

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

**17 JUNE 2020, 9:30 A.M.
REMOTE MEETING ON WEBEX
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.	X		
Bruce Laverty	X		
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.	X		
Douglas Mooney	X		

* Owing to public health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 virus, all Committee members, staff, and public attendees participated in the meeting remotely via Cisco Webex video and audio conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

- Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner I
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons attended the online meeting:

- Bob Malin
- Jay Farrell
- Matt Taylor
- Susan Wetherill
- Michael Stepnowski
- Kevin Boyle
- Nancy Pontone
- Steve Spross
- Raquel Guzman
- J.M. Duffin
- Paul Steinke
- Robert Schwarz
- Tim Shaaban

Ted Rauch
Kimberly La Porte
Regina Stepnowski
Ryan Furlong
Oscar Beisert
Ben Leech
Patrick Grossi
Nick Foreman
Mary Spross
Ryan Boland
Gabriel Barbaro
Amy Lambert
Marlene Schleifer
Steven Peitzman
Celeste Morello
Christopher Strom
David Traub

DRAFT

CONTINUANCE REQUESTS

ADDRESS: 3101 AND 3143 W PASSYUNK AVE

Name of Resource: Point Breeze Gas Works

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 3101: City of Philadelphia Gas Works; 3143: Philadelphia Energy Solutions

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3101 W. Passyunk Avenue and a portion of the property at 3143 W. Passyunk Avenue and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the sixteen identified buildings, sites, and structures, historically known as the Point Breeze Gas Works, satisfy Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J, although some Criteria are not applied to all resources. The site is inaccessible to the general public, so aerial imagery was utilized in the nomination to determine what remains of the complex. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the Point Breeze Gas Works has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development of the City, expanding its complex as the population of the City, and therefore the demand for gas, grew. Under Criteria C and D, the nomination argues that the majority of the identified resources collectively represent a public works that was executed in the Gothic Revival style between 1851 and 1859 with additions through 1899, with several later resources being designed in the Jacobean Revival style. Under Criterion E, the nomination contends that the earliest buildings of the Point Breeze Gas Works were built under the leadership of designer and engineer John Chapman Cresson. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Point Breeze Gas Works exemplifies the economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, as one of the largest employers for Philadelphians in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission continue and remand the nomination to allow time for the staff to visit and survey the site, which is publicly inaccessible, and report on its findings to the Committee on Historic Designation.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 00:06:40

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Philadelphia Gas Works representative Raquel Guzman and attorney Christopher Strom represented the owner of 3101 W. Passyunk. Attorney Kevin Boyle represented Hilco Redevelopment Partners, the entity assuming interest in Philadelphia Energy Solutions, the current owner of 3143 W. Passyunk Avenue. Mr. Boyle stated that Hilco just learned of the nomination.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nomination and did not oppose the continuance request.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman asked if there is a requested meeting date for the continuance.
 - Mr. Farnham responded that one of the continuance requests did not specify a date. The other continuance request requested a 30 day continuance, but Mr. Farnham informed that owner that the Committee on Historic Designation does not meet in July, and so the next available Committee meeting is in

August. He stated that there seemed to be an agreement that a continuance to the August Committee on Historic Designation meeting and the September Historical Commission meeting is acceptable.

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.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the review of the nomination of 3101 W. Passyunk Avenue and 3143 W. Passyunk Avenue and remand it to the August 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

ITEM: 3101 and 3143 W Passyunk Ave					
MOTION: Continue and remand to August 2020 CHD meeting					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Mooney					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 1810 CHESTNUT ST

Name of Resource: Samuel T. Freeman & Co. Auction House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Astoban Investments LLC

Nominator: Philadelphia Historical Commission staff

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1810 Chestnut Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criterion for Designation D. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that architectural firm Tilden & Register designed the Samuel T. Freeman & Co. Auction House in 1923-24 in Renaissance Revival style; the building's style offered a sense of distinction and grandeur to a company with a legacy of auctioning the exclusive collections of Philadelphia's elite.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1810 Chestnut Street satisfies Criterion for Designation D.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 00:14:55

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Tim Shabaan represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Shaaban if he would like to comment on the nomination.
 - Mr. Shaaban responded that he recently acquired the property and is not opposed to the nomination.
- Ms. Milroy stated that the nomination does a wonderful job narrating the Samuel T. Freeman & Co. history and questioned whether Criterion J should be included.
 - Mr. Laverty agreed that Criterion J should be included.
- Ms. Cooperman questioned whether Criterion E is appropriate, stating that she has a particular fondness for Tilden & Register and the various iterations of the firm, though she added that it may not qualify.
 - Mr. Cohen contended that the firm is significant enough to warrant inclusion. He asked for clarification on why Criterion J should be included.
 - Ms. Milroy answered that Freeman's is the oldest operating auction house in the country, and given the significance of the auction company, particularly in the nineteenth century, is part of the commercial or business community.
 - Mr. Laverty added that it applies to both the business and art communities in terms of the purchasing of art and historic furniture. By his estimation, he continued, Freeman's is the second oldest continuously operating business in Philadelphia, the oldest being Philadelphia Contributionship. Begun in 1805, he added, the auction company is now in its third century, and the building itself is nearly 100 years old. He argued that in terms of service to the community, Freeman's is an important part of the story.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed.
 - Ms. Milroy stated that she would support the inclusion of Criterion E.
 - Ms. Barucco commented that she supported the addition of Criterion E but argued against including Criterion J, noting that the nomination did not adequately satisfy that criterion.

