

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

**21 OCTOBER 2020, 9:30 A.M.
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:32 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 Lavery	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 Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
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:

John Bang
Gussie O'Neill, Klehr Harrison
Nathan Farris, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Randy Baron
Ben Leech
Michael Tarsia
Aaron Cohen
Chris Strom, Eckert Seamans
Michelle Shuman
Ronn Ash
Nancy Pontone
David Traub

Harrison Haas, Esq., Cozen O'Connor
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance
Keith Cramer
David Ivory
Ilana Dean
Jason Ford
Kristi Ford
Venise Whitaker
Oscar Beisert
Jacob Cooper
John Vettese
J. M. Duffin
Scott Scuderi
Max Ochester
Nicholas Baker, Streets Department
Theo Aronson
Dana Fedeli
Susan Wetherill
Jon Makar
Neil Sklaroff, Esq., Dilworth Paxon
Greg Bond, Newmark
Aaron Levinson
Yue Wu, Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation
Jake Paine
Dirk Devlin
Perry Garvin
Josh Silver
Jack McCarthy
Steven Peitzman
Stephen Klay
Arthur Stoppe
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Vickie Feldman
Thaddeus Squire
Jeffrey Ogren, Bochetto & Lentz
Justin Detwiler
Elizabeth Stegner, University City Historical Society

CONTINUANCE REQUESTS

ADDRESS: 1826 CHESTNUT ST

Name of Resource: Aldine Theatre

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sam's Place Realty Associates LP

Nominator: Kevin Block, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1826 Chestnut Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Aldine Theatre, constructed in 1921, is significant under Criteria for Designation A, E,

and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the theatre has significant character, interest, or value as one of the last remaining first-run movie palaces in Philadelphia. Under Criterion E, the nomination explains that the Aldine was the work of prominent local builders William Steele & Sons. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Aldine represents the commercial development of Chestnut Street in the prestigious Rittenhouse Square neighborhood after the turn of the twentieth century.

Following the submission of the nomination and notification to the property owner, the nominator uncovered additional information not presented in the nomination, which is posted on the Historical Commission's website as additional information.

The Committee on Historic Designation previously reviewed a nomination for the property in March 1986 and recommended against designation owing to the loss of architectural integrity of the interior and the front doors. The Historical Commission adopted the recommendation of the Committee at its April 1986 meeting and declined to designate the property. The staff notes that the interior of the property is not under consideration, and that the Historical Commission routinely designates properties that have alterations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1826 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, E, and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:05:00

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Harrison Haas, representing the property owner, was in attendance, but did not speak.
- Paul Steinke and Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, representing the nomination, were in attendance and did not oppose the continuance request.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: See below.

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 at notice; PESRM currently

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 ZOOM RECORDING: 00:07:20

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Christopher Strom represented PGW, the operator at 3101 W. Passyunk Avenue. Attorney Neil Sklaroff represented PESRM, the new owner of 3143 W. Passyunk Avenue.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nomination and opposed the continuance request.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Beisert asked why the nomination is being continued again. He criticized the agenda and continuances.
- Mr. Strom stated that additional time is needed to complete research and secure experts, owing to the scope of the nomination and the size of the property. He stated that their analysis of the nomination will not be complete before February 2021. He stated that they will do everything possible to make sure that everything is ready to go at the February meeting date.
- Mr. Sklaroff stated that his client acquired the property recently, and did not receive notice at the time it was sent. In these unusual times, he believes that continuing the

review until February 2021 will allow time to make a proper presentation in response to the nomination. A guarantee would not be appropriate in these times, he stated, as we do not know what will happen between the presidential election and February 2021.

- Ms. Cooperman stated that all the Committee can ask is that both representatives make all possible efforts to be ready for the February 2021 meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: See below.

ADDRESS: 3701-15 CHESTNUT ST

Name of Resource: International House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: International House

Nominator: University City Historical Society & Docomomo US/Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3701-15 Chestnut Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J. The nomination argues that the property satisfies Criterion A for its association with the International House organization, the oldest institution of its kind in the United States to support international students. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the building is a significant example of Brutalist architecture. Under Criterion E, the nomination argues that the architecture firm of Bower & Fradley influenced the architectural development of Philadelphia, contributing designs to the city from the 1960s to the present day. Under Criterion H, the nomination contends that the International House building occupies a unique location in the heart of University City and, together with Criterion J, stands as one of the first high-rises in the neighborhood that was constructed as part of the West Philadelphia Corporation and Redevelopment Authority's efforts for urban renewal.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3701-15 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J, but not E and H. The influence of Bower & Fradley is limited. For a very large building, it has a limited impact on the streetscape. Owing to its setback and mid-block location, it cannot be considered an established and familiar visual feature like City Hall or the Art Museum.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:14:24

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.

- Elizabeth Stegner of the University City Historical Society represented the nomination and did not oppose the continuance request. Provided the nomination is reviewed at the December 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: See below.

