

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

**WEDNESDAY, 18 JANUARY 2023
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		
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.		X	
Bruce Laverty		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 Supervisor
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner Supervisor
Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner II
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner I
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner I
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner I

The following persons attended the online meeting:

Fred Morrison
Regina Miller
Thaddeus Squire
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Nick Kraus, Heritage Consulting Group
Nathan Farris, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Frank Dalicandro
Jacqueline Wiggins
Steven Peitzman
David Traub, Save Our Sites
Alex Balloon
Nancy Pontone
Loretta Micola

Cynthia Dutwin
Michael LaFlash
Adrienne Carpenter
Allison Weiss, So/Lo Germantown
Monica Gonzalez
Michael Ramos
Leah Silverstein
Deborah Gary, SPPAAA and ACES Veterans Museum
Nika Faulkner
James Saile
Sherman Aronson
Wadell Ridley, St. Joseph's University
Matthew McClure, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society
Douglas Kingsbury
Jay Farrell

DRAFT

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 1131 S BROAD ST

Name of Resource: Boot N Saddle Bar Sign

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Frank Del Borrello

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Alex Till, alexander.till@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate an object, the Boot N Saddle Bar neon sign, attached to the property at 1131 S. Broad Street, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. An eight-foot wide and twenty-foot-tall stainless steel and porcelain sign with neon lighting elements is attached to the front of the three-story masonry commercial building that stands on the property.

The nomination contends that the Boot N Saddle Bar sign satisfies Criteria for Designation D, H, and J as a historic object. It argues that the sign embodies many of the distinguishing characteristics of the Neon Spectacular design style as seen on neon signs in the twentieth century, satisfying Criterion D.

The nomination also argues that the sign, owing to its rare and complex design and position situated along the commercial corridor of South Broad Street, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, satisfying Criterion H.

The nomination further argues that the sign, through its connection to midcentury mom and pop commerce, neon sign design, and the area's Italian American community history, exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, satisfying Criterion J.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the object on the property at 1131 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, H, and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:07:12

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Till presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Patrick Grossi represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Grossi outlined the nomination and offered his support for it. He added that the Preservation Alliance has been in contact with the current building tenants, who are in support of the nomination.
- Ms. Cooperman asked if a representative of the property owner was in attendance. It was determined that no such person was present. Mr. Till confirmed that the staff has not been in contact with the owner, except to mail the notice letters.
- Ms. Barucco mentioned that she loved reading the nomination and enjoyed seeing the sign restored. She added that it is a great nomination and is in support of it. She added that she would like to see additional neon signs nominated in the future.

- Ms. Miller agreed and added that she believes resources like this one are being lost quickly. She emphasized the idea of context and mentioned that she worries about how the object would be cared for in the case it ended up being removed from its current building. She would like to see solid plans for the perpetual care of objects when they are nominated.
- Ms. Barucco agreed with the comments on the location of the sign and added that all nominations represent a commitment for long-term care of resources and speculated on caring for the sign even if it ended up being moved at some point in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Beisert offered support for the nomination and asked how the designation of a historic object would apply to the sign and its relation to the building it is currently attached to.
 - Mr. Farnham answered with the definition for a historic object and mentioned that there was the potential for the object to be moved to a new location, but a move would have to be approved by the Historical Commission.
 - Mr. Reuter, the Historical Commission's attorney, added that moving a historic object would be considered a demolition and would be reviewed as such. He added that the nomination appears to suggest a strong association of the sign with its current building and that that context is important. He asked to confirm that the ownership of the property has not changed.
 - Mr. Farnham answered that the staff looked into the ownership of the building and sent written notification to both the property owner and tenant.
- Mr. Grossi added that the nominators submitted their application with the understanding that the ownership has not recently changed, though there are new tenants present. He understood the technical possibility of the sign being moved but highlighted the significance the sign has in its current location in the context of S. Broad Street.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The sign is an important example of neon sign design along the S. Broad Street corridor.
- The sign exemplifies and highlights the community history of the neighborhood and is an established visual feature along South Broad Street.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates argues that the sign embodies many of the distinguishing characteristics of the Neon Spectacular design style as seen on neon signs in the twentieth century, satisfying Criterion D.
- The nomination demonstrates that the sign, owing to its rare and complex design and position situated along the commercial corridor of S. Broad Street, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, satisfying Criterion H.
- The nomination demonstrates that the sign, through its connection to mid-century mom and pop commerce, neon sign design, and the area's Italian American community history, exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the Boot N Saddle Bar

Sign on the property at 1131 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, H, and J and should be designated as historic and listed as an object on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ITEM: 1131 S Broad St MOTION: Designate, Criteria D, H, and J. MOVED BY: Barucco SECONDED BY: Miller					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen					X
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3	0			3

