

ADDRESS: 6740 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: The Pelham Trust Company

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sovereign Bank

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Pelham Trust Company building satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that the building stands as a distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the former Pelham Trust Company building represents the economic and historical heritage of Pelham, the planned suburban residential development in the Mt. Airy neighborhood.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.



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

**20 APRIL 2022, 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 9:30 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		Arrived at 11:15 a.m.
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.	X		
Bruce Lavery		X	
Debbie Miller	X		
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.	X		

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

- Jon Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons attended the online meeting:

- Olga McGarity
- Sharla Russell
- Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance
- Lisa Smith
- Oscar Beisert
- David Traub, Save Our Sites
- Nick Kraus, Heritage Consulting Group
- Allison Weiss, SoLo Germantown Civic Association
- Lacy Rhoades
- Marjorie L. Spaeth
- Mary McNatt
- Patrick Nellis
- Kate Riestenberg
- Arthur Verbrugghe
- Sharla Russell

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the interior main floor, historically known as the Main Sales Floor, of 1424-26 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E and F.

ITEM: 1424-26 Chestnut St					
MOTION: Designate Interior, Criteria C, D, E, F					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Miller					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 6740 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: The Pelham Trust Company

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sovereign Bank

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Pelham Trust Company building satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that the building stands as a distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the former Pelham Trust Company building represents the economic and historical heritage of Pelham, the planned suburban residential development in the Mt. Airy neighborhood.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:35:00

PRESENTERS:

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

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Keller noted that the property was under an agreement of sale at the time notice was sent and that the staff has been in contact with the equitable owner.

- Mr. Beisert stated that the property is a distinctive architectural landmark along Germantown Avenue.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the property is worth adding to the Register. The nomination, he continued, was well argued and well researched, though with a few minor errors.
- Ms. Miller observed that the nomination includes the entire parcel, including the building and adjacent lot. She stated that a block away, at the corner of Westview Street and Germantown Avenue, a Revolutionary War soldier's remains were recovered during building renovations in 1985. Given the proximity and that the British Army marched down Germantown Avenue, Ms. Miller continued, there may be archaeological resources on the parcel. She added that it did not appear any other structure occupied the lot prior to the bank's construction. She asked to discuss the potential for archaeology and the inclusion of Criterion I.
 - Mr. Beisert stated that he did not research the site's earlier history and is apprehensive about adding Criterion I to nominated properties without justification in the nomination, though he acknowledged the Committee's ability to recommend the addition of the Criterion.
 - Ms. Miller commented that she did some research and did not find any evidence of previous structures, so the likelihood of having cultural resources is high.
 - Ms. Cooperman opined that, if an individual wants to nominate a building without addressing archaeological potential, then confining a nomination to the building footprint could be a possible strategy rather than including an entire parcel. She then acknowledged the potential for artifacts related to the Battle of Germantown.
 - Ms. Milroy stated that the Committee continually returns to the challenge of Criterion I, adding that there is the potential for archaeological remains everywhere in the city and that asking nominators to accommodate that is difficult. She questioned whether the Committee should be asking nominators to research the archaeological potential in areas impacted by the Battle of Germantown.
 - Ms. Miller contended that the reason she requests that Criterion I be added after a nomination has been submitted is because archaeological potential has not been addressed in the nomination. She argued that this property is a special case, being located along a major thoroughfare and capped under a parking lot.
 - Mr. Cohen asked that nominators consult the earliest atlas for a property to see whether there is ground cover. He suggested that the staff add that information for certain nominations located in areas of high archaeological potential that lack Criterion I.
 - Ms. Miller concluded that the nomination's focus is on the development of Pelham, and that while she feels it is important to raise the issue of archaeological potential, she is not insisting on its inclusion without the necessary research.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman commented on Criterion I.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property boundary includes the former Pelham Trust Company building and an adjacent parking lot.

- The property is located on Germantown Avenue in Mt. Airy in an area impacted by the Battle of Germantown. The nomination does not explore the potential for archaeological resources, though the adjacent parking lot seems to contain undisturbed land that could have archaeological potential.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- More research into the site's archaeological potential should be conducted to determine whether the property satisfies Criterion I. Nominations for properties located in areas of high archaeological potential should include historic maps or research to determine whether a property may satisfy Criterion I.
- The bank building represents a distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style, satisfying Criterion D.
- The former Pelham Trust Company building represents the economic and historical heritage of Pelham, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

ITEM: 6740 Germantown Ave					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria D and J					
MOVED BY: Milroy					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

Ms. Barucco joined the meeting.

ADDRESS: 5008-10 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: The Reser-Royal House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Nai Liang Li

Nominator: Keeping Society

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5008-10 Germantown Avenue, known as the Reser-Royal House, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the Reser-Royal House is an important structure and represents the development and heritage of Germantown from the construction of the

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

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

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

Street address: **6740 Germantown Avenue**

Postal code: **19119-2192**

Councilmanic District: **8**

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **The Pelham Trust Company**

Current Name: **Santander Bank**

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building

☐ Structure

☐ Site

☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Occupancy: ☐ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☒ unknown

Current use: **Commercial**

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): **1907 to 1927**

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: **1907**

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: **Churchman & Thomas, Architects**

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: **A. Whitehead, Contractor**

Original owner: **Pelham Trust Company**

Other significant persons: **NA**

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

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

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

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach

9. NOMINATOR: KEEPING SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian**

Date: **14 February 2022**

Email: **keeper@keepingphiladelphia.org**

Street Address: **1315 Walnut Street, Suite 320**

Telephone: **717.602.5002**

City, State, and Postal Code: **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107**