ADDRESS: 222-48 N BROAD ST

Name of Resource: Hahnemann Hospital

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Broad Street Healthcare Properties LLC

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW:

This nomination proposes to designate a portion of the property known as 222-48 N. Broad Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination is limited to the boundaries of the Neo-Gothic building constructed in 1928 for Hahnemann Medical College & Hospital. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, F, and J. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that the building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Neo-Gothic style, including the main Gothic arch entrance, buttresses, and tracery, as applied to skyscrapers in the 1920s. Under Criteria A and J, the nomination contends that subject building important in exhibiting the heritage of Hahnemann Medical College & Hospital, which opened in 1848 and became a major source of general medicine and surgical care for numerous Philadelphians, particularly the poor and working class people of North Philadelphia, which represents a shift in the cultural, economic, and social mores of the period, when the lower classes would first gain access to healthcare in a modern medical facility. Under Criterion F, the nomination argues that the 1928 Hahnemann Hospital represents both innovation in the design of medical colleges and hospitals in the first and second quarters of the twentieth century and the broader development of modern hospitals in the Philadelphia region, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the larger nation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the 1928 Hahnemann Hospital building, a portion of 222-48 N. Broad Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, F, and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:16:24

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Jeffrey Ogren represented the property owner.
- Steven Peitzman represented the nominator.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Ogren explained that his firm has just been retained by the property owner and would like additional time to evaluate the nomination. He noted that they are requesting a continuance to the December 2020 Committee on Historic Designation meeting and hope to be ready to proceed by then. He stated that this is their first request for a continuance.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that the Committee on Historic Designation appreciates assurances that nominations will be reviewed in a timely manner.
- Mr. Peitzman initially opposed the continuance request, noting that notice of the nomination was sent a month ago. He opined that it is disruptive to the review process and requires the Committee members to re-review nominations. He noted that he understands that the owner and their representatives may not be familiar with the Historical Commission process. He noted that the nominated building is of great historical importance to the city, and opined that the review should proceed because it would be helpful to know whether the Committee agrees that the property merits designation. He opined that the best place to put forth arguments in opposition to the designation are before the Historical Commission.
- Mr. Reuter explained that the property owner is an LLC based out of Los Angeles County, California, and notification most likely went to an address that has not been open during the pandemic. He noted that he did not have confidence that notification was received in a timely manner, and took it upon himself to reach out to an attorney he knew had previously represented one of the principals of the LLC, and that attorney was unable to respond since he had not been retained by the ownership. Mr. Reuter stressed that the continuance should be granted.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that it is conventional to accept an initial request for a continuance.
- Mr. Peitzman withdrew his opposition to the continuance.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- This is the first request for a continuance, and it is conventional to accept an initial request for a continuance.
- The property will remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the period of the continuance.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: See below.

ADDRESS: 1615 WALNUT ST

Name of Resource: The Clarke & Sarah Merchant House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Honey Nuts LLC

Nominator: Center City Residents' Association

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1615 Walnut Street, located in Center City, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Historically known as the Clarke and Sarah Merchant House, it was constructed in 1832 with substantial alterations completed in 1892 and 1911.

Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the building is associated with the life of Clarke Merchant, whose career as a manufacturer and merchant of metal and tin-plate architectural and building materials made a significant impact on the built environment of Philadelphia and beyond. The nomination further contends that the building qualifies under Criterion E, owing to the alterations and addition completed in 1892 by prominent Philadelphia architect Addison Hutton. Finally, the nomination asserts that the building is significant under Criterion J because it is a rare surviving urban mansion on a principal street that was once home to expensive residences but is now lined with purpose-built commercial structures. The period of significance begins in 1892, when the Merchant family purchased the property and engaged architect Addison Hutton, and ends in 1931, when the building was sold out of the Merchant family.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1615 Walnut Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, E, and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:25:15

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Nathan Farris represented the property owner.
- No one represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- This is the first request for a continuance, and it is conventional to accept an initial request for a continuance.
- The property will remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the period of the continuance.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the review of the nomination of 1826 Chestnut Street and remand it to the December 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation; continue the review of the nomination of 3101 W. Passyunk Avenue and 3143 W. Passyunk Avenue and remand it to the February 2021 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation; continue the review of the nomination of 3701-15 Chestnut Street and remand it to the December 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation; continue the review of the nomination of 222-48 N. Broad St and remand it to the December 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation; and continue the review of the nomination of 1615 Walnut St and remand it to the January 2021 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

ITEM: Continuance requests					
MOTION: Continue and remand to later CHD meetings					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
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				

NOMINATION REVIEWS

ADDRESS: 210-12 N 12TH ST

Name of Resource: Sigma Sound Studios

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 210 N 12th St Investment, 212 N 12th St Investment

Nominator: Benjamin Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 210-12 N. 12th Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Sigma Sound Studios satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the property has significant character, interest, and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, and Nation, as the home to Sigma Sound Studios, one of the most influential recording studios in America in the late twentieth century, and the birthplace of “The Sound of Philadelphia” or “Philly Soul,” a popular musical genre that fused soul, gospel, rhythm and blues, jazz, funk, and classical music. Additionally under Criterion A, the property is significant for its association with persons significant in the past, including both local and international music producers and recording artists. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the property exemplifies the cultural, economic, social and historical heritage of the community, standing as a remnant of the neighborhood’s once-abundant stock of film exchanges, record labels, and other entertainment industry service buildings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 210-12 N. 12th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:27:15