- Ms. Barucco asked that the Committee consider the period of significance, noting that it is listed as 1923-24 to present. She stated that under Criteria D and E, the period of significance should be 1923-24, though if Criterion J is added, they will need to consider an appropriate end date.
 - Mr. Cohen asked whether the Committee members found enough support in the nomination for Criterion J, or whether the nomination needs additional information to address the criterion.
 - Ms. Barucco answered that she recognizes the significance of the auction company, but contended that the nomination did not satisfy the criterion.
- Mr. Cohen stated that since the nomination focuses so heavily on the architectural style of a particular era, that style could be better refined. He stated that the style is more specifically English Palladianism, not just Italian Renaissance Revival. He then argued that the building design is almost a straight derivation of buildings on Covent Gardens, particularly the arcade.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that the nomination discusses the history of the auction house and contended that there is a basis for an argument for Criterion J.
- The Committee discussed the design of the building as a means of advertising to the community and adopting certain conventions to present an image of financial stability and security. As a warehouse, the Committee concluded, a specific design vocabulary was used, which underscores the Samuel T. Freeman & Co.'s commitment to promoting their image on the city's primary retail street.
- The Committee discussed the period of significance, noting that the period would need to start with the building's construction in 1923-24, and questioned when that period should end.
 - Ms. Keller recommended ending the period of significance in 2020, when Samuel T. Freeman & Co. sold the property.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Architecture firm Tilden & Register designed the building in the Renaissance Revival style in 1923 for Samuel T. Freeman & Co, which owned the building and operated as an auction house until 2020.
- The nomination lists the period of significance from 1923/24 to present.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The period of significance should extend from the date of the building's construction in 1923 to when Samuel T. Freeman & Co. sold the building and it ceased operating as an auction house.
- Though it functioned as a warehouse, the building was designed with great architectural detail in the Renaissance Revival style, satisfying Criterion D.
- Significant Philadelphia architecture firm Tilden & Register designed the building in 1923, satisfying Criterion E.
- Samuel T. Freeman & Co.'s history is significant to the economic and social history of Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1810

Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, and J, and that the period of significance should be revised to extend from 1923 to 2020.

ITEM: 1810 Chestnut St					
MOTION: Designate, D, E, and J; period of significance 1923 to 2020					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Milroy					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 4649 UMBRIA ST

Name of Resource: Levering Smick Arbuckle House
 Proposed Action: Designation
 Property Owner: Umbria Commons LLC
 Nominator: Ridge Park Civic Association
 Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 4649 Umbria Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation J. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the building and the original land associated with it preceded the neighborhood’s development, and that several prominent owners over the course of a century contributed significantly to the neighborhood’s growth and its current appearance.

This property is slated for redevelopment. The property owner plans to demolish the building and construct a multi-family residential building. The property owner began seeking permits for the project prior to the submission of the nomination or issuance of the notice to the property owner announced the consideration of the nomination. However, the timeline of permit applications is unclear at this time, but will be clarified before the July meeting of the Historical Commission.

Section 14-1005(6)(f) of the preservation ordinance governs the Historical Commission’s jurisdiction during the consideration of a designation. The provision prohibits the Department of Licenses & Inspections from issuing any building permit for any property being considered for designation “where the building permit application is filed on or after the date that notices of proposed designation have been mailed” unless the Historical Commission approves the building permit application or fails to complete its designation process within 90 days. The notices were mailed on 15 May 2020.

The question in this case is whether a building permit application vesting rights in the project was “filed” with the Department of Licenses & Inspections prior to 15 May 2020. If it was, then

the Department may issue the permit without the Historical Commission's review and the project may proceed regardless of any designation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4649 Umbria Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J, but it also recommends that the Historical Commission defer designating the property if it determines that a permit application for the new construction was filed prior to the issuance of the notice letters.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 00:28:40