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: February 14, 2022

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: February 18, 2022

Date of Notice Issuance: February 24, 2022

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: Sovereign Bank

Address: 1103 Berkshire Blvd

City: Wyomissing

State: PA

Postal Code: 19610

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: April 20, 2022

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: May 13, 2022

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated

☐ Rejected

3/12/18

NOMINATION

FOR THE

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

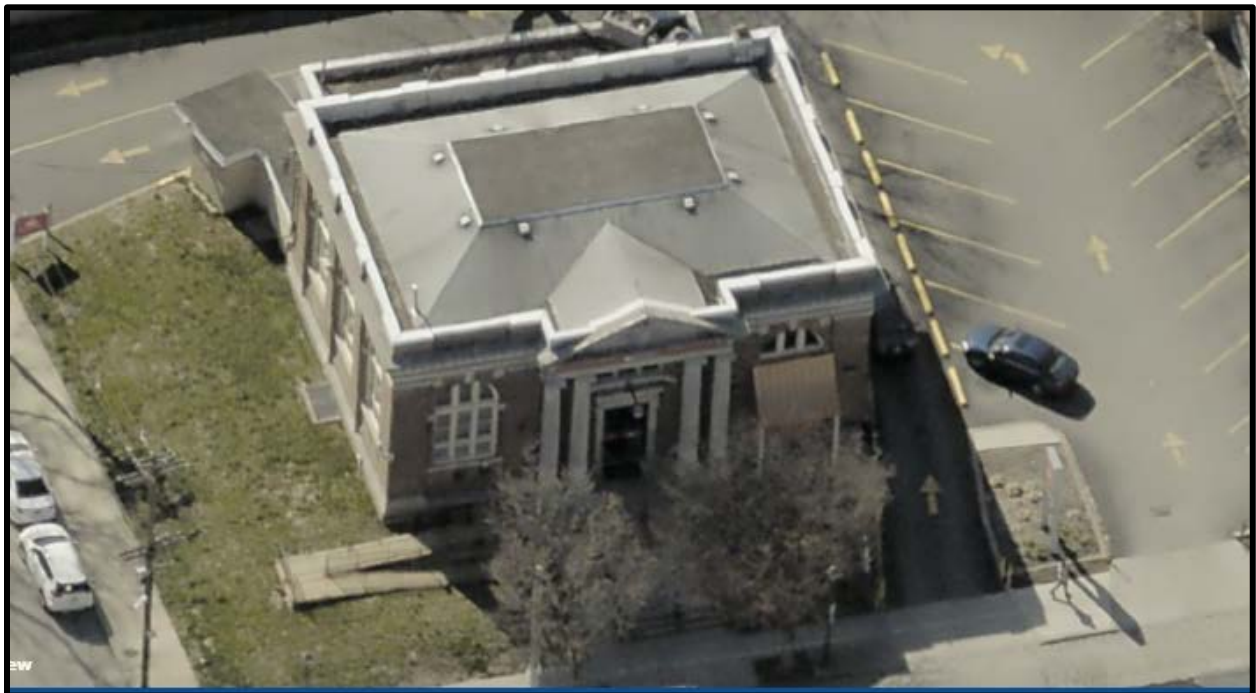


Figure 1. Looking west at the subject property from an aerial perspective. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2020.

THE PELHAM TRUST COMPANY
ERECTED 1907
6740 GERMANTOWN AVENUE
MT. AIRY
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19119-2192

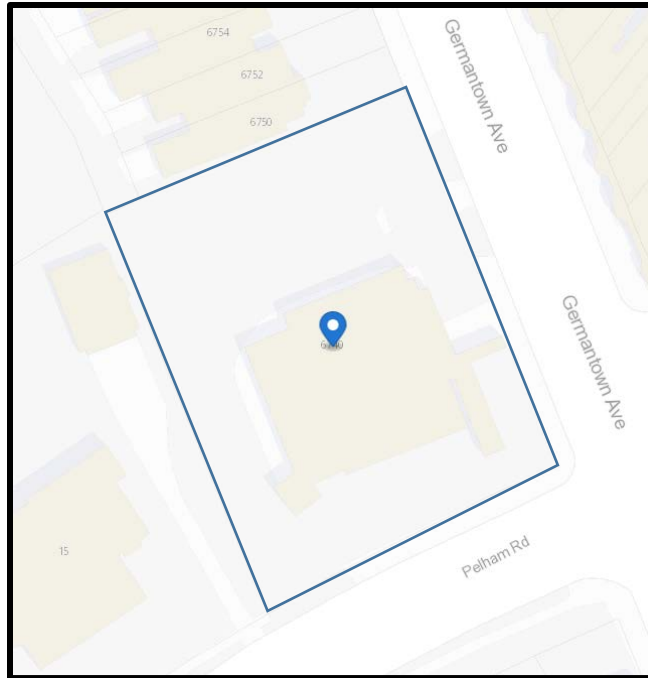


Figure 2. The subject designation is confined to the parcel delineated above in blue. Source: City of Philadelphia, Atlas, 2020.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the subject designation is as follows:

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground in the Twenty-second Ward of the City of Philadelphia, situate on the Southwesterly side of Germantown Avenue (60 feet wide) and the Northwesterly side of Pelham Road (60 feet wide, proposed street, not on confirmed City Plan) bounded and described according to a Survey and Plan thereof made by Joseph C. Wagner, Surveyor and Regulator of the Ninth District, on the Ninth day of March A.D., 1907, as follows:

BEGINNING at a point on the Southwesterly side of said Germantown Avenue at the distance of four hundred seventy-four feet, eleven and three-quarters inches (474' 11-3/4") Southeastwardly from the Southeasterly side of Carpenter Street; thence extending in a Southwesterly direction along a line at right angles with the said Germantown Avenue a distance of one hundred and twenty feet (120.00') to a point; thence extending in a Southeasterly direction along a line parallel with the said Germantown Avenue a distance of one hundred and nine feet, two and five-eighths inches (109' 2-5/8") to a point in the Northwesterly side of the said Pelham Road; thence extending in a Northeasterly direction along the Northwesterly side of the said Pelham Road on a line curving to the right with a radius of seven hundred and eighty five feet, five and five-eighths inches (785' 5-5/8"), a distance of one hundred twenty feet and five and five-eighths inches (120' 5-5/8") to the point of intersection of the Northwesterly side of the said Pelham Road and Southwesterly side of the said Germantown Avenue; thence in a Northwesterly direction along the Southwesterly side of the said Germantown Avenue a distance of one hundred feet to the point and place of Beginning.

BEING No. 6740 Germantown Avenue.

PREMISES "B"

ALL THAT CERTAIN, lot or piece of ground in the 22nd Ward of the City of Philadelphia.

SITUATE on the Southwesterly side of Germantown Avenue (60 feet wide) at the distance of 100 feet Northwest from the Northwesterly side of Pelham Road (60 feet wide).

CONTAINING in front or breadth on Germantown Avenue 50 feet more or less and extending of that length or breadth 120 feet more or less.

BEING NO. 6748 Germantown Avenue.