ADDRESS: 5401-03 VINE ST

Name of Resource: Crystal Bird Fauset House

Review: Designate

Property Owner: UCM Enterprises LLC

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Ted Maust, theodore.maust@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5401-03 Vine Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. A three-story brick townhouse, the home of Crystal Bird Fauset from 1933 to 1944, stands on the property. The nomination contends property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J for its association with Fauset, a renowned Philadelphia politician and early Civil Rights advocate.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 5401-03 Vine Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:20:30

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Patrick Grossi represented the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia, the nominator.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Miller commented that the nomination was beautifully written and succinct and shared a story of which she had previously been unaware.
- Ms. Barucco provided some critical feedback for the nomination asking for indicators of North on images and noting some typographical errors.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jaqueline Wiggins and Deborah Gary, both representing the Society to Preserve Philadelphia African American Assets (SPPAAA), commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The life and achievements of Crystal Bird Fauset were under-recognized and worthy of commemoration.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J, for its association with Crystal Bird Fauset, a renowned Philadelphia politician and early Civil Rights advocate.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5401-03 Vine Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ITEM: 5401-03 VINE ST					
MOTION: Designate, Criteria A and J					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
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	3	0			3

ADDRESS: 905-07 S 20TH ST

Name of Resource: Calanthe Hall

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Jerome Whack

Nominator: Nika Faulkner, Historical Commission Intern

Staff Contact: Heather Hendrickson, Heather.Hendrickson@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 905-07 S. 20th Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the two former brick rowhouses which have been combined into one property satisfy Criterion for Designation J. The nomination argues that Calanthe Hall's connection to the history of Philadelphia's Black fraternal organizations, especially Black female fraternal organizations, make it eligible for designation under Criterion J, as exemplifying the cultural, political, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community. The period of significance spans from 1941, when the property was sold to the Black female fraternal auxiliary of the Knights of Pythias called the Grand Court of Calanthe, to 2004 when the property was purchased by the current owner to

ensure continued support of the fraternal organization and its community members in the Southwest Center City/Graduate Hospital neighborhood.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 905-07 S. 20th Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:29:44

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Nika Faulkner, a former intern at the Historical Commission and the author of the nomination, represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Miller offered her support of the nomination and stated she had no previous knowledge of the site. She commented on her interest in fraternal organizations and her enjoyment in reading this nomination. She noted her appreciation of the research on fraternal organizations found in the nomination and especially appreciated that Calanthe Hall continues to be active in contemporary society. Ms. Miller noted the clever adaptive reuse of the two rowhouses joined together.
- Ms. Barucco expressed interest in knowing if there are other organizations like this in Philadelphia. She commented in support of the nomination.
- Ms. Cooperman spoke of the relationship between the use of these rowhouses for a social institution and the founding of many Black congregations, which were started in rowhouses.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Deborah Gary, representing SPAAA and ACES Veterans Museum, supported the nomination. She stated the purpose of her organization to preserve Philadelphia's African American assets is to promote awareness of the hundreds of African American sites in the Philadelphia community, many of which will not qualify for a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission marker.
- Steven Peitzman commented in support of the nomination and noted that many hospitals in Philadelphia were started in rowhouses, specifically identifying Douglas Hospital, the first hospital in Philadelphia established for and by African Americans, which still stands.
- Paul Steinke referenced the Christian Street/Black Doctors Row Historic District and the South of South Neighborhood Association who had expressed interest in expanding the district to a thematic district to include other Black historic sites, of which this site could be a catalyst.
- Jacqueline Wiggins commented that there are many similar organizations in Philadelphia and recalled the Continentals and the Links. She pointed to the *Philadelphia Tribune* as a resource to find this information and asserted there are many groups like the Court of Calanthe, some of which have been around since the 1700s. She expressed gratitude that this site was elevated and commented that there are many others that should be elevated as well.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The adaptive reuse of two rowhouses into one property at 905-07 S. 20th Street to accommodate a social institution relates in a broader context to the historic use of rowhouses for the founding of Black congregations and hospitals in Philadelphia.
- Calanthe Hall continues to play an active role in the Graduate Hospital community.
- The Court of Calanthe is one of many Black fraternal organizations that still exist today in Philadelphia.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that Calanthe Hall's connection to the history of Philadelphia's Black fraternal organizations, especially Black female fraternal organizations, make it eligible for designation under Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 905-07 S. 20th Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ITEM: 905-07 S 20th Street					
MOTION: Designate, Criterion J.					
MOVED BY: Miller					
SECONDED BY: Barucco					
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	3				3

ADDRESS: 5801-03 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: Parker Hall

