the street railway companies were regulated by "An Ordinance To Regulate Passenger Railway Companies" which required the submittal of "all proposed plans, courses, styles of rails, and manner of laying the same to the Board of Surveys and Regulations" for approval; the "cost and expense of maintaining, paving, repairing and repaving" required for any work that took place "on any road, street, avenue or alley occupied by them;" etc. McLain estimated that that passenger railway companies provided nearly 500 miles of street paving to the city between 1857 and 1908. Additionally, at least fifteenth of the companies paid a six percent tax (on all dividends of the company greater than six percent) to the city; however, not all of the companies complied with this standard.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 233–34.

<sup>52</sup> "Philadelphia City Passenger Railways," *The Baltimore Sun*, 12 February 1864, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.



Figure 46. A trolley at the depot. Source: The Free Library of Philadelphia.

The following companies represent the early period of passenger railway companies:

<b>Company Name, Inc./Operational Period</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Lessee, Lease Date</b>
Beach St. Connecting Passenger Railway Co. 1902	1907	PRT 1903
Catherine & Beach Streets Railway Co. 1889	1890	PRT 1890
Centennial Passenger Railway Co. 1889	1896	PRT 1893
Chester & Philadelphia Railway Co. 1910/1910–11	1910	PRT 1911
Philadelphia & Chester Railways Co. 1900/1901–10	1901	Foreclosed 1910
Citizens Clearfield & Cambria St. R. Co. 1894/1895–96	1895	Union Traction 1896
Citizens East End Railway Co. 1894/1895–96	1895	Union Traction 1896
Citizens Passenger Railway Co. 1858/Unknown	Unknown	F&SPCPC 1892
Continental Passenger Railway Co. 1873/Unknown	1876	Union Passr 1880
Darby & Yeadon Street Railway Co. 1904/Unknown	1907	PRT 1904
Doylestown & Willow Grove Street Railway Co. 1900/U	Unknown	PRT 1902
Electric Traction Co. 1893/Unknown	Unknown	Union Traction 1896
Empire Passenger Railway Co. 1869/1870–97	1870	Union Traction 1897

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Fairmount Park & Haddington Passenger R. Co. 1892/Unknown	Unknown	HM&FPRC 1895
Frankford & Southwark Phila. Pass. R. Co. 1854/U	1894	Electric Tract. 1893
Germantown Loop Railway Co. 1920/Unknown	1920	PRT 1920
Germantown Passenger Railway Co. 1858/Unknown	1881	Peoples PRC 1881
Girard Avenue Passenger Railway Co. 1894/Unknown	1895	Peoples PRC 1895
Hestonville, Mantua, & Fairmount PRC 1859/Unknown	Prior 1898	Union TC 1898
Hillcrest Avenue Passenger Railway Co. 1896/Unknown	1898	Peoples PRC 1896
Huntingdon Street Connecting PRC 1894/Unknown	1896	PTC 1895
Kessler Street Connecting PRC 1892/1892–96	1892	Union PRC 1892
Lehigh Avenue Railway Co. 1873/1890–99	1890	Union TC 1899
Market Street Elevated PRC 1901/Unknown	1905	PRTC 1901
Motor Real Estate Co. 1918/Unknown of the PRTC	NA	NA
Northern Passenger Railway Co. 1890/Unknown	1892	Peoples PRC 1892
Peoples Passenger Railway Co. 1873/Unknown	Unknown	UnionTC 1896
Peoples Traction Co. 1893/Unknown	Unknown	UnionTC 1896
Philadelphia, Cheltenham, & Jenkintown PRC 1892/U	1896	PeoplePRC 1895
Philadelphia City Passenger Railway Co. 1859/1859–84	Unknown	WPPRC 1884
Philadelphia & Darby Railway Co. 1857/1859–70	Unknown	PCPRC 1870
Philadelphia & Grays Ferry PRC 1858/Unknown	Unknown	PTC 1891
Philadelphia Traction Co. 1883/1883–95	Unknown	UnionTC 1895
Philadelphia & Willow Grove SRC 1901/Unknown	1904–08	PRTC 1904
Real Estate Holding Co. 1902/Unknown	NA	NA
Ridge Avenue Connecting Railway Co. 1892/1892–95	Unknown	PTC 1895
Ridge Avenue Passenger Railway Co. 1859/1859–92	Unknown	PTC 1892
Second & Third Sts. PRC 1858/Unknown	Unknown	FSPCPRC 1893
Seventeenth & Nineteenth SPRC 1859/Unknown	Unknown	CPRC 1879
Snyder Avenue Railway Co. 1911/1912–?	1912	UnionTC 1912
Thirteenth & Fifteenth Sts. PRC 1859/1859–92	1859–92	TRC 1892
Twenty-Second St. & Allegheny Ave. PRC 1890/1891–94	1891	PTC 1894
Union Passenger Railway Co. 1864/1865–84	Unknown	PTC 1884
Union Traction Co. 1895/1896–1902	Unknown	PRTC 1902
Walnut St. Connecting PRC 1890/1894–95	Unknown	PTC 1895
West Philadelphia PRC 1857/1859–84	Unknown	PTC 1884
Willow Grove Park Co. 1919/Unknown	1895–1903	PRTC 1920 <sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Feustel, *Report On Behalf Of The City of Philadelphia*, Docket No. 3504.