TAX PARCEL NO.: 88296365

DEED REGISTRY NO.: 83N160040



Figure 3. The primary (northeast) elevation of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: Brad Maule, 2020.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The subject property at 6740 Germantown Avenue is a fine example of the Colonial Revival style in its more robust form, as wonderfully applied to a commercial, banking structure. Laden with Classical Revival/Neoclassical detailing such as dentils, Ionic column capitals, round-top window openings, symmetry, and a mix of brick with limestone trim, the subject property conveys the seriousness and civic-mindedness of a neighborhood financial institution at an accessible yet still imposing scale.

PRIMARY ELEVATION

The primary elevation is a case study in the more neo-classical mode of the Colonial Revival style. Centered in the three-bay façade is a limestone Greek temple front, with two columns on either side of the entry door, capped by an imposing pediment that extends out from the brick wall plane. There is a robust limestone cornice with dentils above which the brick wall extends as a parapet. The three registers are divided by brick pilasters of a low profile. Each register contains a large, round-top opening in the brick wall, with a keystone and springers expressed in limestone. Limestone is also used for the sills of the flanking windows and the two medallions that decorate each of the three arch spandrels.

The pediment and the cornice of the building are robust in their limestone forms. The pediment contains a seal or coat of arms within the triangular frieze. The architrave is simplified in profile and at the center pediment, sits on four columns with Ionic capitals and gently expressed entasis that rest on plinths of substantial scale and simplified form.

The entry door itself is a contemporary, single-leaf glass door within a larger opening filled with black-framed storefront glass. The surround of the door, however, is an original limestone frame with a simple profile to the jambs and architrave and a header with expressive classical details such as end pieces of ceremonial garlands and guttae. There is a light fixture extending from the uppermost part of the limestone entry frame. Above the frame is a radial, tripartite, fanlight window.

The windows within the two openings flanking the center entryway are wood frame. With tripartite fanlights expressing the round top, above three double hung windows above three square, fixed windows, the fenestration continues the Colonial Revival expression of the building. The northern window has been modified to accommodate an ATM machine at grade with a contemporary metal overhang supported by two posts and accessed by side steps.

The approach to the building is a wide, concrete sidewalk centered on the entryway. There are black metal railings on either side of the two sets of steps to the porch. There is an accessibility ramp to the south with contemporary, black metal railings.



Figure 4. The side (southeast) and primary (northeast) elevations of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: Brad Maule, 2020.

SIDE ELEVATIONS

Both elevations on either side of the primary elevation have the same composition to each other and continue the theme of the façade. There are three registers within a brick wall, with each register flanked by low-profile brick pilasters and capped by a limestone cornice. Within each register is a large, round-top arched opening with tripartite windows (3 panes across, 3 panes down) that have hefty mullions. There are limestone springers and keystones at each opening, along with limestone sills and medallions within each pair of spandrels.

*The Pelham Trust Company, Erected 1907
6740 Germantown Avenue, Mt. Airy, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, February 2021 – Page 5*

At the rear of the property is a brick addition, also one-story, but lower in profile with a more discrete limestone cornice under its parapet. The elevation is set back from the primary volume. At the Pelham Road elevation, there is no window opening within the field set off by flanking pilasters. At the opposite elevation, facing the parking lot to the north, there is a rectangular window opening with a limestone keystone and a Chicago-style window behind bars painted to match the mullions.

At the south elevation, there is a contemporary, buff brick addition that extends from the main volume, in front of the rear addition, that contains the drive-thru teller. There is a thick profile of the flat roof that extends over the rear driveway above the teller window.



Figure 5. The rear (southwest) and the side (southeast) elevations of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: Brad Maule, 2020.

REAR ELEVATION

The rear is expressed by the shorter addition with a lower profile, limestone cornice. The brick wall and parapet of the main volume can be seen and the robust portion of the limestone cornice that wraps around from the front of the building stops at the rear elevation above the wall plane of the addition but continues in a profile that matches that at the addition.

To the north of the addition is a brick stack that extends above the roofline. The wall plane is brick with three registers within brick pilasters. The register closest to the stack has a square window opening with two double-hung windows behind metal bars; there is a limestone keystone at this

opening. While the larger, center register has no opening, the southernmost register has a bricked-in opening containing a small vent. This window, like the one at the northernmost register, has a limestone sill and keystone.

To the south of the brick addition is a small addition in buff brick containing a drive-thru window with a flat, Modern overhang. This addition is built up to the curb to allow vehicular access.



Figure 6. The primary (northeast) and side (northwest) elevations of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: Brad Maule, 2020.

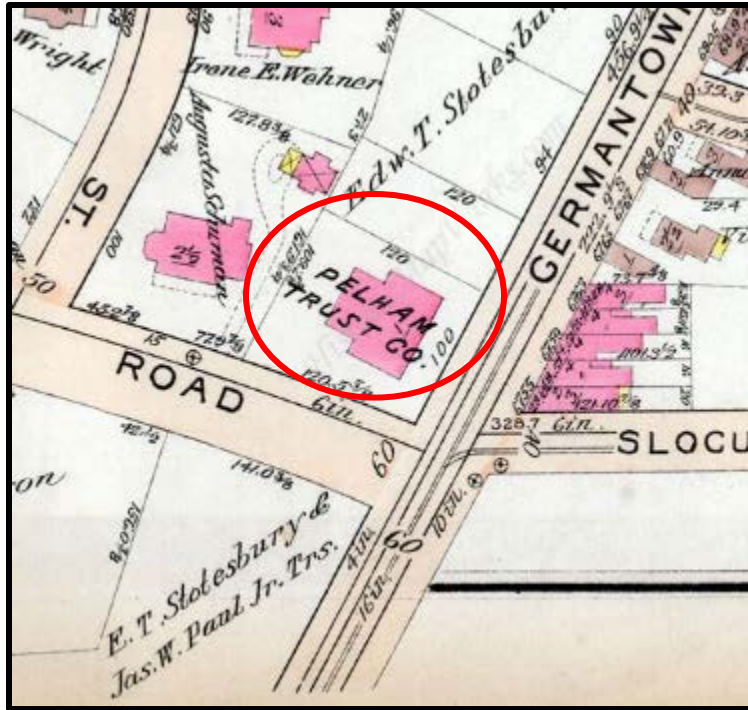


Figure 7. Philadelphia Atlas 1911, Ward 22, Published by G. W. Bromley and Co. Source: Historic Map Works.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pelham Trust Company at 6740 Germantown Avenue is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Located in the Mt. Airy neighborhood of the larger German Township, the subject building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation, as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; and
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

The period of significance for the subject building is from the time of construction in 1907 to 1927, at which time it was consolidated with the Germantown Trust Company, taking on the name of that slightly older institution.