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Ryan Boland represented the property owner.
- Mary Schleifer and Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman stated that it is beyond the Committee's purview to make any determinations related to the filing of permits. She asked that the Committee proceed with its review of the merits of the nomination, noting that the outstanding questions will be answered prior to the Historical Commission meeting.
- Mr. Boland stated that he has no comment on the merits of the nomination and is attending the meeting as an observer.
- Mr. Beisert commented that there is evidence that the building may have been present on the site since the eighteenth century, adding that he is positive the building was constructed by descendants of the Levering family. He noted that the history includes occupancy by George W. Smick prior to the development of the Mount Vernon neighborhood and the building represents the initial subdivision of what is now a dense, urban neighborhood. He then remarked that the house was subsequently purchased by a significant mill owner, the Arbuckles, during a significant chapter in Manayunk's history.
- Ms. Schleifer, president of the Ridge Park Civic Association, stated that she is hoping to extend beyond the Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic District to nominate buildings, such as 4649 Umbria Street, which are significant to the neighborhood's history. She asked the Historical Commission to designate the property because of its connection to the mill owners and farmland that preceded the neighborhood's development, as well as its significance to Roxborough-Manayunk.
- Mr. Farnham stated that the staff received numerous letters of support for the nomination and noted that those letters had been provided to the Committee and are available on the Historical Commission's website.
- Mr. Cohen contended that the property is key to the area, is intact, and is significant to the development of the neighborhood. He further commented that the property creates ties between key themes, such as farmland and mills to development and the Levering family. He added that the property's history is well-documented in the nomination.
 - Ms. Barucco agreed, adding that the nomination clearly presents the area's history and remarked that the building is significant to the community.
- Mr. Mooney asked the Committee to consider Criterion I for archaeological potential, since the property holds one of the oldest continually occupied buildings in Manayunk. He explained that the potential for artifact deposits and features associated with these prominent families and the neighborhood's history is high,

adding that the property is situated in a part of Manayunk that is not well documented.

- Ms. Milroy and Mr. Lavery concurred with the other Committee members.
- Ms. Cooperman also agreed, stating that estate houses, known as the park houses along the Schuylkill, existed upstream as well, and arguing that this property contributes to that designation. She argued that there are many layers of significance, including the property’s association to the development of Manayunk.
- Mr. Farnham asked the Committee to give Mr. Boland the opportunity to comment on the potential addition of Criterion I.
 - Mr. Boland stated that he has no further comments, adding that he will contact Mr. Reuter to try to resolve some procedural issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Neighbor Mary Spross supported the nomination, claiming that the property at 4649 Umbria Street served as a model for the nineteenth-century houses that were constructed around it. She noted that the building was used as a speakeasy during prohibition.
- Near neighbor Bob Malin supported the nomination, asking the Committee to recommend in favor of designation, owing to the building’s long history and association with Levering, Smick, and Arbuckle.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Owing to its history as one of the oldest continually occupied buildings in Manayunk, the property has high potential for artifact deposits, satisfying Criterion I.
- The building and several prominent inhabitants over the course of a century contributed significantly to the neighborhood’s growth and its current appearance, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4649 Umbria Street satisfies Criteria for Designation I and J.

ITEM: 4649 Umbria St					
MOTION: Designate, I and J					
MOVED BY: Milroy					
SECONDED BY: Lavery					
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	6				

ADDRESS: 1700-06 N HOWARD ST

Name of Resource: Gillinder & Sons' Franklin Flint Works Decorating Plant

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Columbia Silk Dyeing Co., Inc.

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1700-06 N. Howard Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former decorating plant of Gillinder & Sons Franklin Flint Glass Works, which occupied the property from 1876 to 1914, is significant under Criterion for Designation J as exemplifying the heritage of the glass industry in Philadelphia and of manufacturing in Kensington. The nomination argues that the decorating plant is the last remaining portion of the larger Gillinder & Sons Franklin Flint Glass Works, which was one of the most significant manufacturers of decorative glass products in the United States, and one of a few surviving examples of the glass manufacturing industry in Philadelphia.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1700-06 N. Howard Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J, but that the arguments may make a better case for Criterion A.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 00:49:05

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner. Ms. DiPasquale noted that the property owner has not contacted the Historical Commission.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Beisert noted that this property was the decorating plant of the Franklin Flint Glass Works, and was opened around the time of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, souvenirs for which were decorated at this plant. At the time of construction, the company was one of the most significant glass manufacturers in Philadelphia.
- Mr. Cohen offered a few corrections on the architectural description, including that the corbelling is just corbelling, not arched corbelling, that "segmental lintels" should be "brick arches," and disagreed with the term "scalloped" to describe the angled corner of the building. He also noted that there was a discussion of "Wheat Village," when he believes Mr. Beisert meant "Wheaton Village," New Jersey.
 - Ms. Barucco added that ornaments described in the nomination as "slivered" should be "silvered."
 - Ms. Cooperman suggested that "beveled" may be a better way to describe the corner, since it is flat.
- Mr. Cohen asked about "Flint" glass.
 - Mr. Mooney responded that flint glass is another term for leaded glass.
 - Ms. Milroy explained that she looked up the term flint glass and found that the term derives from the flint found in the chalk deposits used as a source of silica in England to produce leaded glass.