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- Patrick Grossi represented the nomination and briefly discussed the significance of Sigma Sound Studios.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Chantry stated that attorney Nino Tinari is representing the property owner, and had indicated that he would attend the meeting. However, Mr. Tinari did not appear in the list of attendees.
 - Ms. Cooperman continued to check the attendees list for Mr. Tinari throughout the discussion, and commented that he is welcome to participate in the review of the matter when it is reviewed by the Historical Commission.
 - Mr. Farnham asked if anyone else was in attendance as a representative of the property owner. No hands were raised in Zoom.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the nomination was well-researched and well-written, and the building is a worthy candidate for historic designation.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that she did not need convincing as to significance of Sigma Sound Studios, but appreciated all information about the density of similar sound and film studios in this area of the city.
- Mr. Mooney stated that he enjoyed reading nomination and noted that he was fortunate enough to sit in on a recording session in this studio in late 1980s.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Max Ochester supported the nomination and discussed the historic significance of Sigma Sound Studios.
- Michael Tarsia supported the nomination and discussed the historic significance of Sigma Sound Studios and Reco Art Studios.
- Dana Fedeli supported the nomination.
- Oscar Beisert supported the nomination.
- Jake Paine commented that he supports the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- It had recommended granting Mr. Tinari's request at its 19 August 2020 meeting to continue the review of the nomination to this meeting.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The property has significant character, interest, and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, and Nation, as the home to Sigma Sound Studios, one of the most influential recording studios in America in the late twentieth century; the property is significant for its association with persons significant in the past, including both local and international music producers and recording artists, satisfying Criterion A.
- The property exemplifies the cultural, economic, social and historical heritage of the community, standing as a remnant of the neighborhood's once-abundant stock of film exchanges, record labels, and other entertainment industry service buildings, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 210-12 N. 12th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

ITEM: 210-12 N 12th St MOTION: Designate, A and J MOVED BY: Mooney 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: 5848 CITY AVE

Name of Resource: The Chestnuts

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sisters of the Visitation of Philadelphia

Nominator: Overbrook Farms Club and Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5848 City Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building and its landscape satisfy Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J. Under Criteria A and J, the nomination argues that the property is representative of the development of country estates in Philadelphia. It further elaborates under Criterion A on the significance of several former residents, including David Scull, Jr., a Quaker merchant and philanthropist, and Charles P. Vaughan, an industrialist and philanthropist. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the property's landscape represents the Picturesque style of landscape architecture and gardening. Under Criterion E, the nomination argues that Eugène Achilles Baumann, the individual responsible for the property's significant landscape design, stood as an important Alsatian-American botanist, landscape gardener, and nurseryman. The nomination further argues under Criterion E that the property's original buildings are significant as works of prominent architect Addison Hutton and that Cherry Cottage and later alterations to the original buildings are significant as works of prominent architect William Lightfoot Price.

The historic preservation ordinance authorizes the Historical Commission to protect sites through the review of building permit applications. If the site is designated, the Historical Commission would enjoy regulatory authority over large-scale alterations to the grounds, but it would not regulate the planting, trimming, or removal of individual bushes and trees or other small-scale lawn and arboreal maintenance work.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5848 City Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:45:00

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.

- The Sisters of the Visitation of Philadelphia represented the property owner and submitted their opposition to designation in writing prior to the meeting.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Milroy commended Mr. Beisert on the extent of his research and the completeness of the nomination, adding that it is rare to find a landscape plan such as the one Mr. Beisert located of Eugène Baumann's design for the property. Ms. Milroy questioned why Mr. Beisert ended the period of significance in 1940, noting that the nomination includes substantial discussion on the Quakers who settled in Overbrook Farms. She argued that there is also an arrival of important Catholic institutions in the area at the same time, specifically St. Charles Borromeo and St. Joseph's University. She elaborated that the Sisters of the Visitation were able to acquire the property at 5848 City Avenue thanks to Cardinal Dougherty, whose residence was next door. She added that the property is an important site related to the Catholic Church and Catholic institutions in suburban Philadelphia. She argued that the period of significance should be extended to include the later Catholic history, which would then include the outbuildings and chapel, as they reflect the order's Mexican heritage.
- Mr. Cohen agreed with Ms. Milroy, adding that the nomination is a remarkable piece of research. He questioned whether he has read a nomination focused so heavily on the landscape, commenting that it raises questions related to the preservation of a landscape more than one hundred years old. He remarked that the footprint of the house in Baumann's plan is quite different than the house as it was built. He then asked that the nomination be proofread to eliminate numerous errors.
- Ms. Milroy stated that the nomination makes no mention of Baumann's involvement with the estate beyond the plan, which she called quite schematic and stylized. She then noted that the staff's comments on the implication of the designation regarding the plantings are important, because the nomination should not contend that the property's plantings are intact. Most significantly, she continued, there are no chestnut trees. She stated that the nomination should make very clear that the bones of the plan may remain in terms of pathways and perimeters, adding that the property is a candidate for an archaeological survey; however, she remarked that one cannot assume that any of the current plantings date from the time of the plan, because there was no tree inventory provided, and none of the trees or plantings are dated. She commented that there is a level of specificity that is lacking, but she contended that it does not detract from the nomination's argument, considering so much of the pathways and perimeter survive from the plan.
- Ms. Cooperman agreed with Ms. Milroy that the character of the design from the Baumann plan survives. She noted the rarity of finding a landscape plan such as Baumann's in this country and called it a remarkable document. She clarified that the plan functions as a design scheme and should not be interpreted as a planting plan for a landscape. The plan, she continued, shows the patterns of open space, the patterns of plantings, and the layout of pathways, all of which remain legible in comparison to the plan as it was published.
- Mr. Laverty stated that he was concerned the nomination would focus solely on the landscape and was relieved to see that the significant structures on the property were placed into the larger context. He added that while the Historical Commission does not regulate flora, that aspect of the property is an essential part of the story of a rural suburban development where the owners were consciously seeking out