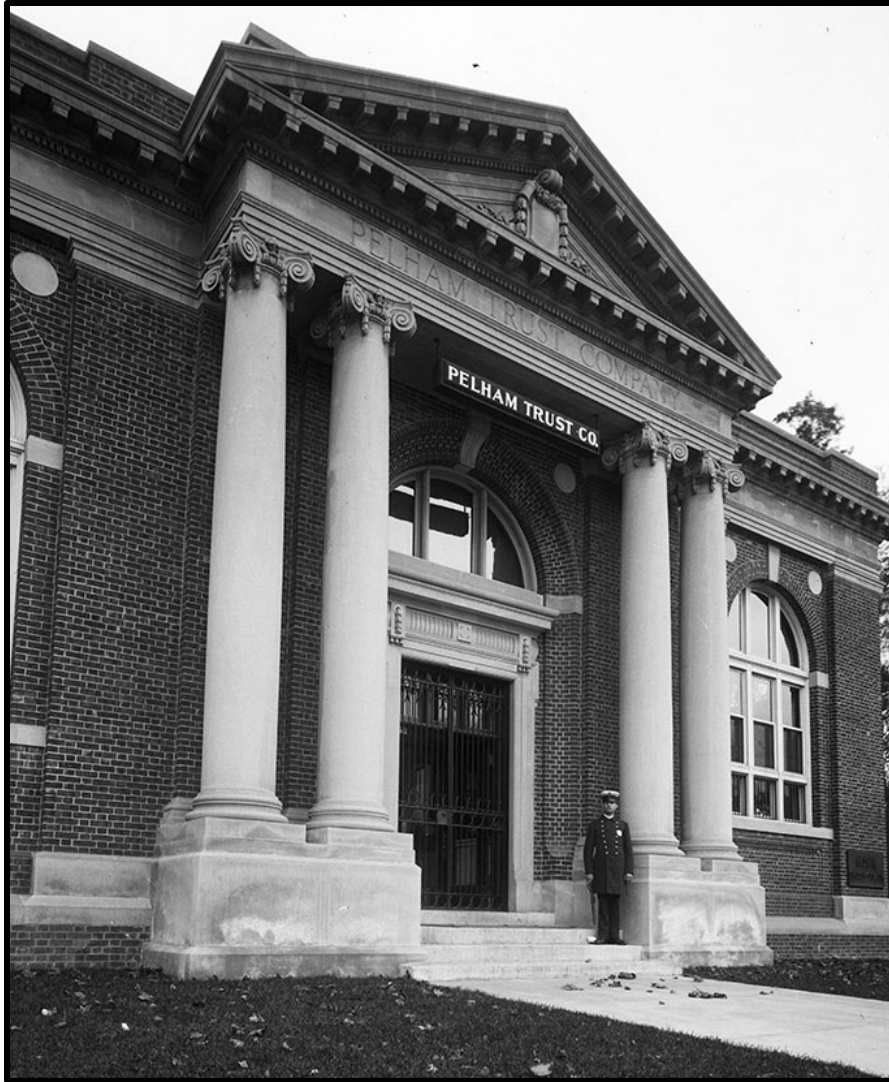


Figure 8. The Pelham Trust Company, taken by Franklin Davenport Edmunds (1874–1948) in 1909. Source: Digital Collections of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

CRITERION J

Constructed in 1907, the Pelham Trust Company represents the economic and historical heritage of Pelham, the planned suburban residential development in the Mt. Airy neighborhood of Philadelphia.

For much of the nineteenth century, the subject property was simply a small portion of the grounds of Phil-Ellena, the country seat of George Washington Carpenter and his wife, Ellen Douglas Carpenter. In 1893, Anthony J. Drexel and Edward T. Stotesbury, both Gilded Age tycoons, purchased the subject property from the Carpenter Estate.¹ Soon after their purchase, they formed

¹ Deed: Sydney L. Wright and the Provident Life and Trust Company of Philadelphia et alia to Anthony J. Drexel and Edward T. Stotesbury, 18 May 1893, Philadelphia Deed Book T.G., No. 341, p. 1, City Archives of Philadelphia.

the Carpenter Land and Improvement Company, which ultimately led to the development of “Pelham,” the residential suburb of approximately 300 homes. It would figure among the city’s early modern, large scale real estate developments contemporary to Overbrook Farms, which Drexel and Stotesbury were financing simultaneously.² The real estate development firm of Wendell & Smith was commissioned with creative license to manage the project, having a reputation of being “unlike other suburban developers,” controlling “every aspect of the development from the platting of land and the installation and maintenance of private infrastructure systems to the financing, design, construction, sales, and rentals of lots and homes.”³ The houses of Pelham were largely built between 1893 and 1910, most of which were designed by a select coterie of architects, specifically chosen by Wendell & Smith. These architects also designed some of the commercial buildings serving Pelham along Germantown Avenue, as well as similar buildings in Overbrook.⁴



Figure 9. Left: a photograph of “A Drug Store, Pelham,” showing the primary, commercial elevation of the subject property, taken by Franklin Davenport Edmunds (1874–1948) in 1909. Source: Digital Collections of the Free Library of Philadelphia, 2018. Figure 10. Right: the primary, commercial elevation of the subject building on Germantown Avenue. Source: Google, 2018.

² *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Overbrook Farms Historic District*. (Philadelphia Historical Commission, October 2004).

³ Laura DiPasquale. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Fairlawn, 30 Pelham Road and 15 Westview Avenue*. (Philadelphia Historical Commission, 2017).

⁴ For a richly detailed description of Wendell and Smith’s methods see the Statement of Significance of the *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Overbrook Farms Historic District*.