- Mr. Cohen questioned the light coloration of the brick underneath the windows, and asked whether those are areas that were previously stuccoed.
 - Ms. Cooperman responded that the brick is visible.
 - Ms. Barucco responded that she assumes that there were cracks between the windows and the coloration resulted from exuberant patching.
- Mr. Cohen opined that the property is worthy of designation and is an articulate presence of Kensington's industrial past.
- Mr. Cohen questioned whether the one-story shed roofed section of the property, identified in the nomination as section "3", which fronts on Cecil B. Moore Avenue, is a significant part of the property or whether it should be considered non-contributing.
 - Ms. Cooperman noted that it is identified as dating to 1895-1901.
 - Mr. Cohen noted that it does not appear in the 1896 Hexamer survey.
 - Ms. Milroy noted that the drawing of the property from 1914 makes that portion of the building look larger, but that it is still a one-story, shed-roofed volume.
 - Mr. Cohen opined that the rendering makes it appear as though there is a space between the one-story shed-roofed portion and the perpendicular stable portion of the building in the rendering.
 - Ms. Barucco noted that other portions of the building are also rendered differently, and that perhaps some artistic license was taken in the rendering.
 - Mr. Beisert opined that the one-story portion should be considered an historic feature, but acknowledged that there have been modifications to it, and perhaps could be treated with the greatest degree of flexibility in terms of alterations. He asked how that portion of the building might be treated if the property is redeveloped in the future.
 - Ms. Cooperman explained that the Committee could not design a potential redevelopment scheme for the property. She agreed that there may have been some alterations to the roofline, but that a one-story, shed-roofed volume is present in historic images and maps from the time of Gillinder's occupation of the property.
 - Ms. Barucco noted that the one-story portion of the property falls well within the period of significance identified in the nomination and opined that the evidence presented in the nomination makes a case for it being considered contributing.
 - Ms. DiPasquale noted that Figures 43-45 on page 23 of the nomination show the footprint of the property in 1887, 1895, and 1901, and that by the latter, the one-story portion of the building is shown.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Ms. DiPasquale noted that a letter of support was submitted by the Museum of American Glass in West Virginia.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The former decorating plant of Gillinder & Sons Franklin Flint Glass Works occupied the property from 1876 to 1914.
- Gillinder & Sons was an important glass manufacturing company in Philadelphia and in the Kensington neighborhood.

- The one-story shed-roofed portion of the building appears to have been modified in some ways.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The former decorating plant of Gillinder & Sons Franklin Flint Glass Works represents the history of the glass industry in Philadelphia and of manufacturing in the Kensington neighborhood, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1700-06 N Howard Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J.

ITEM: 1700-06 N Howard St					
MOTION: Designate,					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Lavery					
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	6				

ADDRESS: 1615-31 N DELAWARE AVE

Name of Resource: Bradlee & Co. Empire Chain Works

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: LMM Associates

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1615-31 N. Delaware Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the remaining portion of the Bradlee & Co.'s Empire Chain Works, constructed between 1905 and 1910, is significant under Criteria for Designation C and J. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the property is a "rare surviving industrial building at the Delaware River waterfront...that was associated with the maritime railroad and shipbuilding industries." Under Criterion C, the nomination contends that the one-story shed building is representative of low-slung masonry industrial buildings of pilaster construction that were once commonplace throughout the River Wards and the larger region.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the property at 1615-31 N. Delaware Avenue satisfies any Criteria for Designation.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 01:12:35

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Ted Rausch and Nick Foreman represented the property owner and opposed the nomination.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Rausch explained that the street-fronting walls along Delaware and Susquehanna Avenues are the only old portions of the building, while the remainder of the building is of newer construction, including the roof structure, interior floors, the southwest wall which contains bays of garage doors, and the southeast wall which is concrete block. Addressing condition, he noted that the northeast wall fronting Susquehanna Avenue is in particularly poor condition, has significant settling, is out of plumb, and in a few spots is tied back to the new structure.
 - Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee on Historic Designation does not address condition.
 - Ms. Cooperman asked for the dates of the newer walls.
 - Ms. DiPasquale responded that Figure 18 of the nomination provides a better understanding of the wall that is not visible from the photograph shown in the presentation, but that the building historically was composed of three masonry walls, with the remainder of the building of frame construction. She noted that the building has been truncated.
- In regards to the Criteria cited in the nomination, Mr. Rausch observed that the Empire Chain Works does not appear to have been any more significant than any other industrial operation that operated in the city around the turn of the century.
- Mr. Farnham explained that the staff has recommended against the designation of the property because it feels that there is very little of the historic building remaining. Looking at historic images and renderings of the building, he explained, the historic building had a very different roofline with a clerestory, much of the southeastern portion of the building towards the river has been demolished, and what remains is a fragment of the historic building. The staff's concern is that there is not much left to represent the history that is documented in the nomination. The nomination may tell an interesting story, but the bricks and mortar does not.
- Mr. Beisert opined that the length of the wall along Susquehanna Avenue is striking. He noted that the building was historically used as a chain works, and the long, narrow length of the building in some ways resembles a rope walk, to which the chain works would be somewhat related. He acknowledged that a portion of the building has been demolished and that it was historically open to a yard. However, he opined, so many buildings have been lost along the waterfront, and this is a vestige of that maritime past.
- Ms. Milroy asked whether this building is being nominated as a surviving example of a building type that has largely disappeared. She questioned what changes have been made to the surviving two walls, noting that the photographs from 1955 and present day suggest that the two street-facing walls have not changed much in that time, but that there are no illustrations of what these facades looked like prior to 1950 when the chain works was still in operation.
 - Mr. Beisert responded that he was not able to find any earlier images of the building. He noted that the windows at the corner have been infilled, and that there was a two and a half story building, presumably a house, attached to the eastern wall fronting along Delaware Avenue that was used as an office. The house has been lost.