Review: Designate

Property Owner: Dr. Althea Hankins

Nominator: Nika Faulkner, Historical Commission intern

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5801-03 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. A three-story brick building, known as Parker Hall, stands on the property. The nomination contends that Parker Hall satisfies Criterion for Designation J. The nomination argues that the property exemplifies the cultural, economic, and social heritage of the community in its history as a commercial storefront and social hall.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 5801-03 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:41:40

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Nika Faulkner, a former intern at the Historical Commission and the author of the nomination, represented the nomination.
- Deborah Gary, advisor ACES Veterans Museum, represented the property owner Dr. Althea Hankins.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Miller said she supports the nomination. She commented that she is familiar with the building and the ACES Veterans Museum. Ms. Miller said this building is an important part of the cultural history, especially for the African-American community, and as research continues on this building, more will be uncovered of its history. She commended the owner for their care of the building and engaging the public to come into the building. Ms. Miller reiterated her support of the nomination for Parker Hall and noted that it is not only an asset to the local community but to all of Philadelphia.
- Ms. Barucco inquired about the proposed Period of Significance continuing to present day and expressed concern about this. She said she initially thought it should end in 1949 with the conclusion of the Parker family ownership. Ms. Barucco asked for her fellow Committee members to comment on the Period of Significance.
- Ms. Cooperman said she noted this too. She questioned how much significance should rest on earlier buildings on the property as described in the nomination and noted that this raises a Criterion I question. Ms. Cooperman said a property would not be nominated for a building that previously stood on the site unless it was nominated for Criterion I. She remarked they need to address the duration of history that is presented in the nomination.
- Ms. Miller said she thought about this too after reading the nomination. She said she was not aware of the earlier structure that had been there and the subsequent reconstruction. Ms. Miller questioned how much of the foundation had been reused and what else had been built on to the back. Ms. Miller said it could be considered for Criterion I because of the long history of the site described in the nomination but noted she is not wedded to this idea either.
- Ms. Barucco asked if the existing building was constructed in 1900.
- Ms. Miller confirmed this was true but pointed out the nomination states the existing building was constructed on the foundation of the earlier structure after the original building was destroyed by a fire.
- Ms. Cooperman pointed to the picture on page 17 in the nomination that shows the earlier building after the fire. She said that it appeared the existing building was constructed on the footprint of the damaged building.
- Ms. Barucco said that adding Criterion I seemed like a stretch.
- The Committee members discussed the possibility of adding Criterion I to the significance. Ms. Miller questioned the existence of a basement and the work done at the back of the property. Ms. Barucco confirmed that there is basement in the building and noted that she previously worked on this building and worked on the structurally damaged wall in the back. She noted that all work with the rear wall was

above grade and only engaged the back wall at the corner. She noted that rear wall on the building is original to the 1900 construction date.

- Ms. Cooperman asked if the existing building covers the entire parcel.
- Ms. Barucco confirmed that it does, with the exception of a rear alley behind the building.
- Ms. Miller said she is not sure if Criterion I would be applicable since the existing foundation dates to the earlier building.
- Ms. Cooperman said she is not comfortable defining a Period of Significance that includes time that does not relate to the existing physical building.
- The Committee members discussed the Period of Significance proposed as 1900 to the present. They agreed the question is whether or not there is enough history included about the 1940s to the present day to justify the length of the proposed Period of Significance.
- Ms. Cooperman agreed with the start date of 1900. She commented that the earlier historical documentation led her to believe the proposed Period of Significance began earlier than 1900.
- Ms. Barucco asked when the Period of Significance should end.
- Ms. Cooperman said they need to tie the physical building to the important narrative of its history as presented in the nomination, unless they wish to address the current revival and use.
- Ms. Barucco said she applauds the current revival.
- Ms. Cooperman said the current use has not altered the fabric of the building but has rather found it again.
- Ms. Gary said the nomination does not go into enough historic detail after 1940. She said that the history needs to be expanded further if the Period of Significance goes to the present. Ms. Gary stated she believed the history documented in the nomination is weak after 1940 and later history is missing from the nomination. She said this comment was submitted in a written response sent to the staff.
- Ms. Faulkner said the Period of Significance is proposed as it currently is because of the USO history, which was difficult to document. She said that there are oral histories included as part of the nomination research and this would extend the Period of Significance to Dr. Hankins' purchase of the building. She stressed that it extended to this time because of Dr. Hankins' efforts to preserve the building.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that the Period of Significance in the City of Philadelphia is tied to the regulation of building fabric. She stated that it is important to document and record these histories, such as preservation efforts, but the goal should not be to lock the appearance of the building to 2023. Ms. Cooperman said she suspects this is not the Committee's goal.
- Mr. Farnham confirmed that the Period of Significance is a tool used by the Historical Commission, Architectural Committee, and staff to determine which physical features, materials, or elements are character defining. He noted that, in the future, if a scope of work is proposed, the Historical Commission would look to the Period of Significance to assist with the review to determine if changes would affect the overall historic character of the building and its character-defining elements. He concluded that the Period of Significance is used as a tool to help restore the building.
- Ms. Cooperman said she believed they should be more conservative with the ending date of the Period of Significance. She proposed ending it in 1949.
- Ms. Barucco commented that by defining an end date of 1949 does not mean that that important events did not happen after this date.

