ACTIVITIES OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION STAFF
JUNE 2022

DESIGN REVIEW
Design review continues to be the staff’s primary task, with all staff members collaborating on the processing of building permit applications. The permit reporting utility in eCLIPSE shows that 189 permit applications were approved for historically designated properties in May 2022. The staff returned 24 additional permit applications to applicants with requests for revisions and/or additional information. The Historical Commission staff conducted an additional 29 detail reviews outside of eCLIPSE.

DESIGNATION
Designation tasks occupy much of the staff’s time. Nearly all staff time not devoted to design review is dedicated to designation-related tasks.

The reviews of the following nominations have been continued by the staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Continued From</th>
<th>Continued To</th>
<th>Total Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8835 Germantown Ave</td>
<td>Women's Center</td>
<td>7/21/2021</td>
<td>7/20/2022</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2301 Fairmount Ave</td>
<td>Rothacker-Orth Brewery and Saloon</td>
<td>1/19/2022</td>
<td>7/20/2022</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400,1406-18, 1420 S 3rd St</td>
<td>Sacred Heart of Jesus Church</td>
<td>8/30/2021</td>
<td>7/20/2022</td>
<td>10 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>234 and 240 Hermitage St</td>
<td>Church of the Holy Family</td>
<td>8/30/2021</td>
<td>7/20/2022</td>
<td>10 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148-54 E Mount Airy Ave</td>
<td>Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church</td>
<td>8/30/2021</td>
<td>7/20/2022</td>
<td>10 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4501 Poplar St</td>
<td>Stephen Smith Home</td>
<td>3/16/2022</td>
<td>7/20/2022</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1010 S 10th St</td>
<td>First Italian Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia</td>
<td>8/13/2021</td>
<td>8/12/2022</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001 W Luzerne Ave</td>
<td>Little Flower High School for Girls</td>
<td>8/30/2021</td>
<td>9/21/2022</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2901 W Allegheny Ave</td>
<td>Mercy Career and Technical High School</td>
<td>8/30/2021</td>
<td>9/21/2022</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1611 Walnut St</td>
<td>Hollinger Building</td>
<td>6/15/2022</td>
<td>9/21/2022</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>914-26 Christian St</td>
<td>St. Paul's Roman Catholic Parochial School</td>
<td>10/8/2021</td>
<td>10/11/2022</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5920 Greene St</td>
<td>Thomas C. Potter House</td>
<td>12/1/2021</td>
<td>11/30/2022</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>775 S Christopher Columbus Blvd</td>
<td>Piers 39 and 41 South</td>
<td>12/1/2021</td>
<td>11/30/2022</td>
<td>11 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3401 Solly Ave</td>
<td>Stonyhurst</td>
<td>1/19/2022</td>
<td>1/1/2023</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The staff administered the reviews of designation matters at the 10 June 2022 meeting of the Historical Commission. At that meeting, the Historical Commission took the following actions on designation matters:
- Designated two individual resources, 6740 Germantown Avenue, Pelham Trust; and 224 W. Washington Lane, Taws Cottage.

The staff administered the reviews of designation matters at the 15 June 2022 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. At that meeting, the Committee considered the following designation matters:
- Individual nominations for 700 Westview Avenue, Sadie T.M. Alexander House; 1901 W. Oxford Street, Sultan Jihad Ahmad Community Foundation; 4500 and 4506 Tyson Avenue, Disston Memorial Presbyterian Church; 2852-56 Frankford Avenue, Isoka
Tribe, No. 379, Improved Order of Red Men; 8720 Germantown Avenue, The Yellowstone; and 1102 Master Street, Sister Rosetta Tharpe House; and,

- A district nomination for the Christian Street Historic District.

Ms. Chantry and Mr. Farnham participated in an information session for property owners in the proposed Christian Street Historic District hosted by the South of South Neighborhood Association on 1 June 2022.

The addresses for the properties at 26, 28, and 30 S. 21st Street were removed from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The Historical Commission designated the properties on 3 June 1982. As the report of the Committee on Certification of 4 May 1982 indicates, the properties were designated to protect the Addison Hutton-designed, brick and terra cotta rowhouses that stood on them at the time. In 1988, the property owner applied to the Historical Commission for approval to demolish the rowhouses. After a protracted review that took place at meetings of the Architectural Committee on 28 July 1988, 25 August 1988, and 31 May 1990, and of the Historical Commission on 14 September 1988, 8 February 1989, 10 May 1989, 13 June 1990, and 14 November 1990, the Historical Commission approved the demolition application on 14 November 1990 and the buildings were subsequently demolished. The addresses for the properties should have been removed from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 1990, but, owing to an apparent oversight or clerical error, the addresses have remained on the Register for more than three decades, despite the fact that the historic buildings were demolished with the requisite approvals and permits. To correct this error, the staff removed the addresses from the Philadelphia Register on 2 June 2022.