- Ms. Cooperman noted that the historic atlas images in Figures 17 and 18 provide additional detail on what was happening along the interior of the parcel, which was all open frame structure.
- Ms. Milroy responded that they do not indicate the appearance of the wall along Susquehanna Avenue.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that these types of open-frame structures changed all the time. The lower portion of the building, the forging shed, had some solid walls, but was also largely open.
- Mr. Cohen opined that he values the nomination's description of the pilaster wall/pilaster screen wall construction as an early twentieth century feature.
- Mr. Lavery questioned whether there is any indication as to why this type of decoration would have been applied to what was essentially a structural wall of a three-sided brick shed that was used for manufacturing purposes. He noted that there was a railroad track that went into the site historically, which makes sense, but that it does seem that more effort was put into the Susquehanna Avenue façade than might have been called for. He noted that when he first saw the elevation, he thought perhaps there were openings that had been infilled, but that does not appear to have been the case, based on the 1922 Bromley atlas. He noted that he likes the comparison made in the nomination to other one-story structures, and explained that the Athenaeum has a pencil drawing by Matthias Baldwin of his workshop on Hamilton Street from 1834 which was about a two-block long, one-story brick structure that was similar to this building. He opined that this building is an unusual survivor and an unusual case.
 - Mr. Cohen responded that he is not sure how unusual it is for a building to have had brick pilasters such as these, noting that they are not so much Classicism as structural thickening for the wall where the beams for the roof are.
- Mr. Mooney explained that Criterion I would be applicable to this property as well. He noted that it is difficult from historic maps to track the full extent of impacts from prior development there, but it appears that throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was significant open space or areas occupied by fairly light, frame buildings that have the potential to preserve archaeological resources below. He explained that the area around the mouth of Gunners Run was one of the earliest developed areas of Fishtown, dating back to the 1730s. Directly across Delaware Avenue from this site, AECOM for its I-95 Girard Avenue interchange investigations have documented a series of virtually intact archaeological sites, including eighteenth and nineteenth-century domestic residences and artifacts, as well as a series of Native American archaeological sites. One site that is directly across Delaware Avenue from this property contains an artifact that was carbon dated to 3500 B.C. and sites adjacent could date back to 7000 B.C. The area has extremely high potential for archaeological remains. Any open space preserved in this property could preserve significant archaeological finds.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed that the area has high archaeological potential.
- Mr. Lavery opined that there are arguments for Criteria I and J, but questioned Criterion C, opining that it is difficult to identify the building as being of a particular architectural style.
- Ms. Milroy asked whether the addition of Criterion I requires that the nomination be amended.

- Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee has recommended that a property satisfies Criterion I based on the expertise of the Committee in the past.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Ms. DiPasquale noted that local historian Ken Milano submitted a letter of support for the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The original Bradlee Empire Chain Works building featured three sides of masonry construction with an open southwestern elevation lined with a series of light frame structures.
- The original building has been significantly altered, and the two street-facing walls along Delaware and Susquehanna Avenues are all that remains of the historic building.
- The building reflects the maritime history of the Fishtown neighborhood of Philadelphia.
- The building is not of a particular architectural style.
- Owing to its open nature and the former light construction on the site, much of the property may have remained relatively undisturbed.
- The property is located around the historic Gunners Run, and extensive archaeological investigations have been done in the immediate vicinity as part of the I-95 project and have yielded significant archaeological finds.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The property has the potential to yield artifacts significant in history or prehistory, satisfying Criterion I.
- The property reflects the history of the community, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that 1615-31 N Delaware Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation I and J.

ITEM: 1615-31 N Delaware Ave					
MOTION: Designate, I and J					
MOVED BY: Milroy					
SECONDED BY: Lavery					
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	6				

ADDRESS: 324 N 13TH ST

Name of Resource: City Morgue

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Roman Catholic High School

Nominator: Celeste Morello

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 324 N. 13th Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation A and E. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the former City Morgue has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development of the City, being the City's third morgue by 1928 after the first two proved inadequate, and is associated with the life of a person significant in the past, Joseph W. Spelman, MD, the City's first medical examiner, who began and concluded his work at this City Morgue beginning in 1956 and ending with his passing in 1971. Under Criterion E, the nomination contends that the building was designed by Philip H. Johnson, the architect for Philadelphia's Department of Public Health, whose hospitals and public projects were examples of Progressive Era innovations in the early twentieth century.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 324 N. 13th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and E.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 01:37:20

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- Celeste Morello represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Morello summarized the historic significance of the building.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the nomination was well-researched and well-written, and that the building is very deserving of historic designation. He suggested a minor correction, that it was likely that the prior 1890s morgue was designed by John T. Windrim, the son of James Windrim.
- Mr. Lavery commented that the building comes from a time when the City was not just building utilitarian buildings, but was building highly designed structures that were meant to inspire, even for this kind of use.
- Ms. Milroy asked if the sculptor of the angel relief was known.
 - Ms. Morello responded that she was unable to find information on the relief, but noted that it was on the original blueprints by Johnson.
- Ms. Barucco asked if Criterion D should be included, but then acknowledged that it was not argued for in the nomination.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed that Criterion D might apply, but is not essential and is not included in the nomination.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, supported the nomination.
- Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, supported the nomination.