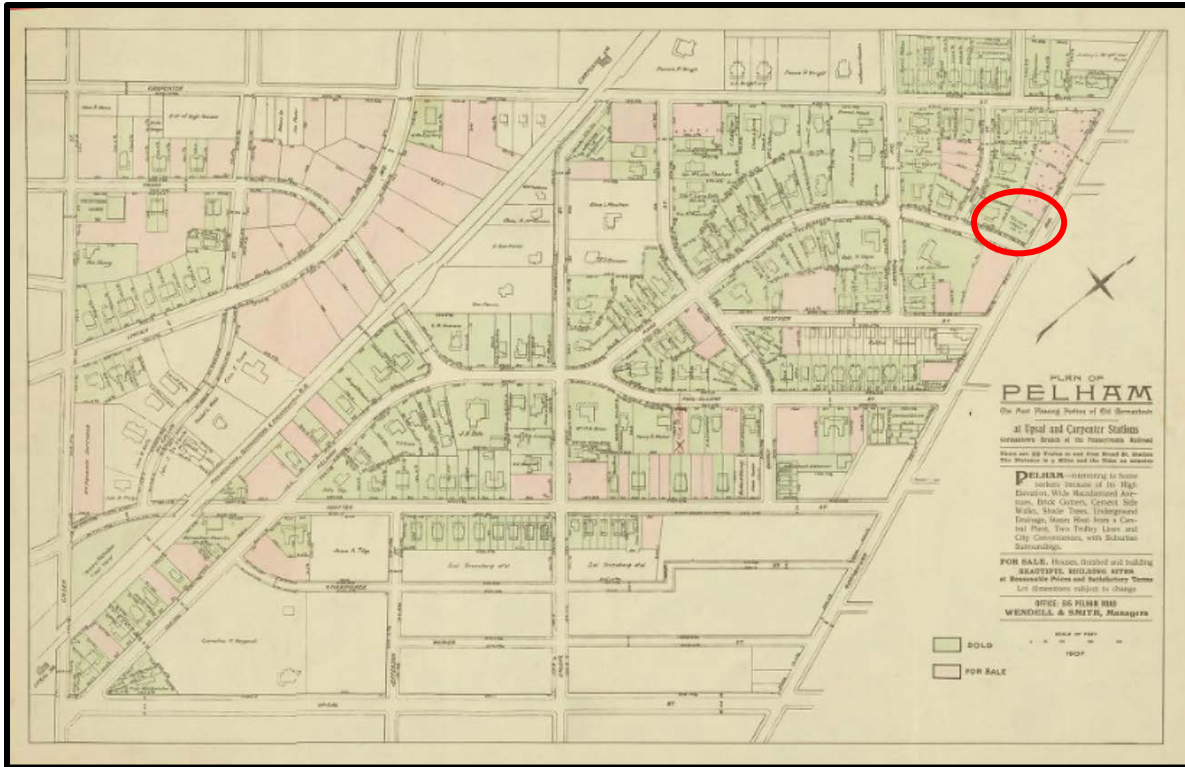


Figure 11. Plan of Pelham, 1907. Source: Source: Pew Museum Loan—Radnor Historical Society Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia (Local ID #: PEW/RHS/2/17; ECW Filename: pat10007/PEW-RHS-2-17.ecw).

In their work on Pelham, Wendell & Smith improved upon the designs, plans, and policies of their past developments, in which they included “wide, curving streets with homes in varied designs set on large lots with minimum setback requirements.” An 1898 advertisement included the following description:

There’s a vista of beautiful road-bed cottages sitting placidly in plots of greensward, and here and there a clump of old trees screen from view all save the odd gable of a Pelham home...

It is a park—that is the first thought that strikes one. The houses are set down in no stiff row of conventional exactitude.⁵

In the period in which many cities were first establishing their zoning laws, Wendell & Smith used the only mechanism at their disposal, establishing strict building and development requirements through deed restrictions. These restrictions ensured that the Pelham subdivision would become and remain the perfect blend of town and country, with much of the beauty of a country place, but with all the modern amenities then associated with a city or first-class suburb.

⁵ “A Word or Two About Pelham Homes,” *Times* (Philadelphia), 14 September 1898.

The scene strikes you as different. It breathes of freedom and the country, yet one walks on cement sidewalks and the road-beds are of Macadam...

It is the country, yet here is the electric light and off in the distance the sound of the gong of the trolley car is heard.⁶

Among the modern amenities, Wendell & Smith made it their business to guarantee clean water, electricity, sewage and drainage systems, steam heat, as well as well-maintained thoroughfares for both pedestrians and vehicles. In the case of Pelham, the subdivision's location was strategically selected as it was served by the Philadelphia, Germantown & Chestnut Hill Railroad—a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Both the Carpenter and Upsal Stations are within walking distance of most homes.⁷

The concepts of Wendell & Smith were not unique to Philadelphia or America even. In fact, it is clear in the advertising for Pelham that the developers were “influenced by the principles laid out by John Ruskin’s *Seven Lamps of Architecture & Lectures on Architecture and Painting*.”⁸ According to the *Nomination: Fairlawn, 30 Pelham Road and 15 Westview Avenue*, a Tudor Revival style mansion and carriage house in the Pelham subdivision, “Wendell & Smith set out to build a community with great variety and ornamentation.”

An 1898 advertisement for the Pelham development is descriptive, using Ruskin quotes:

I would have, then, our ordinary dwelling-houses built to last, and built to be lovely; as rich and full of pleasantness, as may be, within and without, and with such differences as might suit and express each man’s character and occupation, and partly his history.⁹

Adhering to these ideals meant that Pelham featured homes “built of local Wissahickon schist,” and brick, some of which were clad with stucco. The designs “included a wide variety of architectural styles including Tudor, Colonial Revival, Jacobean, Flemish, Italianate, and Dutch Colonial, along with an assortment of idiosyncratic late Victorian hybrids, and additional influences of Queen Anne, Norman, Greek Revival, and East Lake.”¹⁰ Those who purchased building lots in the Pelham development were able to decide on plans furnished by “the builders’ group of capable young architects, or could have one of the architects prepare a new design in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.”¹¹ The architects chosen by Wendell & Smith

⁶ “A Word or Two About Pelham Homes,” *Times* (Philadelphia), 14 September 1898.

⁷ Laura DiPasquale. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Fairlawn, 30 Pelham Road and 15 Westview Avenue*. (Philadelphia Historical Commission, 2017), 11–12.

⁸ Laura DiPasquale. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Fairlawn, 30 Pelham Road and 15 Westview Avenue*. (Philadelphia Historical Commission, 2017), 12–13.

⁹ Quoted from original in the Germantown Historical Society Collections in Lois Frischling, “Pelham: A Residential Enclave” *Germantown Crier* 38 (1986): 86.

¹⁰ Burt Froom, “A Look at Pelham’s Past,” *Pelham: Yesterday and Today* (December 8, 2011): 1, accessed 13 February 2022, via <http://www.wman.net/a-look-at-pelhams-past/>.