- Ms. Cooperman agreed with Ms. Barucco and reiterated that the Period of Significance is used as a regulatory tool by the Historical Commission.
- Ms. Barucco said that she wished to request corrections to a couple points in the nomination because she is familiar with the building. She said that a description suggests the window keystones and sills are cast stone on page 5. She stated they are actually limestone. Ms. Barucco said the back of the building has been stuccoed but it retains all its original feature. She said she would summarize her corrections and send them to the staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert supported the nomination.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Jacqueline Wiggins supported the nomination.
- Allison Weiss of SoLo Germantown Civic Association supported the nomination.
- Michael Ramos of West Central Germantown Neighbors supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The existing building was constructed in 1900 on the foundation of an earlier building which was destroyed by a fire.
- The property does not meet the requirements for significance under Criterion I.
- The Period of Significance should be from 1900 to 1949. The end date of 1949 reflects when the Parker family sold the building.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property exemplifies the cultural, economic, and social heritage of the community in its history as a commercial storefront and social hall, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5801-03 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criterion J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The Committee on Historic Designation recommended revising the Period of Significance to 1900-1949.

ITEM: 5801-03 Germantown Ave					
MOTION: Designate, Criterion J					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
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	3				3

ADDRESS: 1172-74 S BROAD ST

Name of Resource: Davis Auto Sales headquarters

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Filippone-Newman LLC

Nominator: Philadelphia Historical Commission

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1172-74 S. Broad Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Davis Auto Sales headquarters satisfies Criteria for Designation C and D. Under Criterion C, the nomination argues that the former auto sales and service shop, which opened in 1938, reflects the environment in an era when Art Deco design was embraced by architects and developers for small-scale but visually distinctive commercial buildings in neighborhoods across the city. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that in both its form and details, the building embodies character-defining features of the Art Deco style as applied to low-rise commercial construction.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1172-74 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C and D, and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:15:00

PRESENTERS:

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

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Chantry thanked former Preservation Alliance staff member Ben Leech for his 2014 nomination of 1501 Fairmount Avenue, a similar automobile showroom building, which Ms. Chantry heavily utilized for this nomination.
- Ms. Cooperman observed that more research is warranted on Jewish architects from this time period. It was noted that a biography of architect Isadore W. Levin was included in the nomination as an appendix.
- Ms. Barucco noted that this property would have been part of the Automobile Row historic district on North Broad Street if it were located there. She commented that it was good to see a similar building on South Broad Street.
- Ms. Miller commented favorably on the appropriateness of one-story buildings as part of the built environment. She observed that the overall architectural character of the building remains, despite alterations over the years.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Steven Peitzman commented in support of the nomination and noted the architect.
- Paul Steinke, representing the Preservation Alliance, commented in support of the nomination and noted the architect.
- David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building, the Davis Auto Sales headquarters, was designed by architect Isadore W. Levin and constructed in 1937-38.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The former auto sales and service shop, which opened in 1938, reflects the environment in an era when Art Deco design was embraced by architects and developers for small-scale but visually distinctive commercial buildings in neighborhoods across the city, satisfying Criterion C.
- In both its form and details, the building embodies character-defining features of the Art Deco style as applied to low-rise commercial construction, satisfying Criterion D.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1172-74 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C and D and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ITEM: 1172-74 S Broad St.					
MOTION: Designate, Criteria C and D					
MOVED BY: Miller					
SECONDED BY: Barucco					
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	3				3

ADDRESS: 7200-04 CRESHEIM RD

Name of Resource: Cresheim Valley Apartments

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Cresheim Valley Realty Co.