- Oscar Beisert supported the nomination.
- Ms. Chantry stated that she received an email from a retired Philadelphia homicide detective named Ed Rocks. He indicated that he wanted to comment, but was not in attendance, so she read his email, which stated that a visit to the old morgue was part of his training, and his experiences there have been etched in his mind. He commented that the “angel of death” over the front door always impressed him.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The 1928 purpose-built morgue was the City’s third morgue and was designed by Philip H. Johnson.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The former City Morgue has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development of the City, being the City’s third morgue by 1928 after the first two proved inadequate, and is associated with the life of a person significant in the past, Joseph W. Spelman, MD, the City’s first medical examiner, satisfying Criterion A.
- The building was designed by Philip H. Johnson, the architect for Philadelphia’s Department of Public Health, satisfying Criterion E.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 324 N. 13th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and E.

ITEM: 324 N 13th St					
MOTION: Designate, A and E					
MOVED BY: Lavery					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
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	6				

ADDRESS: 5708 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: Mitchell, Fletcher, & Co., Inc.

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: MMS Acquisitions LLC

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Megan Cross Schmitt, megan.schmitt@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5708 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Under Criterion C, the nomination argues that the “former store building of Mitchell, Fletcher & Co., Inc. reflects the historic built environment of Philadelphia in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries when the

Flemish Revival and other Renaissance-inspired styles were used to disguise older housing stock and make new distinctive buildings in a row to appear as fashionable new buildings.” The nomination contends that despite alterations, the building is a “distinctive vernacular example of a commercial building in the Flemish Revival style, satisfying Criterion D.” The nomination also argues that the celebrated architect Addison Hutton was “well-versed in remodeling older buildings—usually residences, and the subject property is an important example of his commercial work, satisfying Criterion E.” Finally, the nomination suggests that the subject property is “representative of both the commercial and economic heritage of Germantown Avenue...as it evolved from an old German village...to a lush residential suburb and on to a dense residential neighborhood in the consolidated City of Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion J.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5708 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E and J.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 01:59:35

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman and Ms. Milroy observed that the building possessed many unusual layers. Ms. Cooperman added that she appreciated the inclusion of the images that showed what the building looked like before the vinyl siding was installed.
- Ms. Milroy asked her fellow committee members for their thoughts on the nomination’s description of stepped Flemish gables to describe the building. She noted that all of the examples of Flemish gables of which she was aware had this feature at the front of the building, not the side. Ms. Milroy also said that the subject property made her think of buildings with false fronts which were commonly seen out in the “Wild West.”
- Mr. Cohen responded that he agreed with Ms. Milroy, adding that the pediment feature seen on the subject property was a very rare detail. Mr. Cohen said that the reference to Dutch architecture in this time and place was surprising to him, especially considering that when it was seen, it was usually applied to residential rather than commercial buildings.
- Mr. Laverty remarked that his first thought upon seeing this building was to Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown’s publication *The Highway*, noting that the decorative stepped gable faces Vernon Park, which means it would have been visible to anyone traveling south on the trolley down Germantown Avenue. Mr. Laverty also commented that Mitchell & Fletcher seemed like a very fascinating company. He congratulated Mr. Beisert and the Keeping Society for their work on the nomination.
- Mr. Cohen pointed his fellow committee members to Figure 11 of the nomination, remarking that the way the pilasters wrapped around the side of the building was a clear indication that the building was not just another house along Germantown Avenue. He said that the nomination was very well researched and though the building had undergone some unsympathetic alterations, it was still there to tell its story on the street.