¹¹ Laura DiPasquale. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Fairlawn, 30 Pelham Road and 15 Westview Avenue*. (Philadelphia Historical Commission, 2017), 12–13.

included established firms like Hewitt Brothers, as well as budding Philadelphia architects: Horace Trumbauer, William L. Price, Charles Barton Keen and Frank Mead, George T. Pearson, Hazelhurst and Huckle, and D.K. and L.V. Boyd.”¹²

Commercial architecture was also an integral component, and all of the same aesthetic ideals were continued into this milieu. The “west side” of Germantown Avenue between Hortter Street and Carpenter Lane includes several architecturally significant buildings that represent the commercial aspect of the Pelham development. These buildings were the Pelham Pharmacy at 6626 Germantown Avenue; several distinctive Jacobean Revival style buildings at 6614-24 and 6632 Germantown Avenue; and the Mt. Airy Station of the U.S. Post Office at 6700 Germantown Avenue. The Pelham Trust Company was one of the few purely commercial buildings to be constructed on Germantown Avenue in connection with the larger development. The building was designed in a more formal, far grander manner than its aforementioned Germantown Avenue neighbors. In keeping with the prescribed strictures, the subject building is set back from the street with space at each side, a grand gesture in the first decade of the twentieth century on the “Main Street,” which continued to grow more and more dense. In addition to its architectural presence, the Pelham Trust Company would serve as the neighborhood’s official financial institution, being a trust led by prominent local financiers with all the usual accoutrements. However, one major aspect of the business was its Real Estate Department, which would ultimately come to serve Pelham, as well as the larger Mt. Airy neighborhood, Germantown, and Chestnut Hill.



Figures 12. (top) and 13. (bottom) Advertisements of 1909 (top) and 1912 (bottom) for the Real Estate Department of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: Top: “Pelham,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 16 October 1909, 14.; and Bottom: “Germantown,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 17 November 1912, 45.

¹² Lois Frischling, “Pelham: A Residential Enclave,” *Germantown Crier*, 38 (1986), 86.; and Laura DiPasquale. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Fairclawn, 30 Pelham Road and 15 Westview Avenue*. (Philadelphia Historical Commission, 2017), 12–13.



Figure 14. An advertisement for the Real Estate Department of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 16 March 1913, 41.

The Pelham Trust Company was formed by December 1905 with a projected location “on Germantown avenue opposite the car barn.”¹³ The details of the project became more specific in January 1906, when “the erection of a new building” was announced “at Germantown avenue and Carpenter street.” Some of the “heavy subscribers” of shares of the company” included Jacob S. Disstori, Elwood D. Toland, Walter F. Hagar, Mark B. Reeves, and E. Lowler Stokes.¹⁴ Construction plans were announced in December 1906, revealing that the building would be “one-story and basement high, built of brick and terra cotta, 40 x 80-feet, and contain up-to-date banking fixtures.”¹⁵ By mid-December it was announced that Churchman & Thomas, Architects, of 532 Walnut Street, had won the design competition, and completed plans, for which they were seeking estimates for “a handsome new banking house for the Pelham Trust Company, Germantown Avenue and Philellena Street.”¹⁶ Churchman & Thomas completed revised plans by February 1907.¹⁷ Permit No. 800, Application for Erection of New Buildings, is dated February 26, 1907, listing A. Whitehead of 1624 Latimer Street as the contractor.¹⁸ The property was officially transferred from Edward T. Stotesbury and James W. Paul, Jr. to the Pelham Trust Company on April 3, 1907 for \$5,000.¹⁹ The new property owner was subject to various reservations,

¹³ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide*, 13 December 1905, 909.

¹⁴ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide*, 31 January 1906, 67.

¹⁵ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 5 December 1906, 790.

¹⁶ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 12 December 1906, 806.

¹⁷ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, 13 February 1907, 100.

¹⁸ Permit No. 800, Application for Erection of New Buildings, 26 February 1907, City Archives of Philadelphia.

¹⁹ Deed: Edward T. Stotesbury and James W. Paul, Jr. to the Pelham Trust Company, 7 April 1907, Philadelphia Deed Book W.S.V., No. 814, p. 304. City Archives of Philadelphia.