The address for the property at 5250 Unruh Avenue was removed from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places at the direction of the Law Department. As is explained in the appeals section below, the owner of the property at 5250 Unruh Avenue appealed the Historical Commission’s designation. On 25 April 2022, Judge Ann Marie Coyle of the Court of Common Pleas issued her decision, overturning the Historical Commission and undoing the designation. The Law Department decided not to appeal the decision and directed the staff to remove the address from the Register on 3 June 2022.

**FINANCIAL HARDSHIP**

The Historical Commission has no pending financial hardship applications.

**SURVEY**

The initial project to install, configure, and test Arches for use as the survey data management platform was completed in 2020. Philadelphia’s installation of Arches has been named PlatForm for the first map of the City of Philadelphia, which William Penn called a “Plat-Form.” Arches is an open source, web- and geospatially based, customizable information system that was purpose-built by the Getty Conservation Institute and World Monuments Fund to inventory and manage immovable cultural heritage. Arches is the inventory and data management platform for the City’s comprehensive, citywide survey of historic resources. The consultant, Farallon Geographics of San Francisco, worked with the staff to design, customize, configure, and install Philadelphia’s installation of Arches and continues to work with the staff on maintenance and upgrades. The Historical Commission received a $25,000 CLG grant from the State Historic Preservation Office earlier this year to fund enhancements to Arches. The grant will fund upgrading Philadelphia’s installation of Arches from Version 4 to Version 6; enhancements to the data collection capabilities, especially for nominators; the creation of additional resource models, customized structures that hold specific types of data; and preparing the system to be
used by the general public. Mr. Farnham is meeting bi-weekly with the Arches consultants at Farallon Geographics to plan for the upgrades to the Arches installation. The consultant presented a proposed scope of work, which is currently under review. Mr. Farnham is working on contracting for the project.

The Department of Planning & Development received a grant of $250,000 from the William Penn Foundation to develop and pilot a historic resource survey program. Martha Cross, the deputy director of the Division of Planning & Zoning, is leading the work. Megan Schmitt and Shannon Garrison of the Historical Commission’s staff are assisting her. The survey pilot project will explore ways to engage with populations and histories not currently reflected in the properties listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Through the project, Department of Planning & Development seeks to expand the traditional understanding of preservation to include a wider range of tools and more comprehensive understanding of cultural heritage. The ultimate goal is to develop a process that engages the public, ties together work across City departments, and ultimately leads to strategic and equitable designations and documentation to protect both tangible and intangible resources. The project released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to qualified firms in late 2021. Proposals were due at the beginning of December 2021 and consultant teams were interviewed in January 2022. The members of the chosen team were announced publicly on 12 April 2022. The team members are the ROZ Group, Little Giant Creative, and Partners for Sacred Places. Their experience includes project management of major historic African American sites. They have designed social justice-driven programs related to Philadelphia history. Team members have engaged with diverse communities in the city for decades.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION INCENTIVES
The Historical Commission’s staff did not issue any incentive letters in June 2022.

APPEALS
The following permit decisions are or were under appeal at the Board of License & Inspection Review (BLIR):

- 1435-41 Walnut Street
  - At its September 2021 meeting, the Historical Commission denied an application to enlarge window openings at 1435-41 Walnut Street. The property owner appealed the decision to the BLIR. The Historical Commission submitted its official record to the BLIR on 3 December 2021. The BLIR scheduled a hearing for 14 December 2021 but then postponed it. The hearing has not been rescheduled despite several requests for a hearing date from the appellant.

The following appeals to the Court of Common Pleas and Commonwealth Court are in process:

- 156 W. School House Lane
  - The Historical Commission designated 156 W. School House Lane on 12 March 2021. The property owner, the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, has appealed the designation to the Court of Common Pleas. The Historical Commission’s staff has assembled the record of the designation for submission to the Court. It was due on 5 July 2021, but the Court continued the case at the request of the appellant on 1 July 2021. The Commission’s record was submitted 19 January 2022. The case has been continued as the property owner explores options.