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## Contributions

This nomination was prepared by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia. Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, wrote the nomination with comments and edits by J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Kelly E. Wiles, Architectural Historian.

## APPENDIX A: CRITERION G

*The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Co.’s Depot, Car House, & Stables  
2501-61 N. Fifteenth Street, North Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Fall 2019*



Figure 47. Right: the environs of North Broad Street and Lehigh Avenue, a distractive non-residential section of North Philadelphia. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2018.

**(g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif.**

The commercial, industrial, and transit-related buildings located in the vicinity of North Broad Street and Lehigh Avenue, as well as the juncture of the former Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Railroad right-of-ways, form one of the most coherent non-residential sections of North Philadelphia. This surviving environment of distinctive and significant buildings of former companies, establishments, and public services, including the 13<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> Street Passenger Railway Company Block at 2501–61 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street; the Ford Motor Company at 2700–34 North Broad Street; the Keystone Pure Oil Company’s Gasoline Station at 2527–37 North Broad Street, situated just south of the subject property; the International Harvester Company at 2905 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street; the J. Anderson Ross Company’s Mill Work Building, better known as Joe Fraizer’s Gym, at 2917–19 North Broad Street; the North Broad Street Station, built by the Reading Railroad, at 2601 North Broad Street; the North Philadelphia Station, built by the Pennsylvania Railroad, at 2900 North Broad Street; early buildings of the Philadelphia & Reading Railway Company at 1326–56 W. Lehigh Avenue; the Traylor Building at 2701 North Broad Street; the Vim Motor Truck Company at the southwest corner of North Broad Street and W. Huntington Street; and several others. The said resources include large multi-story factory and mill buildings; sprawling low-rise auto- and transit-related garages, offices shops, and sheds; and railroad and transit-related buildings, both formal station houses and utilitarian sheds; etc., which comprise a distinctive commercial, industrial, and transit-related area that should be preserved according to an architectural, cultural and historical motif. The subject property is an important physical and visual component of this distinctive area, being a one of the largest, fully detached buildings that stands at the lower end of this historic built environment.