exemptions, covenants, and restrictions, almost all of which were part of the developer's efforts to control the quality of the Pelham neighborhood.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.				
Name.....	North Philadelphia Trust Company* ¹	Northwestern Trust Company* ¹	Pelham Trust Company* ¹	The Pennsylvania Co. for Insurance on Lives & Granting Annuities* ²
Address.....	Broad Street, Germantown & Erie Avenues	Ridge & Columbia Avenues	6740 Germantown Avenue	517 Chestnut Street
Assets				
Stocks and Bonds.....	\$248,650.45	\$362,326.58	\$236,625.62	\$7,804,592.88
Loans, Dem., Time & Spl.	626,437.15	1,035,430.83	318,660.00	11,188,451.45
Mortgage Loans.....	259,551.00	229,825.00	65,080.00	2,172,765.05
Bills Purchased.....	130,661.17		47,313.00	183,000.00
Cash on Hand.....	84,017.00	80,350.14	25,767.73	941,681.48
Cash in Bank.....	89,728.19	132,885.78	49,172.22	2,598,657.68
Real Estate.....			30,000.00	34,800.00
Banking House.....	44,000.00	68,000.00		898,835.00
Furniture and Fixtures.....	3,000.00		11,000.00	
Safe Deposit Vaults.....				
Accrued Int. Receivable.....	1,090.50		2,383.15	185,538.57
Accounts Receivable.....	622.42			37,505.27
Insurance and R. E. Dept.				15,449.70
Other Assets.....	5,846.25			1,770.64
	\$1,493,634.13	\$1,914,818.33	\$786,001.72	\$26,063,047.72
Liabilities				
Capital Stock.....	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$2,000,000.00
Surplus.....	85,000.00	125,000.00	60,000.00	3,500,000.00
Undivided Profits.....	9,179.32	17,736.98	7,136.68	950,605.22
Deposits.....	1,244,007.21	1,622,081.35	598,361.76	19,470,630.97
Dividends Unpaid.....	3.00			520.00
Certified Checks.....	240.00			15,017.13
Accrued Expense.....			53.75	4,903.22
Accounts Payable.....			449.53	85,567.33
Insurance and R. E. Dept.				35,803.85
Other Liabilities.....	5,204.60			
	\$1,493,634.13	\$1,914,818.33	\$786,001.72	\$26,063,047.72
Commenced Business.....	1903	1905	1906	1812
Quo. for Stk: Par-Bd-Askd	Par \$50—Bd 100 1/4%	Par \$50	Par \$100	Par \$100—Bd 542%
Quo. for Stk: Last Sale.....	100 1/2%	224 1/2%	131 1/2%	551%
1909 Div., Annual Rate.....	6%	6%		20%
1910 Div., Semi-An. Rate	3%	3 1/2%		10%
New York Correspondent	National Park Bank	Chase National Bank	National City Bank	Brown Brothers & Co.
Officers				
President.....	William M. Gordon	William Freihofer	Jacob S. Disston	C. S. W. Packard
Vice-Presidents.....	Chas. P. Donnelly	Thos. J. Pendergast	E. J. Kerrick	Thomas S. Gates
Treasurer.....	John M. Snyder	A. Schimmel Jr.	Walter F. Hager	
Secretary.....	Lee Sowden	Alex. D. Robinson	W. M. Churchman	A. V. Morton
Asst. Treasurer.....		Alex. D. Robinson	W. M. Churchman	John J. R. Craven
Asst. Secretary.....				C. S. Newhall
Trust Officer.....	W. J. Snyder			J. Williamson 3d
				Thos. S. Gates
Directors				
	Chas. P. Donnelly	H. F. Gillingham	Jacob S. Disston	C. S. W. Packard
	William M. Gordon	William H. Bilyeu	Walter F. Hager	Edward H. Coates
	Wm. H. Houston	Godfrey Schmelzer	E. J. Kerrick	Wm. W. Justice
	Andrew P. Maloney	William Allen	F. S. McIlhenny	Craige Lippincott
	Walter T. Merrick	Thos. J. Pendergast	Albert H. Disston	Edw. S. Buckley
	Lowrie Montgomery	Thos. M. O'Brien	Edw. A. Schumann	Edward Merrell
	D. Chas. Murtha	A. Schimmel Jr.	Mark B. Reeves	Arthur E. Newbold
	J. Newton Peck	William Ewing	Henry P. Wright	George H. Frazier
	George Pohlig	William Freihofer	E. R. Tourison	Thos. DeW. Cuyler
	George Schmidt	Benjamin Bertollet	William Disston	George F. Baer
	John M. Snyder	Thos. J. Ward	E. L. Stokes	J. Percy Keating
	John Sowden	Wm. McMahan	Frank W. Thomas	Alfred C. Harrison
	C. A. Van Dervoort	J. W. Logue	Thos. B. Meehan	Alba B. Johnson
	F. W. Walter	Christian A. Fisher	Lynford Biddle	
		Philip Hailbach	William W. Harper	
			John M. Hartman	
			W. M. Churchman	

¹Statement as of April 30, 1910 280

Figure 15. *The Trust Companies of the United States.* (United States Mortgage & Trust Company, 1910).

The Pelham Trust Company was perhaps the primary financial institution of the neighborhood for many decades. It was selected as a “State depository by the State Revenue Commission” in April 1908.²⁰ The institution also included a Real Estate Department, selling properties in Pelham, as well as Germantown, Mt. Airy, and Chestnut Hill, as shown in Figures 12, 13, and 14. A “title

²⁰ “Pelham Trust Selected,” *Harrisburg Telegraph*, 14 April 1908, 1.

department” was organized in 1923.²¹ On May 30, 1927, the Germantown Trust Company and the Pelham Trust Company were consolidated to form the Germantown Trust Company, which was the latest incorporation of the Germantown Real Estate Deposit & Trust Company, founded as such in 1889.²²

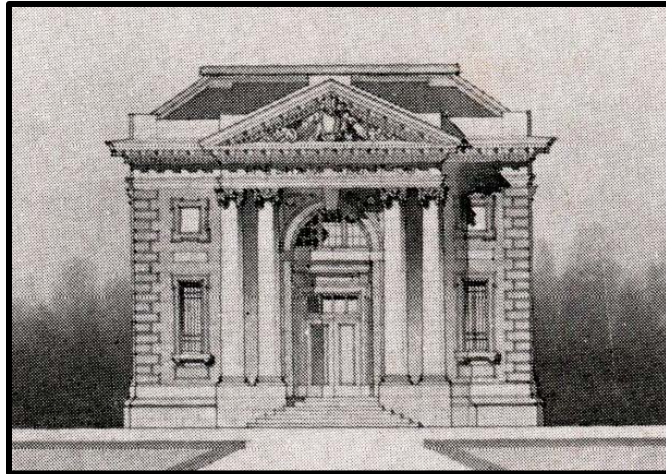


Figure 16. A proposed primary elevation of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: *AIA/T-Square Yearbook* (1906), 74.

CRITERION D

Built in 1907, the Pelham Trust Company is a distinctive, architect-designed example of the Colonial Revival style as applied to a banking house on a neighborhood scale in Philadelphia during the first decade of the twentieth century. Clearly infused with the spirit of the École des Beaux Arts, the subject building features a characteristic array of features and hallmarks of the Colonial Revival, as described in the Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide published by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC).²³

As detailed in the PHMC Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, the Colonial Revival Style, which was prevalent between 1880 and 1960, is “...one of the most frequently produced and enduring popular styles in America...”²⁴ While always a constant of the Quaker City’s built environment, the style enjoyed renewed popularity after it was showcased at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia. This led to a “rise in national spirit” that ultimately “fed the flowering of the American Renaissance,” which “naturally produced an interest in the events and artifacts of Colonial times.”²⁵ A highly creative period of Colonial Revivalism followed the

²¹ “The Pelham Trust Company of Mt. Airy,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 23 May 1923, 25.

²² “Germantown Trust Co. (Philadelphia, Pa.),” *Moody’s Manual of Investments*, (New York, New York: Moody’s Investors Service, 1944), 395.

²³ The Colonial Revival Style 1880-1960, Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, published online by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Accessed on 13 February 2022. <<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/colonial-revival.html>>

²⁴ The Colonial Revival Style 1880-1960, Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, published online by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Accessed on 13 February 2022. <<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/colonial-revival.html>>

²⁵ Robert A.M. Stern, et. al. *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915*. (New York, New York: Random House Incorporated, 1995), 342.

