OVERVIEW: The property at 6901 Germantown Avenue includes a late-eighteenth-century stone structure, the Joseph Gorgas House, located at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Gorgas Lane, and a large parking lot at the side and rear. The property's large open space historically functioned as a side and rear yard. Aside from a wood-frame shed or stable building at the rear of the stone house, historic maps show that no other structures existed on the site. This application proposes to construct a three-story, multi-unit building on the site of the parking lot. The new building would have frontages on Germantown Avenue and Gorgas Lane, would be clad in stone and blackened cedar siding, and would feature large dormers with terraces and a standing seam metal roof.

SCOPE OF WORK:
- Construct three-story, multi-unit building in location of existing parking lot.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:
The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- **Standard 9:** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
  - The proposed three-story building would be differentiated from the historic building, though it would not be compatible. While the standing seam metal roof and stone cladding reflect the materials of the historic building and surrounding context, the blackened cedar siding, the dominant material of the new construction, would not be compatible. The proposed building is too large in massing, size, and scale and should be reduced to more closely match the massing of the historic building.

- Guidelines for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction:
  - **Recommended:** Designing new construction on a historic site or in a historic setting that it is compatible but differentiated from the historic building or buildings.
  - **Recommended:** Considering the design for related new construction in terms of its relationship to the historic building as well as the historic district and setting.
  - **Not Recommended:** Adding new construction that results in the diminution or loss of the historic character of the building, including its design, materials, location, or setting.
  - The first-story wall fronting Germantown Avenue, the primary façade of the building, would be clad in stone with one door centered on the elevation. It would include no other fenestration. The lack of fenestration at this façade would adversely impact the historic streetscape, a main commercial corridor through...
Northwest Philadelphia, and should be modified to include punched window openings.

- Owing to the massing, size, and scale of the new construction and its siting around the building, the new construction would result in the diminution of the historic character of the building.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Guidelines for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction.
MAPS & IMAGES:

Figure 1: 2020 aerial showing 6901 Germantown Avenue. Source: Atlas.

Figure 2: The front façade and adjacent parking area of 6901 Germantown Avenue, 2020. Source: Cyclomedia.
Figure 3: View from Gorgas Lane of the rear yard and parking area of 6901 Germantown Avenue, 2020. Source: Cyclomedia.

Figure 4: Historic photo of the property at the time of designation, June 1957. Source: Historical Commission files.
Figure 5: Historic photo of the front façade of 6901 Germantown Avenue, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.

Figure 6: Historic photo of the north elevation, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.
Figure 7: Historic photo of the rear of the property taken from Gorgas Lane, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.

Figure 8: The 1910 G. W. Bromley Atlas illustrates that a wood-frame structure historically existed at the rear, with no other structures on the site. Source: PhilaGeoHistory.
July 13, 2021

**Property Address:** 6901 Germantown Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19119  
**Applicant:** Lea Litvin / LO DESIGN  
**Applicant Email:** info@lodesignco.com  
**Applicant Phone #:** 954-559-3549  
**Applicant Address:** 2116 Locust Street Philadelphia, PA 19103  
**Property Owners:** Adam Deeves / Time Keene

**Project Description:**  
The project includes the subdivision of the parcel located at 6901-13 Germantown Avenue into two parcels. The size of the existing parcel is 12,333.65 SF. Currently on this property, there is the existing historic structure, which is used as a commercial space as well as a large surface parking lot.

As part of this project, the current surface parking lot will be redeveloped to include a multifamily structure consisting of 5 residential units and 8 parking spaces.

The new construction is intended to reference the historic structure and immediate context through the use of similar massing strategies including gabled roofs, dormers, and punched opening windows. The new construction will also complement the historic structure by finely calibrating the alignments between the two structures.

While the historic building is predominantly clad in Wissahickon Schist with a standing seam metal roof, the new construction will use similar complementary stone in several key areas, while introducing dark stained cedar tongue and groove siding as well as a grey standing seam metal roof. The use of a darker color palette is intended to create visual separation between the new and old buildings, allowing the old building to be in the foreground, with the new building as a complementary structure in the background.

Further, the siting of the new structure will be such that it preserves the mature Sycamore tree fronting Germantown Avenue. The siting is oriented so that it also provides frontage on Gorgas Ave. The parking spaces will be concealed from pedestrian view through the use of stone site walls and landscape elements.