professionals from Alsace to offer them the best of the Picturesque. He commented that it is significant for such a site to survive into the twenty-first century. He then agreed with Ms. Milroy's statements regarding the importance of the Catholic period and commended the Sisters of the Visitation for preserving the site and landscape in such a densely populated area for eighty years.

- Ms. Cooperman clarified that while the Historical Commission cannot designate individual trees, it can designate sites. She contended that this property qualifies as a site.
- Ms. Milroy added that her comments were related to the precision of the language in the nomination. She explained that some statements implied that some trees are heritage trees, though there is no documentation to support those claims. She further explained that the Baumann plan shows design but does not prescribe the plantings and should not be interpreted as doing so.
- Ms. Barucco agreed and also clarified that the nomination contends that the landscape remains intact, though she distinguished that the site remains intact.
- Ms. Milroy noted an error in the nomination in which it states that designed Picturesque pleasure grounds rarely survive outside Fairmount Park. She clarified that the majority of Fairmount Park is not designed according to a plan, with the exception of the area around Lemon Hill. She elaborated that Fairmount Park is not a designed park and should not be regarded as such.
- Mr. Cohen argued that such sophisticated landscape designs do not follow Quaker behavior. He suggested that the nomination describe the designed landscape as working with nature rather than purposefully showing off to neighbors.
- Ms. Cooperman asked the Committee to reach a consensus on the period of significance.
 - Ms. Barucco questioned whether the nomination supports a period of significance that extends well into the twentieth century.
 - Ms. Milroy responded that it does not but that she contends that the period of significance should be extended to include the important presence of Catholic institutions in the immediate area, though the nomination focuses its discussion on the Quaker influence. She noted that Cardinal Dougherty purposely moved into the house next door in the 1920s, while St. Charles Borromeo was constructed nearby much earlier, in the 1860s. She stated that the nomination discusses the Quakers at great length; otherwise, the Committee could more easily recommend an extended period of significance, had the nomination provided a more general history.
 - Ms. Cooperman asked the Committee to focus on determining which buildings constructed by the Sisters contribute to the site.
 - Ms. Milroy answered that the chapel is significant. She commented that there is a Mexican chapel in nearby Overbrook that was designed to communicate that many of the nuns came from Mexico.
 - Mr. Cohen agreed that including the chapel would enrich the site's history, adding that the Committee would need to determine whether there is an even later structure that should be included in the period of significance. He then suggested that the period of significance tentatively end at 1960 to allow for the inclusion of the chapel.
 - Other Committee members agreed, given the information they have been provided.
- Mr. Beisert thanked the Committee for their kind comments and constructive criticism, noting that he has not written many nominations focused primarily on

landscape. He agreed with Ms. Cooperman's earlier comments that the bones of the design scheme remain. He stated he reviewed the Cultural Landscape Foundation and National Park Service requirements regarding the survival of plantings and heritage trees and noted that there is acknowledgement that over time plantings die or are replaced and schemes change, but that it would not preclude a later restoration of the garden. He suggested that the landscape plan be used to mitigate any potential future development at the site. He further acknowledged that regulation would not be a plant-by-plant review but that the staff would review any large-scale changes proposed to the site.