Nominator: West Mount Airy Neighbors

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 7200-04 Cresheim Road as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the apartment building satisfies Criteria for Designation C, G, and J. Under Criterion C, the nomination argues that the 1914 Cresheim Valley Apartments reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Tudor Revival style as applied to low-rise apartment buildings. Under Criterion G, the nomination claims that the building's location next to the Richard Allen train station provides open park space on the train station parcel which should be preserved. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the building exemplifies the railroad-led economic and historic transformation of Northwest Philadelphia in the early decades of the twentieth century as the area became a bustling residential suburb within the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 7200-04 Cresheim Road satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J, but not Criterion G. The argument for the satisfaction of Criterion G proffered in the nomination is based on open space at 200 W. Allens Lane, an adjacent parcel owned by SEPTA, not the subject property.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:27:08

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Cynthia Dutwin represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner. Ms. Cooperman noted that the Committee received a letter of opposition from the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Dutwin noted that there is significant support for the nomination from the residents of the apartment building. She opined that the architecture complements the surrounding homes and is a cherished landmark in the neighborhood.
- Ms. Miller noted that she is a resident of Northwest Philadelphia and is familiar with this building and others that are similar across that portion of the city. She commented that this and similar buildings are prominent elements of the landscape in the West Mount Airy neighborhood and noted that the style is used throughout the immediate neighborhood and the broader Northwest Philadelphia.
- Ms. Miller opined that Criterion G does not apply since the open space discussed in the nomination is not part of the property proposed for designation.
 - Ms. Barucco agreed, noting that it is great that the community is able to use the space, but that the Historical Commission cannot include a portion of a different parcel in the designation.
 - Mr. Farnham noted that the Richard Allen train station is designated, so the train station building and the land associated with it is already protected by the Historical Commission.
- Ms. Barucco supported the nomination. She noted that she lives along the Main Line, and that it is fascinating to see the quality of architecture and apartment buildings built around railroad stations. She opined that the Cresheim Valley apartments are a great example in the Tudor style. She lamented the loss of the brick patio area in front of the building but opined that it does not detract from the character of the building, which still expresses its architectural significance.
- Ms. Cooperman commented that the nomination explains an interesting pattern of development that characterized the area, which was a notable contrast to the pattern of development pursued by the Houstons and Woodwards in the Northwest. She noted she could only think of one apartment building built by Samuel Houston. She explained that apartment buildings such as this one, which are largely Tudor in style or occasionally Colonial Revival, are a considerable component of the character of the Northwest section of Philadelphia and its subsequent development. She noted that she has experienced this building over her lifetime and remarked on how well it fits into the streetscape and forms the streetscape around the Allen Lane station. She stated that she understands the desire to include Criterion G, but that it is not appropriate because the area where the activities take place is not part of this property.
- Ms. Cooperman explained that the Committee received a letter of opposition from the attorney for the property owner, and lamented the fact that Mr. Pulley was not in

attendance at the meeting. She noted that his letter, which is in the public record, states that a designation would cause him to default on his mortgage. She commented that she has never experienced anything of that sort in terms of designation, and would like to understand more about that assertion, but in the absence of the owner's representative, is not comfortable commenting on it. She noted that the Commission will have the opportunity to determine whether it is in the public interest to designate or not designate for whatever reason.

- Mr. Farnham responded that he is unaware of any designation resulting in a default on a mortgage in his 20 years at the Historical Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination. He noted that the building is large but is broken into more residential segments with three separate entries. He commented that the square bays at the fourth floor capped with gables gives the building a home-like feel and opined that the property deserves designation.
- Sherman Aronson, an architect and resident of West Mount Airy, commented that he is impressed by the building, its history, and design. He noted that the design breaks the large form into smaller forms that are in keeping with the neighborhood and remarked on the Tudor Revival style and Neo-classical entries as consistent with the surrounding area. He noted that the property is representative of a period of development in the city in which the railroad and economic factors allowed people to move to areas outside the city center but to get there easily by train. Apartments such as this one provided, and still provide, affordable housing.
- Steven Peitzman supported the nomination, and designation of similar apartment buildings more generally, noting that there is a wonderful cluster near the Queen Lane station as well. He commented that, although Philadelphia is often thought of as a city of homes, there are also important apartment buildings throughout the city.
- Oscar Beisert supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Cresheim Valley Apartments were constructed in 1914.
- The property is located adjacent to the Richard Allen train station, but the open park space currently used by tenants of the apartment building is not on the parcel at 7200-04 Cresheim Road.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The property reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Tudor Revival style as applied to low-rise apartment buildings, satisfying Criterion C.
- The property exemplifies the railroad-led economic and historic transformation of Northwest Philadelphia in the early decades of the twentieth century, satisfying Criterion J.
- The property does not contain open park space, and therefore does not satisfy Criterion G.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 7200-04 Cresheim Road satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ITEM: 7200-04 Cresheim Rd
MOTION: Designate; Criteria C and J
MOVED BY: Miller
SECONDED BY: Barucco

VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen					X
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

ADDRESS: 5848 CITY AVE

Name of Resource: The Chestnuts
Proposed Action: Amend Designation
Property Owner: Sisters of the Visitation of Philadelphia
Applicant: Matt McClure, Ballard Spahr LLP
Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to amend the designation of the property at 5848 City Avenue. The property was developed as a country estate in the nineteenth century and converted for use as a convent in the twentieth century. The 11.6-acre property includes a main house and several other buildings and a large amount of open space.