Sincerely,

Lea Litvin  
Principal, LO Design Company LLC
6901 Germantown Avenue
Historical Commission Review
July 13, 2021
Site Plan: Existing
Existing surface parking lot and 2 ½ story historical building on lot
Site Plan: Lot Subdivision

Parcel "A"
3365 SF per 50'-0" Gorgas Lane Measurement

Parcel "B"
6828 SF per 50'-0" Gorgas Lane Measurement
Massing Diagrams
Existing Structure and Surface Parking Lot
Massing Diagrams
Zoning Envelope - Maximum Height at 38’-0”
75% Lot Coverage
14’-0” Rear Yard
Massing Diagrams
Existing context massing analysis

- Building mass with shed roof
- Secondary shed roof attached
- Dormers
Massing Diagrams
Front setback

Setback to meet adjacent
Massing Diagrams
Setback for heritage Sycamore tree along Germantown Ave; will consult with arborists to ensure tree is properly maintained during construction

Retain heritage Sycamore tree
Massing Diagrams
Buildable area after setbacks
Massing Diagrams
Building footprint – rotation to face
Gorgas Lane

- Mass broken down to 3 boxes of proportion similar to adjacent
- Rotate third box to meet Gorgas
- Remove existing shed
Massing Diagrams
Mass Reduction; Shed Roofs

Shed roof to break down mass
Dormers to match adjacent
Massing Diagrams
Pedestrian Circulation and Parking

- Parking & pedestrian entrance off Gorgas Lane
- Main pedestrian entrance off Germantown
- Remove existing curb cut
- Covered porch entrance

LO DESIGN
Massing Diagrams
Details from Context Building

- Dormers with fenestration
- Punched windows
- Stone at first floor
6901 Germantown
Elevation along Germantown Ave, showing alignments with existing historic building façade

- Dormer/ Roof Alignment
- Eave Alignment
- Second Story Windows
- First Floor Porch
6901 Germantown
Building Elevations

LO DESIGN
6901 Germantown
Building Elevations

LO DESIGN
6901 Germantown Avenue

Materials

- Blackened cedar vertical tongue & groove siding
- Stone to match historic building
- Standing seam metal
- Clear-stained White Cedar

- Clear stained white cedar
- Standing seam metal
- Heritage sycamore tree
- Blackened cedar vertical tongue & groove siding
- Stone to match historic building facade
- Landscaped elements
- Landscape lighting
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings

LO DESIGN
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings

Key Plan

LO DESIGN
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings

Key Plan

LO DESIGN
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings – Close Up 1
6901 Germantown Avenue
Renderings – Close Up 2

LO DESIGN
Existing Site Photos
Aerial site photos of 6901 Germantown Avenue
Existing Site Photos
Site photos of 6901 Germantown Avenue

A View looking south on Germantown Avenue
B View looking north on Germantown Avenue
C View looking northeast on Gorgas Lane
D View looking southwest on Gorgas Lane
Site Plan: Proposed

**GROSS BUILDING AREA**
- L1: 1260 SF
- L2: 3423 SF
- L3: 4059 SF
- Total: 8742 SF

**UNIT MIX**
- L2 UNIT 1: 1388 SF, 2 BD/2 BA
- L2 UNIT 2: 1013 SF, 2 BD/2 BA
- L2 UNIT 3: 1376 SF, 2 BD/2 BA
- L3 UNIT 4: 1578 SF, 3 BD/2 BA
- L3 UNIT 5: 1529 SF, 3 BD/2 BA

LO DESIGN
Building Floor Plans

Ground Floor

GROSS BUILDING AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Gross Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
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<td>L2</td>
<td>3423 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>4059 SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8742 SF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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UNIT MIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Gross Area</th>
<th>Bedrooms/Bathrooms</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>Unit 5</td>
<td>1529 SF</td>
<td>3 BD/2 BA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GROSS BUILDING AREA
L1  1260 SF  
L2  3423 SF  
L3  4059 SF  
8742 SF

UNIT MIX
L2  UNIT 1  1388 SF  2 BD/2 BA  
L2  UNIT 2  1013 SF  2 BD/2 BA  
L2  UNIT 3  1376 SF  2 BD/2 BA  
L3  UNIT 4  1578 SF  3 BD/2 BA  
L3  UNIT 5  1529 SF  3 BD/2 BA  

LO DESIGN
Building Floor Plans
Third Floor

**GROSS BUILDING AREA**
- L1 1260 SF
- L2 3423 SF
- L3 4059 SF
- **8742 SF**

**UNIT MIX**
- L2 UNIT 1 1388 SF 2 BD/2 BA
- L2 UNIT 2 1013 SF 2 BD/2 BA
- L2 UNIT 3 1376 SF 2 BD/2 BA
- L3 UNIT 4 1578 SF 3 BD/2 BA
- L3 UNIT 5 1529 SF 3 BD/2 BA

LO DESIGN
Appendix
6901 Germantown Avenue
Site Subdivision Submission