- Ms. Cooperman asked whether the Committee should recommend including the dormitory, which has a later construction date than the chapel. She suggested that the period of significance end with the chapel's construction date.
 - Ms. Milroy argued that, as a cloistered order, the dormitory building is very important and speaks to the function of the building. She added that in reading the history of the order, it began as a teaching order but that Cardinal Dougherty announced that they would be a contemplative order upon arrival in Philadelphia. She agreed that the nomination could be updated and revised at a later date. She questioned if that revision could involve changing the period of significance.
 - Mr. Farnham affirmed Ms. Milroy's statement that a nomination could be amended and period of significance revised in the future.
 - Ms. Barucco asked whether certain buildings constructed by the Sisters would be listed as contributing, such as the chapel and dormitory, since the nomination currently lists them as non-contributing.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed that the buildings would need to be identified as contributing. She named them as the chapel (#1e), dormitory (#1f), and ancillary building (#6).
 - Ms. Milroy explained that the ancillary building has a construction date of c. 1940-60, so by extending the period of significance to 1965 to include the dormitory, the ancillary building would fall within that date range.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jim Duffin commented that with nominations of this type, there are many avenues that could be followed, and the scope needs to be narrowed to accommodate the nominator's time and resources available to devote to the nomination. He agreed with the Committee's comments on the site's later Catholic history. He stated that he and Mr. Beisert chose to focus on the earlier Quaker history because of time and resources, though he contended that at some point in the future, someone could amend the nomination to include more information on the Catholic institutional history.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The site was historically owned by prominent Quaker families, and in the twentieth century it became home to the Sisters of the Visitation of Philadelphia, who came to the area from Mexico.
- The nomination's period of significance extends from 1865 to 1940 and does not include the period of ownership under the Sisters of the Visitation.
- The nomination features a rare original landscape plan to show the intent of the design, which was created by landscape gardener Eugène Achilles Baumann. The general design of the landscape remains intact.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- While the Quaker context and history of the property is significant and well argued in the nomination, the site's later history that includes the occupancy by the Sisters of the Visitation is equally significant and should be represented in the designation. The history of the site's ownership and its relationship to the surrounding context satisfies Criteria A and J.
- The site represents a designed Picturesque landscape that is rare in Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion D.
- Though schematic, the original landscape plan shows the general location of pathways, open space, and groupings of plantings. While it does not provide a plant inventory, it is significant in showing design intent and was created by significant landscape gardener Eugène Achilles Baumann. The nomination satisfies Criterion E.
- The property's original buildings were designed by prominent architect Addison Hutton, and later buildings, such as Cherry Cottage, and alterations were designed by William Lightfoot Price. The nomination further satisfies Criterion E.
- The period of significance should be extended to 1965 to include the structures erected by the Sisters of the Visitation of Philadelphia, including the chapel, dormitory, and ancillary building, which should be listed as contributing buildings.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5848 City Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J, and that the period of significance extend from 1865 to 1965, and that the chapel, dormitory, and ancillary building be considered contributing.

ITEM: 5848 City Ave					
MOTION: Designate; Criteria A, D, E, J, with amended period of significance					
MOVED BY: Milroy					
SECONDED BY: Laverty					
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: 1401 E SUSQUEHANNA AVE

Name of Resource: The Penn Asylum for Indigent Widows & Single Women; The Penn Home

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Penn Asylum for Indigent Widows

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1401 E. Susquehanna Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the complex, which resulted from multiple building campaigns dating from the eighteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries, is significant under Criteria for Designation A and J. The nomination explains that the Penn Asylum for Indigent Widows and Single Women purchased the eighteenth-century country seat of the Austin family at what is now Susquehanna Avenue and Belgrade Street in 1858. The asylum expanded upon the original building through the acquisition of neighboring parcels and the construction of numerous additions and modifications over the next century, and provided services to neighborhood women, and eventually men, until its closure in 2020. The nomination contends that the Penn Asylum, also known as the Penn Home, represents the development of early geriatric care, nursing homes, and social services in mid-nineteenth-century Philadelphia. Established to provide nonsectarian living accommodations for elderly widowed and single women of limited means in the Fishtown and larger Kensington neighborhood, satisfying Criterion J, the founding and physical development of the Penn Widows' Asylum is representative of developments in the broader economic, social, and political culture, as well as the organizational and physical development patterns in the city state, and nation, satisfying Criterion A.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1401 E. Susquehanna Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:23:13

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.
- Oscar Beisert and Jim Duffin represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cohen opined that the nomination is well-researched, and that the property is an interesting species of institution that fits in with many others from both its own time in the mid-nineteenth century, as well as earlier.
- Ms. Milroy questioned the period of significance, noting that the original Mansion House (Resource 1 in the nomination) would be a very substantial structure for 1769. She noted that an estate called West Hill does not appear on the 1808 Hill's map, although, she clarified, many estates did not. She questioned whether the Mansion House actually dates to 1769, and suggested that it dates to around 1800 or later.
 - Ms. Barucco agreed, opining that perhaps the period of significance should begin in 1858 with the institution's purchasing of the building. She noted that the nomination is not about architectural significance, but rather argues more for the significance of the institution.
 - Mr. Cohen suggested that perhaps a portion of a circa-1769 building remains, but that it may not be visible from the exterior anymore. He noted that the five-bay by

four-bay building with the hipped roof shown in the 1850's painting in the nomination appears to date from between 1790s to 1830s. He wondered if an insurance survey might eventually shed more light on the situation.