Centennial in the 1880s and 1890s as a reaction to the eclecticism of the Victorian era. In Germantown, which historically included Mt. Airy, architects like Mantle Fielding produced domestic works referred to by George Thomas, Architectural Historian, as reflective of “a moment of Colonial whimsy.”²⁶

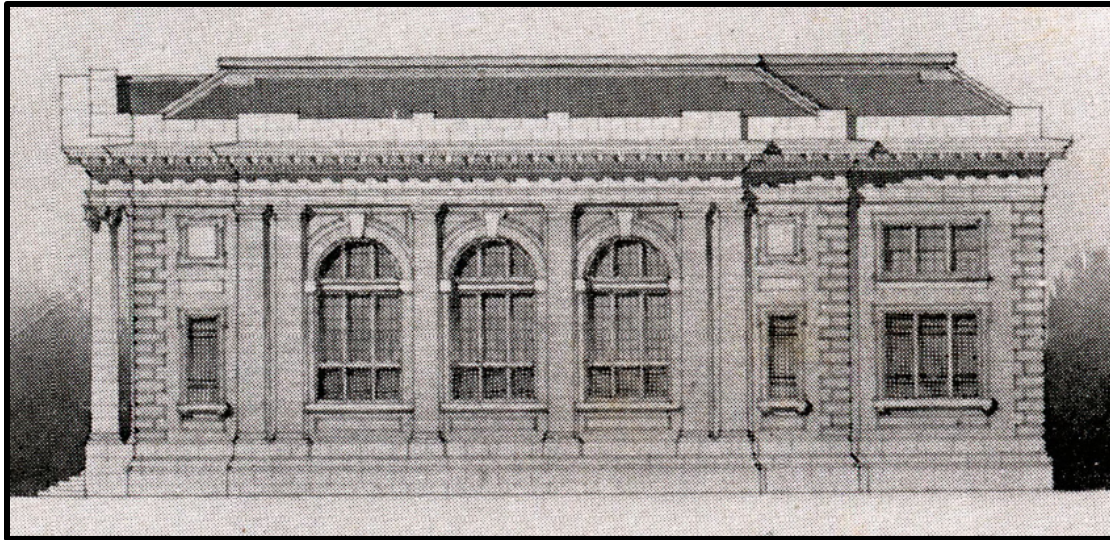


Figure 17. A proposed side elevation of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: *AIA/T-Square Yearbook* (1906), 74.

The “White City,” created for the Columbian Exposition of 1893 at Chicago, Illinois, inspired the further evolution of the style in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Like the period prior, the implementation of the Colonial Revival did not always lead to period Georgian replicas, but, instead, inspired the reemergence of the stylistic characteristics and features in new and innovative ways.²⁷ While not exactly the Anglo-American Georgian described in New York 1900, the employment of the Colonial Revival in commercial and institutional architecture became more dignified and refined, in some cases embracing important aspects of the École des Beaux Arts. In Philadelphia a strain of the Colonial Revival emerged wherein the characteristics of the Georgian Revival were presented with Classical Revival/Neoclassical characteristics. Churchman & Thomas’ design for the subject building represents that period of the style. Walter Horstmann Thomas (1876-1948) of Churchman & Thomas initially designed the building in 1906 in the Classical Revival/Neoclassical style, reflecting his time in “atelier Lambert” at the École des Beaux Arts between 1901 and 1902.²⁸ However, the revised design led to a more Colonial Revival style building without fully vacated his Beaux Arts training.

²⁶ George E. Thomas. *The Buildings of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, Buildings in the United States*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011.

²⁷ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America’s Domestic Architecture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 408–432.

²⁸ E. Delaire. *Les Architectes Élèves de L’École des Beaux-Arts*. (Paris, France: Librairie de la Construction Moderne, 1907).

The PHMC Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide also identifies “banks” as among the “Common Building Types” designed in the Colonial Revival style.²⁹ The Pelham Trust Company does, in fact, embody distinguishing characteristics of the Colonial Revival style as applied to commercial and institutional buildings in the first decades of the twentieth century. The PHMC Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide also describes twelve major “Identifiable Features” that were commonly associated with the Colonial Revival style. The subject building possesses all but two of the said features (numbers align with the style guide):

- No. 1: Columned porch or portico
- No. 2: Front door sidelights
- No. 3: Pedimented door, windows or dormers
- No. 5: Pilasters
- No. 6: Symmetrical façade
- No. 7: Double-hung windows, often multi-paned
- No. 8: Triple windows often with incised patterns
- No. 10: Decorative pendants
- No. 11: Side gabled or hipped roofs
- No. 12: Cornice with dentils or modillions³⁰

Exhibiting distinguishing characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, the subject property satisfies Criterion D.

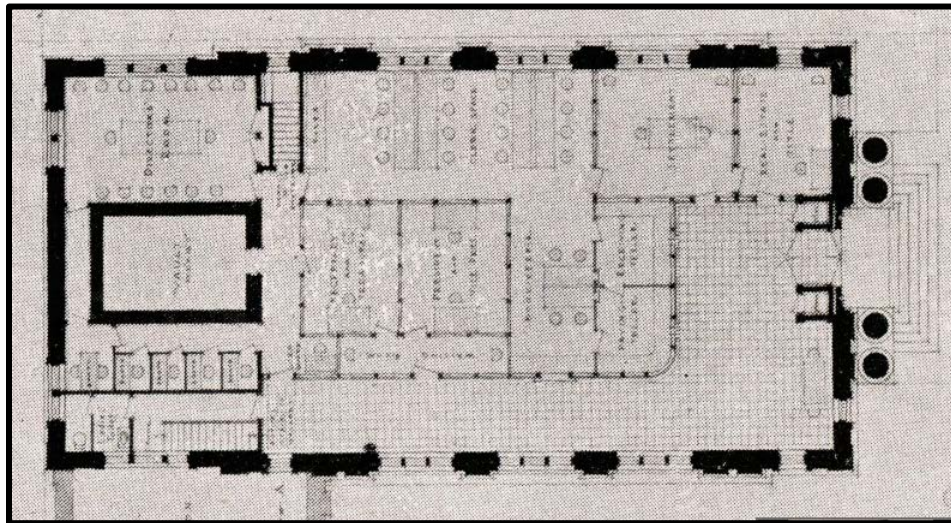


Figure 18. A proposed floor plan of the Pelham Trust Company. Source: *AIA/T-Square Yearbook* (1906), 74.

²⁹ The Colonial Revival Style 1880-1960, Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, published online by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Accessed on 13 February 2022. < <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/colonial-revival.html>>

³⁰ The Colonial Revival Style 1880-1960, Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, published online by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Accessed on 13 February 2022. < <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/colonial-revival.html>>

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