- Mr. Lavery noted that the aerial views show how both the property boundary and the building curve uniquely from back to front. Mr. Cohen agreed and added that the later additions even seemed to respect the previous stepped gables.
- Mr. Lavery asked Mr. Beisert how he chose to nominate this particular building.
 - Mr. Beisert responded that he has long been fascinated by early houses that were later transformed for a new use. He added that there are not many houses along Germantown Avenue that have parapets like the subject property. Mr. Beisert remarked that despite its alterations, it has survived, somewhat unexpectedly.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jim Duffin informed the members that he had worked on this nomination and wished to add some information about his research into the Mitchell & Fletcher firm. He shared that the proprietor was a Quaker grocer, which helped to explain the connection to Quaker architect Addison Hutton. Mr. Duffin noted that this was Mitchell & Fletcher's first suburban store outside of Center City, and said that the building where DiBruno Brothers currently has their store close to Rittenhouse Square once housed Mitchell & Fletcher's main store.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The subject property was the home of grocer Mitchell & Fletcher's first store outside of Center City Philadelphia.
- The subject property is a rare example of renowned architect Addison Hutton's commercial work.
- The building's unique features such as the wrapped pediment and stepped Flemish gable along the sides contributed to its rare and delightful architectural significance.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination argues that the building satisfies Criterion C because it exemplifies Philadelphia's built environment in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries when revival-style architecture such as Flemish-revival, were applied to older buildings in an effort to disguise them as fashionable and new.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property is a unique example of the architect's highly unusual interpretation of the Dutch-revival style, satisfying Criterion D.
- The nomination establishes that the building is a rare and unique example of renowned Quaker architect Addison Hutton's commercial work, therefore satisfying Criterion E.
- The nomination satisfies Criterion J by successfully arguing that the property served as grocer Mitchell & Fletcher's first suburban store, exemplifying the evolution of Germantown Avenue's commercial and economic heritage.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5708 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E and J.

ITEM: 5708 Germantown Ave					
MOTION: Designate, C, D, E, and J					
MOVED BY: Lavery					
SECONDED BY: Milroy					
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	6				

ADDRESS: 2528-32 N 4TH ST

Name of Resource: Germania Turn-Verein

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: True Light Pentecostal Church

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Megan Schmitt, megan.schmitt@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2528-32 N. 4th Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the building “possesses significant character, interest and value through its close associations with the Turner movement and, later, the labor movement,” satisfying Criterion A. The nomination also suggests that the building’s “central role in some of Philadelphia’s most important strikes and labor demonstrations, including the mass demonstration following union-member Carl Mackley’s death,” satisfies Criterion B. Regarding Criterion C, the nomination contends that the building is a rare surviving example of the Queen Anne and *rundbogenstil* styles. Finally, the nomination suggests that the building satisfies Criterion J because of “the importance of hosiery manufacturing and the labor movement to the cultural, political, economic, and social history of Kensington...”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2528-32 N. 4th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, C, and J.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 02:19:50

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance and Ben Leach represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Barucco asked if it was possible to provide context photographs in nominations so that the Committee members could better understand how the buildings under review fit into their blocks. She also commented that the use of terms like

- “rundbogenstil” was elitist and suggested that it was the responsibility of the nominator to provide brief definitions of such vocabulary. Others disagreed.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the nomination provided some unexpected stories and that he learned a great deal from it. He disagreed with the use of Queen Anne to describe the style of architecture of the building. Mr. Cohen said that he could identify some German influences in the architectural elements but not English influences.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed with Mr. Cohen’s assessment, adding that the subject property defied a simple label of its architectural style.
 - Ms. Milroy said that she would like to see nominations identify buildings for what they truly are, American buildings designed by American architects.
 - The Committee members agreed that the nomination was very well researched.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David S. Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The subject property was constructed in 1885.
- The nomination was well written and well researched, documenting the building’s fascinating history.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination successfully demonstrates the property’s important association with the Turner and labor movements, satisfying Criterion A.
- The nomination supports the property’s central role in some of Philadelphia’s most important labor demonstrations, satisfying Criterion B.
- Regarding Criterion C, the nomination contends that the building exhibits strong decorative elements influenced by German architecture.
- The nomination demonstrates the property’s association with hosiery manufacturing and the labor movement, both of which are important to the cultural, political, economic, and social history of Kensington.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2528-32 N. 4th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, C, and J.

ITEM: 2528-32 N 4th St
MOTION: Designate, A, B, C, and J
MOVED BY: Cohen
SECONDED BY: Lavery

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	6				

ADDRESS: 231½-253 CHURCH LN

Name of Resource: Wallace Storage & Carpet Company
Proposed Action: Designation
Property Owner: Church Lane Partners LLC
Nominator: Kimberly La Porte
Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 231½-253 Church Lane, located in the Germantown neighborhood of Northwest Philadelphia, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Historically known as the Wallace Storage and Carpet Company, it was constructed between 1927 and 1928. The nomination argues that George S. Kingsley, an architect notable for his warehouses and storage buildings, designed the façade in the fashionable Art Deco style of the period with an interior that embodied the latest engineering for this building type, satisfying Criterion C, D, and E. The nomination contends that the building is a community landmark, with its historic clock tower visible from Germantown Avenue and the adjacent rail line, satisfying Criterion H.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 231½-253 Church Lane, satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and H, but not Criterion E. The nomination presents no evidence that George S. Kingsley “significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation.”

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 02:33:15

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- Kimberly La Porte represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Committee members Ms. Cooperman and Mr. Lavery agreed with the staff recommendation that the architect George Kingsley does not merit inclusion of Criterion E.