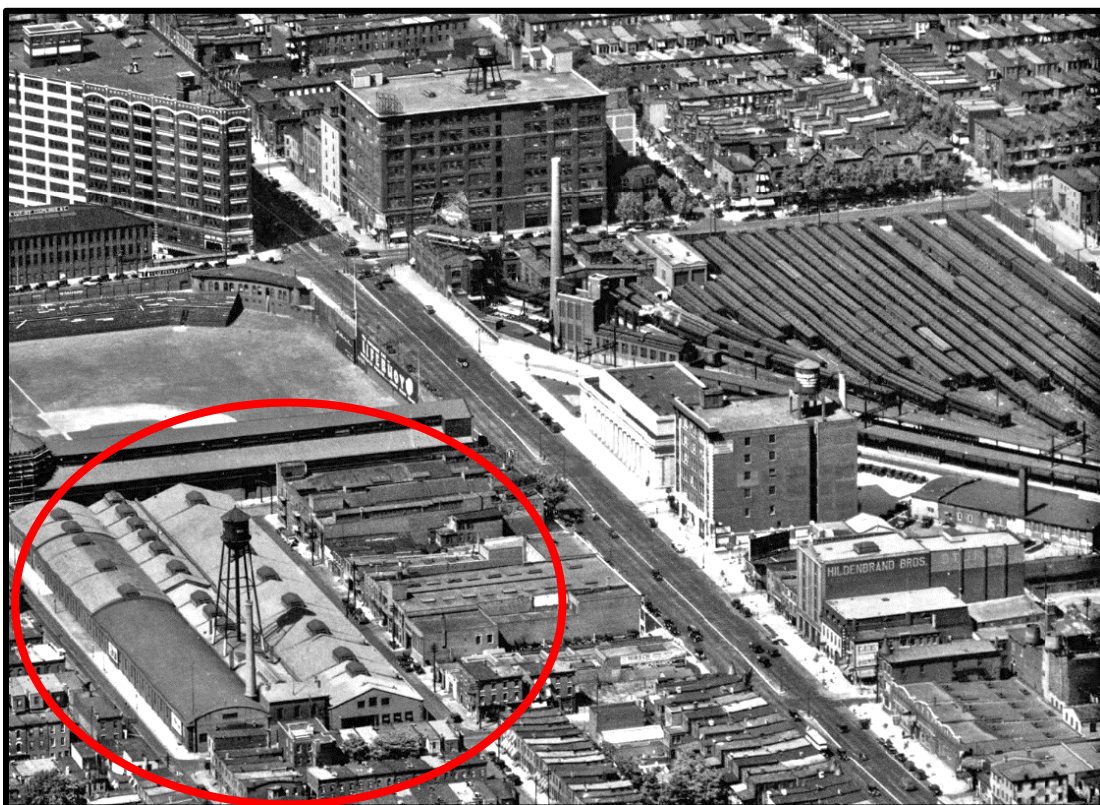


Fig. 1. Top: Looking northeast at the environs of the E.A. Wright Bank Note Company, 1931. Source: J. Victor Dallin Aerial Survey Collection, Hagley Museum and Library. Fig. 15b. Bottom: Looking east at the environs of the E.A. Wright Bank Note Company. Source: Fredric Miller, *Still Philadelphia* [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011], 55.

## APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

*The Thirteenth & Fifteenth Street Passenger Railway Co.'s Depot, Car House, & Stables*  
 2501-61 N. Fifteenth Street, North Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
 Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Fall 2019

### **Historic Context: The Consolidation & Modernization of Philadelphia**

As unveiled by a thirty percent population boom in the 1840s, the numerous governmental bodies and structures within the jurisdiction of Philadelphia County in the middle of the nineteenth century, including all of its districts, boroughs, and townships, proved generally unable to meet the needs of the enlarged and ever-growing population. While the county seat certainly boasted a more complex and evolved system of local government with a greater compliment of amenities and services, the City of Philadelphia lacked the authority and/or jurisdiction to address the growing problems that ultimately plagued its citizens and limited regional progress.<sup>55</sup> As the new decade opened in 1850s and the population growth continued at increased rates, the disorganization, disjunction and inconsistencies created pandemonium, as the said services provided at the center of Philadelphia County were outmoded and inadequate. Most districts, boroughs, and townships were without adequate or consistent services, including basic fire and police protection. Like many industrial cities that grew exponentially in the Victorian era, Philadelphia found itself entering a new world dominated by advent of municipal infrastructure and increased services for a new and enlarged citizenry.

The urban disarray finally led to the Act of Consolidation, also known as the Act of February 2, 1854 (P.L. 21, No. 16), in which the Pennsylvania General Assembly created the consolidated City and County of Philadelphia. By the end of the decade, Philadelphia had experienced its greatest period of growth, reaching just over a 365 percent rise in population—from inhabitants numbering 121,376 in 1850 to 565,529 in 1860.<sup>56</sup> During this time the newly consolidated City of Philadelphia regulated the establishment, installation, and operation of various forms of infrastructure, from its old, broken-down public market system to basic fire and police protection services county-wide. Transportation, including public streets, railroads, street railways, etc., became a major component of the services required in a modernizing city.

Even by the 1850s, Philadelphia's residential built environment was largely defined by the low-rise, row house. The five- and six-story terraced streetscapes common in the residential sections of New York City and across the Atlantic in Europe would not come to Philadelphia with any great force in the nineteenth century. Preserving its tradition of two-, three-, and four-story, largely single-family row houses required a greater land area for the expansion of residential development into the former districts, boroughs, and townships that once comprised Philadelphia County. While many of these new neighborhoods of houses were huddled around factories, the most fashionable and solidly comfortable middle class enclaves required public transportation to conveniently convey working Philadelphians from a residential district to their place of business. The suburbanization of West Philadelphia followed this development pattern with large sections being almost entirely removed from commercial and industrial sections of the city that historically were less defined by neighborhood. Starting in a major way in the 1850s, the residential development

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<sup>55</sup> U.S. Census Population Schedule, 1850.

<sup>56</sup> U.S. Census Population Schedule, 1860.

that would come to define West Philadelphia was an important aspect of the larger development of Philadelphia in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Roger Miller and Joseph Siry, “The Emerging Suburb: West Philadelphia, 1850–1880,” *Pennsylvania History* 47 (1980): 99–146; and “A Plan of the Village of Hamilton,” 1804, Of 607 1804, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

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