The Historical Commission designated the property on 13 November 2020. It found that the property satisfied Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J. While the property was nominated for its significance as a nineteenth-century country estate, the Historical Commission extended the period of significance to 1965 to include the property's history as a convent. With the expansion of the significance beyond that claimed in the nomination, the Historical Commission added the chapel, dormitory, and an ancillary building to the list of historically significant buildings that already included the main house, gardener's cottage, carriage house, and other outbuildings. The nomination adopted by the Historical Commission also called out numerous landscape features as historically significant. Although the Historical Commission designated the property, which consists of a single tax parcel, individually, the nomination treated the large property with numerous buildings, appurtenances, and landscape features as though it was a historic district, classifying various buildings and landscape resources as significant, contributing, and non-contributing.

The owner of the property, a cloistered group of nuns who have little contact with the outside world, did not participate in the reviews of the nomination by the Committee on Historic Designation and Historical Commission, except to note a general objection to the designation by email. The Historical Commission designated the property at a remote meeting in November 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The current application requests that the Historical Commission amend the designation. The application initially proposed that the designation "include only the Main House," with a boundary line drawn around the footprint of the house, but the application has been amended to

include more land and outbuildings. The amended application proposes to draw the boundary around the main house, gardener's cottage, and carriage house as well as some open space between the main house and City Avenue. The application points out numerous mistakes and flaws in the nomination and offers numerous reasons for limiting the area of designation. It also calls for amending the Period of Significance to 1865 to 1940, the period originally proposed in the nomination but later extended to include the convent.

As the application documents, the nomination adopted by the Historical Commission is flawed and should be corrected. The nomination, which was prepared using aerial photographs, misinterpreted many of the features of the site, which is largely inaccessible to the public. At least one building was incorrectly identified and dated in the nomination. Many of the landscape features identified in the nomination are no longer extant. Little or no information was provided in the nomination about the convent buildings that were elevated from non-historic to historically significant by the Committee on Historic Designation with the change to the Period of Significance. The nomination classified the resource as a site, when it should have been classified as a building, which is defined as a building or complex of buildings and its site and appurtenances. And the nomination repeatedly used the terms non-contributing, contributing, and significant to classify aspects and features of the resource, when those terms are defined in the preservation ordinance and apply only to historic districts, not individual resources.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff initially recommended that the Historical Commission reject the application to amend the designation of 5848 City Avenue because the proposal to limit the designation to the footprint of the main house failed to include other historic buildings and any landscape that would provide a setting for them. The staff recommended that the designation boundary should be redrawn to include the main house, gardener's cottage, carriage house, and a portion of the best-preserved landscape between City Avenue and the main house, with a Period of Significance from 1865 to 1940. The revised application presented at the Committee on Historic Designation meeting appears to mirror the staff's recommendation.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:47:33

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the amendment proposal to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorneys Nathan Farris and Matt McClure, Wadell Ridley, the assistant vice president of government and community relations at St. Joseph's University, and consultant Nick Kraus represented the property owner and amendment.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Farris stated that he is representing the Sisters of the Visitation, who are the legal owners of the property, and St. Joseph's University, which is the equitable owner of the property. He reported that the University plans to acquire the property and provide financial assistance to the Sisters. The Sisters are a group of cloistered nuns, who came to Philadelphia from Mexico, and still today many of the sisters are from Mexico or other Latin American countries. Mr. Farris stated that the nomination adopted by the Historical Commission is flawed and should be corrected. He asserted that there are legal and factual in the underlying nomination, and the City's preservation ordinance provides that a designation may be amended if new factual information that shows some portion of the resource does not satisfy the Criteria for Designation, or when the Historical Commission has made a legal error. Mr. Farris stated that his clients are open to a dialogue about the features that deserve

designation. He noted that they have amended the application in response to the staff recommendation, which shows that they want to have an open dialogue with the Historical Commission. Mr. Farris pointed out that the original designation occurred in the height of the pandemic, the fall of 2020, as we were all still learning how to have these virtual hearings, which placed some limitations on the Sisters ability to engage in a dialogue about the nomination, especially given the limited contact that they have with the outside world as a cloistered community. He also noted that the staff was not able to visit the property in advance of the original review. Mr. observed that the Committee on Historic Designation and Historical Commission were working with incomplete information when they reviewed the nomination. He stated that he had Heritage Consulting prepare a report on the property to provide a more complete and accurate view of the condition of the property. The Heritage Consulting report shows that the nomination suffered from factual errors. Mr. Farris moved from the factual to the legal errors. He asserted that the nomination treated the property as a site, and in effect, sought to create an open space preservation easement over the entire property. He asserted that the property does not meet the definition of a site provided in the preservation ordinance. He contended that there are resources on the property that should be listed but there is no basis to list the entirety of the open space given the substantial changes to the property. He stated that the Historical Commission designated features that no longer exist. He also objected to the fact that the nomination treated the property as district, which is an error. He stated that there is a basis for an amendment to the nomination, while making sure that the intact and important features of this property are preserved. He asked the Historical Commission to remove those portions of the property that do not satisfy the Criteria from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