- 401-09 N. 65th Street
  - Attorney Neil Sklaroff has appealed the designation of 401-09 N. 65th Street, St. Donato’s Roman Catholic Church to the Court of Common Pleas. He claims that
the owner of the property, the parish, not the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, was not notified of the proposed designation in a timely manner. The court remanded the matter to the Historical Commission and Committee of Historic Designation for a new review with the property owner present. The new reviews will be scheduled for September and October 2022.

• 5250 Unruh Avenue
  o The owner of the property at 5250 Unruh Avenue appealed the Historical Commission’s designation. The Tacony Community Development Corporation nominated the property, which was designated on 9 December 2020. The Historical Commission’s submitted its record to the court on 29 October 2021. The Court of Common Pleas held oral arguments on 24 March 2022. Leonard Reuter represented the City. Mr. Farnham attended. On 25 April 2022, Judge Ann Marie Coyle issued her decision, overturning the Historical Commission and undoing the designation. On 3 June 2022, the Law Department decided not to appeal the Court of Common Pleas decision because it is concerned that an appeal of a weak designation to Commonwealth Court may have adverse effects that extend beyond this particular case. The property has been removed from the Philadelphia register of Historic Places.

• Chestnut Street East Historic District
  o Four property owners, the owners of 700-02 and 704, 709-13, 727-35, and 801-17 Chestnut Street, filed appeals of the designation of the Chestnut Street East Historic District, which the Historical Commission designated at its November 2021 meeting. The appeal related to 727-35 Chestnut Street was resolved when the Historical Commission classified the property as non-contributing in the district at its February 2022 meeting. The Historical Commission submitted records to the court for the appeals for 709-13 and 801-17 Chestnut Street on 29 April 2022. Upon review of the 709-13 and 801-17 Chestnut Street cases, the Law Department determined that amending the classification of the surface parking lots initially nominated as non-contributing to contributing to the district solely on the basis of Criterion I constituted legal error and agreed to settle the cases. The Law Department directed the staff to remove the contributing classifications and to classify the properties 709-13 and 801-17 Chestnut Street as non-contributing in the inventory. The appeals of the designations of 700-02 and 704 Chestnut Street are pending.

• Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District
  o Nearly all property owners in the recently designated Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District have appealed the designation to the Court of Common Pleas. The Historical Commission submitted its record to the court on 29 April 2022. The appellant’s and appellee’s briefs were due 6 June and 4 July 2022 respectively. Oral arguments are scheduled for 4 August 2022. The property owners participating in the appeal are listed below:
    ▪ 5101R-49 Unruh Avenue
    ▪ 5201 Unruh Avenue
    ▪ 5223 Unruh Avenue
    ▪ 5235-45 Unruh Avenue
    ▪ 5247 Unruh Avenue
    ▪ 6801 New State Road, Unit A
    ▪ 6801 New State Road, Unit B
    ▪ 6801 New State Road, Unit C
ENFORCEMENT
With the Law Department and Department of Licenses & Inspections, the staff is pursuing numerous enforcement cases for unpermitted work, non-compliant work, and failure to maintain in good repair.

UNSAFE AND IMMINENTLY DANGEROUS CASES
No cases currently underway.

SECTION 106
Ms. Garrison is conducting federally mandated Section 106 reviews for the DHCD undertakings assisted by HUD. The Historical Commission is planning to assume all Section 106 reviews for the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) as part of a larger Department of Planning & Development effort to assume all responsibility for PHA’s federal environmental reviews.

OFFICE
The City of Philadelphia closed all non-essential City offices in March 2020, owing to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Historical Commission’s staff was assigned to work remotely from home. The Historical Commission’s offices reopened on 1 February 2022; all in-person, in-office interaction with applicants are on an appointment-only basis. Appointments are being scheduled with an automated online software system. All public meetings are being held remotely at least through the summer of 2022. The Historical Commission’s staff is currently splitting its time between in-office and remote work.

STAFFING
The Historical Commission’s staff is working with the City’s Office of Human Resources (OHR) and the Department of Planning and Development’s Human Resources to hire four staff members at the Historic Preservation Planner 1 level. Two will be replacements for Mses. Keller and Schmitt and two will be new positions. The application period for the positions closed on 20 May 2022 and OHR compiled a civil service eligible list, from which we will be able to interview and hire. Interviews will take place in July and new staff members will likely be in place in September, after undergoing background checks, which take four to six weeks.

The Historical Commission’s intern Nika Faulkner is busy working on nominations of sites documenting the histories of underserved populations. Ms. Chantry is supervising her.

OTHER