- Ms. Cooperman said that she agrees that the building is very much a Germantown landmark and meets Criterion H.
- Ms. Milroy inquired what the other Committee members thought about the period of significance. She pointed out that the nomination proposes a period of significance as 1931-1981 for the time it operated as a storage company. Ms. Milroy contended that if the property is being considered for Criterion H, the period of significance should perhaps go back to the point of construction.
 - Ms. Cooperman and Mr. Lavery agreed.
 - Ms. Barucco said she would be in favor of ending the period of significance in 1981. She noted that she is leery of bringing it to the present day based on her experience with National Register nominations.
- Mr. Cohen asked about the clock.
 - Ms. Barucco pointed out that on page 12, the architect Kingsley is quoted as saying, “Good architecture is good advertising.” She added that that might be the answer right there.
 - Mr. Cohen said that clocks are usually related to railroad stations.
 - Ms. Cooperman replied that this building is eminently visible from the Germantown station.
 - Mr. Lavery said there must have been a water tower on top of this building for protection. He added that in the 1920s, architects are starting to try to hide these. Mr. Lavery suggested that the clock tower was perhaps used to hide the water tower.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The nomination did not make a compelling argument for architect George Kingsley and Criterion E.
- The building is a Germantown landmark and highly visible from the train station.
- The period of significance should be revised to begin with the construction date. The Committee believed this was appropriate due to the inclusion of Criterion H.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The building was designed in the fashionable Art Deco style of the period with an interior that embodied the latest engineering for this building type, satisfying Criterion C and D.
- The building is a community landmark, with its historic clock tower visible from Germantown Avenue and the adjacent rail line, satisfying Criterion H.
- The nomination does not present compelling evidence that George S. Kingsley “significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation,” therefore the property does not satisfy Criterion E.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 231½ 253 Church Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and H but not Criterion E, with a revised period of significance of 1927-1981.

ITEM: 231½-253 Church Lane
MOTION: Designate, C, D, and H; not E
MOVED BY: Barucco
SECONDED BY: Cohen

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	6				

ADDRESS: 5603-05 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: Theodore Butcher Building

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: CH Pennsylvania Under-21 Holdings Inc.

Nominator: Xue Fei Lin c/o Matt Wysong; Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5603-05 Germantown Avenue, located in the Germantown neighborhood of Northwest Philadelphia, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Historically known as the Theodore Butcher Building, it was constructed in 1854 in the Italianate style. The nomination argues that 5603-05 Germantown Avenue embodies characteristics of the Italianate style, a popular revival style that came to dominate post-Civil War development along Germantown Avenue, satisfying Criterion D. In 1908, Chester A. Asher, founder of the Asher’s Chocolate Co., purchased the building and relocated his candy-making business there. The manufacturing plant remained until 1995, marking almost a century of commercial and family history at this location, satisfying Criterion J.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5603-05 Germantown Avenue, satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

START TIME IN WEBEX RECORDING: 02:45:00

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- No one represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman noted that naming the style as Italianate for this building is very appropriate.
- Ms. Milroy inquired about terminology used on page 6, she noted the use of the term “arched hoops” to describe the area above the third-floor windows. She stated that she had never heard that before.
 - Ms. Barucco noted she would have referred to them as “hoods.”
 - Mr. Lavery noted this could be a typo.

- Mr. Cohen stated that he agreed that this building would have stood out stylistically at the time it was built. He inquired if anyone knew the original use of the building.
 - Ms. Barucco said that the nomination doesn't say what it was originally built for. She added that she assumed it was built for a commercial purpose.
- Mr. Cohen said the building is monumental. He noted the proximity to the Germantown Station and that it has a similar vocabulary. Mr. Cohen noted the architect for the station was John Carver and wondered if he was involved with this building. He added that Germantown was taking on a cosmopolitan feel in the 1850s. He expressed curiosity about Theodore Butcher's profession.
 - Ms. Milroy responded that Theodore Butcher was the treasurer of the Germantown Savings Fund for a number of years.
 - Mr. Cooperman noted that the bank was located nearby.
 - Ms. Barucco wondered if it could have been built as a residence.
 - Mr. Cohen responded that it would have been an extraordinary monumental residence. He pointed that it would have had a setback prior to the construction of the front commercial space.
- Mr. Cohen stated that the building is striking and a local landmark by virtue of its form.
- The Committee members agreed that some of the nomination's comparative examples used in the discussion of architectural style are not Italianate as claimed.
- Mr. Cohen said that the nomination was well narrated and chose the appropriate Criteria for Designation, D and J.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, supported the nomination.
- Jim Duffin supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property is a local visual landmark and its Italianate style would have been striking after its initial construction along Germantown Avenue in the 1850s.
- The building's original architect and use remain unknown.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The property embodies characteristics of the Italianate style, a popular revival style that came to dominate post-Civil War development along Germantown Avenue, satisfying Criterion D.
- The property represents almost a century of commercial and family history in Germantown as the manufacturing plant of Asher's Chocolate Company's, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5603-05 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

ITEM: 5603-05 Germantown Ave					
MOTION: Designate, D and J					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Committee on Historic Designation are presented in action format. Additional information is available in the video recording for this meeting. The start time for each agenda item in the recording is noted.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

§14-1004. Designation.

(1) Criteria for Designation.

A building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object, or district may be designated for preservation if it:

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