- Mr. Duffin responded that the date of 1769 is based on the tax lists. He explained that, at that time, the provincial tax lists had a special assessment and taxing rate for country seats. He noted that that is the time period in which the West family is identified as having a country seat. In the preceding year, Charles West is not taxed for a country seat and in the next, 1769, he is. Mr. Duffin explained that, based on research of other properties that Charles West owned, this is the only one that would have had a country seat. Later wills and deed descriptions from the 1790s and the partition of the estate in the 1810s or 1820s, refers to the mansion house being at this specific location. He agreed that what is not clear, however, is what portion of the building shown in the 1850s painting was the eighteenth-century building. He noted that many of Philadelphia's historic buildings have evolved over time, and the standard practice even for those were wealthy, especially among Quakers, was to build upon existing buildings. He opined that some component of the eighteenth-century building is likely within the structure that is visible in the 1850s painting. He noted that it is also telling that the whole building is stuccoed in the painting, which is a very convenient way of covering over seams and mismatched masonry. He suggested that there is a high likelihood that there are remnants of the eighteenth-century building on the site today. Without finding a fire insurance survey or conducting a physical examination of the building, it is difficult to determine what remains, but he suggested that the documentary evidence is strong that some portion of the building dates to the eighteenth century. He agreed that the building shown in the 1850s painting is not what would have been there in the eighteenth-century, which would have been a much more modest structure. He suggested that the original structure was likely expanded by the time of the 1790s insurance survey, likely by the owner of the glassworks, since he had the money and perhaps wanted to make a statement with the property.
- Mr. Beisert suggested that, based on Mr. Duffin's explanation, the beginning of the period of significance remain at 1769. He noted that there are few remaining eighteenth-century buildings, that even if just a component of the property dates to the eighteenth century, the initial construction is likely one of the oldest surviving properties in the Fishtown neighborhood. He compared the property to historic buildings like Wyck and Cedar Grove that expanded over time.
- Mr. Cohen agreed that the mansion itself is an important part of the history, and that the beginning of the period of significance should date to the earliest period.
- Ms. Milroy agreed, but noted that the concern is about the clarity of the language in the nomination. She explained that the description of "Resource 1: Mansion House," is not accurate, and that it would be more precise to say "there is evidence to suggest that the Mansion House was an enlargement of an existing building dating to c. 1769." She noted that she would be happy to have the period of significance begin at the early date, but expressed concern that nominations are written clearly and precisely. She acknowledged that the building may include an earlier structure, and it is a great entry point for further work and research.
- Ms. Barucco agreed, noting that it is a bit of a grey area. She opined that identifying Resource 1: Mansion House as a circa 1769 building is misleading and suggested that the nomination be clarified to say that an early building that may survive within it. Despite these concerns, she noted that she was impressed by the survival of the building even though it has been modified many times.

- Mr. Duffin responded that he goes through the documentation of the earlier structure in the nomination. He suggested keeping the earlier date for the significance but add language noting that the eighteenth-century building may be a component of the Mansion House.
- Mr. Mooney opined that the discussions and evidence presented in the nomination make a good case for including Criterion I in the designation. He noted that the nomination establishes that there was an earlier building on the site, and if there is any evidence of that structure remaining, it would be a rare surviving example, and even more a surviving example of a country seat, of which there historically were many established in this particular area. On the site itself, he noted, there is not a tremendous amount of open space on the property, but there is the courtyard, in which there is a high likelihood for artifact deposits that date to the earliest period of occupation. He further explained that there could be structural remains underground that would help to clarify some of the questions about the early development of the site, even if there are no visible above-ground elements remaining.
- Ms. Cooperman suggested that if they are to take Criterion I seriously, the earlier date should be used for the period of significance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Dana Fedeli spoke in support of the nomination.
- Venise Whitaker spoke in support of the nomination, noting that there is a great deal of community support for the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman spoke in support of the nomination, noting that it fits into the historic context of social service organizations all over the City.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Penn Asylum for Indigent Widows and Single Women, which purchased the property in 1858 and expanded upon it numerous times, is representative of the development of early geriatric care and social services in mid-nineteenth-century Philadelphia.
- It is unlikely that the portion of the property identified as “Resource 1: Mansion House,” as a whole dates to 1769, but rather that the eighteenth-century country seat of the West family may be a component of the Mansion House shown in the 1850s painting in the nomination, and whose form is still visible today.
- The period of significance begins in 1769, which is the earliest documented date of potential occupation of the property.
- Below-ground resources dating from the eighteenth-century onward may be present in the courtyard, including artifact deposits and structural remnants.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.
- Although not explicitly addressed in the nomination, the documentation in the nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation I.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, J, and I, and that the period of significance be understood to cover likely remnants of an eighteenth-century building and its grounds, which may not be visible today from the exterior.

ITEM: 1401 E Susquehanna Ave
MOTION: Designate; Criteria A, J, and I
MOVED BY: Cooperman
SECONDED BY: Mooney

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: 5900 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: Vacant Lot

Proposed Action: Rescind Individual Designation

Property Owner: Scuderi RE 5900-02 Germantown Ave LLC

Nominator: Augusta M. O'Neil, Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg LLP

Individual Designation: 2/25/1964

District Designation: None

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

OVERVIEW: This application requests the rescission of the individual designation of the property at 5900 Germantown Avenue. The property was individually designated on 25 February 1964. At the time of designation, two early nineteenth-century houses stood on the site. The property now known as 5900 Germantown Avenue has been divided into two properties known as 5900 and 5902 Germantown at times, with one house on each lot, and then consolidated back into one property. The property is currently a vacant lot.

In July 2020, the property owner, who acquired the property in April of that year, submitted an application to the Historical Commission proposing to construct a mixed-use building on the vacant lot. During its review, the Architectural Committee questioned whether the designated houses had been demolished legally. For this reason, the applicant withdrew the application and sought to clarify the circumstances of the demolition.

Since the Architectural Committee meeting, the staff, with the assistance of the Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I), discovered that L&I cited the houses as Imminently Dangerous on 24 January 1992, demolished them in the winter or spring of 1992, and then billed the owner for the cost of the demolition on 4 May 1992. The houses were demolished legally by L&I, albeit without the Historical Commission's approval, because they posed a threat to public safety.