- Mr. Kraus summarized his written report. Mr. Kraus explained that he conducted a site visit to assess the current conditions of the cloistered property in September 2022. He stated that he was given access to the property by the Sisters into the property. Most of the property is enclosed with the fence and not accessible unless one has specific permission to get onto the site. He stated that he observed that the site conditions from the public right-of-way or aerial images. He stated that his site visit showed that very little has survived from the Bauman Plan. Mr. Kraus stated that the primary entrance to the estate no longer exists but was called out as a feature in the original nomination. He stated that the main viewshed from the main house to the site no longer exists owing to significant later construction by the Sisters, but was called out as a feature in the nomination. He added that their discussions with the Sisters indicate that the Sisters were unaware of the Bauman Plan when they acquired the property and they constructed buildings and made numerous changes to the grounds without regard for the unknown plan. Their only concern was to create the space needed for the Sisters and their activities. He pointed out that gardens, a well, and garden buildings no longer exist but were called out as features in the nomination. He displayed photographs of the location where the primary entrance to the estate had been and noted that the drive was gone and replaced by a narrow concrete walk without a gate. The area is fenced off. It is not a feature as claimed in the nomination. He displayed a photograph that showed how the mid twentieth-century construction had destroyed the views of the grounds from the main house, even though the views were called out as features in the nomination. He displayed two photographs of areas that the nomination claimed were formal and vegetable gardens and greenhouses according to the Bauman Plan. The photographs showed that the areas were overgrown lawns, not gardens as the nomination claimed. He stated that the well identified in the nomination as a feature is not extant. He

displayed a photograph showing changes to the main house. Mr. Kraus juxtaposed the Bauman Plan with a current site plan to show the many features that have been added and removed since the Bauman Plan. Mr. Kraus displayed photographs of the mid twentieth-century buildings that the Sisters constructed adjacent to the main house. The buildings were not called out as significant features in the nomination, but were attributed with significance by the Committee on Historic Designation. He stated that the building labeled as Garden Building B is not a nineteenth-century building, as the nomination claims, but is a twentieth-century building without historical or architectural significance. He stated that the building labeled Ancillary Building is a non-historic, twentieth-century, concrete-block building without significance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Thaddeus Squire stated that he is the vice president of Overbrook Farms Club. He noted that the Overbrook Farms Club nominated the property for designation. He stated that he wanted to provide comment, and also objection and refutation to the representations that have been made today by Mr. McClure and his clients. He reported that, as a matter of background, his organization was alerted to significance and need for a nomination of the property by Regina Manidis, who was an employee of the nuns at the time. He remarked that the Overbrook Farms Club decided to hire the Keeping Society to write the nomination because it was aware that the nuns were expected to be required to relinquish their convent by the judicatory, the Vatican, in the not-too-distant future as they were close to falling below the number of nuns required to retain the convent, and, while located near Overbrook Farms, the period of significance of the property predates the period of significance of the historic district, making an amendment to add it to the district impossible. Mr. Squire asserted that the allegations of trespassing by Oscar Beisert in the submission by Mr. McClure are false and indeed potentially libelous. Mr. Beisert visited the property under the permission of Miss Manidis, the former employee of the Sisters. Ms. Manidis also provided some of the photographs in question to Mr. Beisert. Mr. Squire stated that the business of Ms. Manidis with the nuns is a separate matter and is irrelevant to this proceeding. Mr. Squire stated that his organization objects to the limited nature of the revised scope that is proposed today. He stated that that his organization was notified about this matter late, and was approached by St. Joseph's University last week, which was not enough time to consider the matter. He stated that he suspects that this was cynically done after the Historical Commission's staff recommended against their first amendment proposal. He stated that his organization recognizes legal tactics to be what they are. He asserted that the suggestions that the designation was some slight to the Sisters is irrelevant. They were given due process. He added that, if this had been some sort of slight, Mr. McClure could have offered his services to them pro bono in 2020. But, alas, he did not. He stated that the presence of the Bauman Plan does make the viewsheds and landscapes worth consideration. He acknowledged that designating them is "a stretch for the PHC, but it's within the Commission's purview to stretch that." He contended that many of the arguments about the landscapes that are featured in the amendment application are made by people like Mr. McClure and Heritage Consulting Group, who are not qualified to make such assessments. He said he saw no resumes qualifying these people to speak about landscape architecture or horticulture. He asserted that Ms. Cooperman is probably the only person in the meeting that might have authority to assess those elements, and they need to be assessed differently than buildings. He stated that he found the arguments about site versus property very specious. He