Section 5.14.b.1 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations authorizes the Commission to remove entries from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places when the qualities that caused the original entry on the Register have been lost or destroyed. In this case, the buildings were designated for their architectural qualities. Those qualities were lost with the demolition. There is no longer a basis for the designation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission rescind the individual designation of 5900 Germantown Avenue and remove it from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1 of the Commission's Rules & Regulations, because the qualities that caused its original entry have been destroyed.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:57:45

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Augusta O'Neill represented the applicant.
- Property owner Scott Scuderi was in attendance.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. O'Neill told the members of the Committee on Historic Designation that her research showed that there had been three other properties owners prior to her client that owned the subject property as a vacant lot. She assured them that her client had nothing to do with allowing the designated buildings to deteriorate. Ms. O'Neill explained that her client's proposed new construction complied with the site's zoning
- Ms. Milroy asked when the Colonial Germantown Historic District gained its National Landmark status, explaining that she wanted to know if it occurred after the buildings were demolished in 1992.
 - Ms. Cooperman responded that the National Landmark Status had been granted before 1992.
- Ms. Cooperman requested confirmation that rescinding the individual designation would remove all regulation of the site by the Historical Commission.
 - Mr. Farnham confirmed this was correct, adding that the adjacent properties were not listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, neither individually or as part of a historic district. Mr. Farnham reiterated that the subject properties were individually listed on the Philadelphia Register.
- Mr. Cohen asked whether there were cases where vacant properties remained under the jurisdiction of the Historical Commission in order to shape how the site would be developed.
 - Mr. Farnham explained that occasionally vacant lots were discovered on the Philadelphia Register, and that these were referred to as "phantom" designations because the buildings that had caused the original designation had been lost.
 - Mr. Farnham said that he was not aware of any case where the Historical Commission made a property owner, especially a new property owner, reconstruct a building that had been demolished decades prior. He said that there have been cases when a property owner who has been clearly involved in the neglect of a building has been forced through legal action to restore or rebuild a structure.
- Mr. Cohen asked if Mr. Farnham believed there was any positive public served by the Historical Commission continuing to have jurisdiction over this site.
 - Mr. Farnham responded that he did not see any legal basis for the Historical Commission to attempt any control over the redevelopment of this site, even if it were to result in a building that was more compatible with the National Register District. He said that he believed that the Historical Commission would be well beyond its legal authority, and any such decision would almost certainly lead to an appeal.

- Ms. Milroy asked Mr. Farnham if there were any advantages for the owner since this property being listed on both the local and national registers.
 - Mr. Farnham said that he was not aware of any such benefits for this property.
- Ms. Milroy asked Mr. Mooney if there were any concerns about archaeology on this site.
 - Mr. Mooney replied that when this issue has come up in the past with other rescission applications, the explanation has always been that because these sites were originally listed for their architectural characteristics and not their archaeological potential, Criterion I cannot be retroactively applied to the site.
- Ms. Barucco asked Mr. Reuter if he had anything to add to the discussion.
 - Mr. Reuter responded that he would support Mr. Farnham's point that the demolition of the subject property had taken place 28 years ago, and this passage of time would create a problem with the courts. He added that reconstructing a historic structure was an enforcement issue used when a property owner violated the code. Mr. Reuter explained that because the current owner was not responsible for the demolition of the designated structure, and because the Department of Licenses & Inspections called for its demolition, there would be no ability to compel a reconstruction at this time.
 - Mr. Reuter commented that he agreed with Mr. Mooney's explanation of why archaeological potential cannot be applied retroactively to this parcel.
- Ms. Milroy stated that going forward, the Historical Commission should always be kept informed of demolitions of designated buildings that occur.
 - Mr. Reuter agreed and confirmed that the departments are in close communication about such matters, perhaps in a way they were not back in 1992 when this demolition of the subject properties occurred.
- Ms. Barucco said she thought that it is was worth mentioning that the subject property is located within a National Historic Landmark Historic District, and yet there is no local protection and the district is at risk.
 - It was noted that the state and federal agencies would have no authority to review the proposed new construction owing to National Historic Landmark Historic District because there is no anticipated federal involvement in the project.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society spoke against the rescission. He said that the owner of the property in question also owned the adjacent parcels and had plans to demolish the existing buildings for a new construction project.
- Scott Scuderi, owner of the subject property, clarified that he did not own the neighboring property. He stated that the owner of the adjacent properties did have plans for a new construction project but those plans are unrelated to his construction project.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The designated buildings that previously stood at 5900-02 Germantown Avenue were legally demolished by the Department of Licenses & Inspections in 1992.
- The Department of Licenses & Inspections ordered the demolition for public safety reasons.
- The current property owner had played no role in allowing the buildings to deteriorate to the point of requiring demolition.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The individual designation should be rescinded because the qualities that caused its original entry have been destroyed in 1992 by no fault of the current property owner.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend approval of the rescission of the individual designation of 5900-02 Germantown Avenue, pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1 of the Commission's Rules & Regulations, because the qualities that caused its original entry have been destroyed.

ITEM: 5900 Germantown Ave					
MOTION: Rescind individual designation					
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 Laverty	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: ORIANNA ST. S 600 BLOCK

Name of Resource: Orianna Street, S 600 block between Bainbridge St and South St

Proposed Action: Rescission of block from Historic Street Paving Thematic District

Inventory Property Owner: City of Philadelphia Streets Department

Applicant: John Bang, owner of 623-625 S. Orianna St

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

OVERVIEW: This request proposes to remove the 600 block of S. Orianna Street from the inventory of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District. The block has been included in the district since 1999. The request was submitted by the owner of a property that abuts the block.

In 1998, the Historical Commission designated the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, a collection of several hundred blocks of streets in the city that retain their historic street paving materials. In 1999, the Commission amended the district, adding a few streets that had been initially overlooked. The designation covers the cartway itself, but not the curbs or sidewalks. The historic preservation ordinance authorizes the Historical Commission to review building permit applications issued by the Department of Licenses & Inspections, but not streets permits for work within the right-of-way, which are issued by the Streets Department of the City of Philadelphia. Therefore, with regard to historic streets, the Historical Commission acts in an advisory capacity, providing advice to the Streets Department about the appropriateness of alterations to historic cartways. Per an informal agreement, the Streets Department consults with the Historical Commission whenever it undertakes work to historic streets or reviews applications from third parties for work to historic streets. The Streets Department should be commended for its stewardship of

historic streets, which it undertakes voluntarily at great expense.

The applicant claims that the subject block has lost its integrity, owing to its severely deteriorated conditions, and is requesting that the block be removed from the District inventory so that the Streets Department can repair and repave it with a non-historic paving material. The Streets Department has indicated that this block is not on its priority list for either reconstruction or major rehabilitation at this time.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the removal of the 600 block of S. Orianna Street from the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations. While the paving is in need of repair, the qualities that led to its designation have not been lost or destroyed.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:16:00

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- John Bang represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Bang said that he built his property on the 600 block of S. Orianna Street in 2001 and has lived there ever since. He said that, during that time, the street had always been neglected. Mr. Bang explained that crews make repairs to the block on the rare occasions, but they leave patches and unacceptable conditions.
- Mr. Bang said that the subject block was a popular one for people to walk down. He noted that the beauty school at the corner of S. Orianna Street and Bainbridge Street attracted many students and clients. Mr. Bang explained that there was heavy pedestrian traffic coming off of South Street as well.
- Mr. Bang described the subject block as a safety hazard owing to the uneven paving and stones. He added that sewage and trash collect in the puddles on the block where his children play.
- Mr. Bang explained that he and his neighbor, Jason Ford, are the only full-time residents on the block, and the conditions of the street impact their quality of life. Mr. Bang informed the members of the Committee on Historic Designation that he has two cars that he parks on his property and driving along the street is extremely difficult.
- Mr. Bang said that the Streets Department says they are unable to address the conditions of the street owing to its designated status, and it has been this way for the last 20 years. He said that he was upset for not getting the same treatment as the surrounding blocks that are not designated.
- Mr. Bang commented that he had been in touch Councilmember Squilla and Stephen Lorenz of the Streets Department, who are both aware of his concerns.
- Mr. Cohen said that the Historic Street Paving Thematic District is important, and this block should remain a part of it, especially now that it seemed like a solution was at hand.
- Ms. Barucco agreed with Mr. Cohen's comments.
- Ms. Milroy encouraged Mr. Bang to reach out to the Preservation Alliance and to continue speaking with Councilmember Squilla.

- Mr. Cohen commented that hopefully this application showed that just because a street is designated, it does not mean that it cannot be touched, and that basic maintenance still needs to occur.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jason and Kristi Ford, owners of 628 S. Orianna Street, explained that over the last 20 years, both the heavy pedestrian traffic caused by the students of the beauty school, as well as the heavy use of full-sized trash trucks, had resulted in the poor conditions of the street bed. Mr. Ford said that the size of the trash trucks was causing the street to be unevenly traversed, leading to many of the problematic existing conditions. Mr. Ford asked what their options were if the Streets Department would not prioritize fixing the block owing to its designated status. He expressed his strong opposition to keeping the subject block designated as part of the thematic district.
- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance spoke against rescission of the 600 block of S. Orianna Street. He offered his assistance to Mr. Bang and Mr. and Mrs. Ford in working with the appropriate City agencies to prioritize the appropriate repairs to the block.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites spoke against the rescission.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society spoke against the rescission.
- Nicholas Baker of the Streets Department said that his agency was aware of the repairs needed on the subject block. He stated that the northern half of the block was considered to be in decent shape, though they acknowledged the deteriorated conditions at the southern half. Mr. Baker said while the Streets Department intends to repair the street, it has not been identified as one of their priorities at this time. He confirmed that the street's designation as part of the thematic district does not prevent it from getting the basic repairs it requires. Mr. Baker thanked the Historical Commission for their partnership with matters pertaining to the Historic Street Paving Thematic District.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The fact that a street is designated as part of the thematic district does not mean that basic maintenance and upkeep should not occur.
- The Preservation Alliance's offer to coordinate between the applicant and Councilmember Squilla seemed like a good way to address the safety issues and retain the character of the block's historic street paving.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- While the paving on the block needs repairs, the qualities that led to its designation have not been lost or destroyed.
- The block should remain in the thematic district.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend denial of the request to rescind the 600 block of S. Orianna Street from the Historic Street Paving Thematic District.

ITEM: Orianna St. S 600 Block					
MOTION: Denial of the rescission request					
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 Lavery	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 12:15 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; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.