- claimed that historic properties with dependencies are designated every day. He objected to the application's arguments related to visibility from the public right-of-way. He stated that it was appropriate to classify the various elements of the property as contributing, not contributing, or significant. He concluded that, for the record, his organization takes issue and objects to the way that St. Joseph's University and its representation has handled this matter. He stated that his organization may be willing to negotiate but will eventually be seeking its remedies in higher authorities.
- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia stated that he is concerned about preserving historic context. He stated that the contributing features of this site are not simply designated in and of themselves, but that they do relate to the landscape context in which they were originally constructed and to which they originally responded. The original application for amendment would not preserve the context. He called on the Committee on Historic Designation to consider context as it deliberates. Mr. Steinke then asserted that the Historical Commission only designates complete parcels, but this application proposes to "slice and dice" 5848 City Avenue. He asked if the Historical Commission had the authority to designate a part of a parcel and wondered how permit applications would be reviewed in the future if only part of the parcel was designated.
 - Regina Meditas Miller stated that she worked for the Sisters for 10 years. She stated that she lived on the property, outside the nuns' enclosure. She stated that she wanted to correct some claims made earlier. She stated that there are no longer any of the nuns from Mexico. The nuns from Mexico all passed away. The last one, Sister Guadalupe, passed away more than 20 years ago. Three nuns live on the property. She said that there is still a well on the property. It is an open well that is inside of the apple house. She asserted that Mr. Beisert did not trespass on the property. She stated that she provided some of the photographs for the nomination.
 - Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society stated that both the buildings and the landscape are important. Numerous individual designations include more than one building or contributing feature. He complained that the nomination form only offers a few options for categorizing the property: building structure, site, or object. If the conclusions made by the applicant were accepted, they could negate the designation of any individual property with more than one contributing building. He stated that it is his experience that the Historical Commission regularly differentiates between contributing and non-contributing features even within individual designations. He pointed to a recent example in Chestnut Hill. He stated that the preservation ordinance does not address integrity. He listed features that might be considered when evaluating a landscape and pointed to National Register Bulletins on evaluating landscapes. He said that one must consider whether changes to the landscape are irrevocable, or can they be corrected so that a property retains integrity. He asked if the absence of any of the original vegetation means that the landscape has lost integrity. Features can be restored. Gardens can be recreated. He asserted that the site is significant. He apologized for misrepresenting any building to which he did not have access. He stated that he hopes that the Overbrook Farms Club and St. Joseph's University come to some sort of agreement on preserving some aspects of that landscape.
 - Allison Weiss stated that the beautiful landscape should remain intact.
 - Frank Dalicandro introduced himself and explained that he was engaged by the Sisters of the Visitation in June of 2021 to help them with a property matter. He reported that he works with numerous religious organizations. He stated that Ms. Meditas Miller had no authority to either act on behalf of the property owner or invite

other people onto the property. She had no such authority. He stated that the Sisters have a process for inviting guests onto the property and she did not comply with the process. She did not have the authority to invite anyone onto the property or to allow them to take photographs.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman disagreed with Mr. Steinke's assertion that the Historical Commission is obligated to designate entire parcels. She asked Mr. Farnham to comment.
 - Mr. Farnham agreed with Ms. Cooperman and stated that the Historical Commission routinely identifies boundary for designations that do not correspond to tax parcel boundaries. It is the Historical Commission prerogative to define the area over which it will assert its jurisdiction. In fact, the Preservation Alliance nominated a part of a tax parcel in 2018. It nominated Our Lady of Sorrows Church at 4800 Lancaster Avenue, drawing the designation boundary to include the church but exclude a cemetery, school, and other buildings.
- Mr. Farnham noted that objections have been raised to the use of the terms non-contributing, contributing, and significant in this nomination of an individual resource. He explained that those terms are defined in the Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations and apply to historic districts. He stated that they are used colloquially in this case to mean non-historic and historic. He added that he does not find their use to be a fatal flaw in the nomination. He indicated that the staff would be more vigilant moving forward and would ensure that those defined terms are not used in individual nominations.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that the City of Philadelphia's historic preservation ordinance does not include an explicit integrity standard, as there is for the National Register. She stated that the Historical Commission does apply an implicit integrity standard, asking if there is sufficient historic material present. She stated that the National Register Bulletin referenced by Mr. Beisert is not applicable in local Philadelphia matters from a regulatory standpoint but may offer some general guidance. Ms. Cooperman stated that she is a landscape historian and has published extensively on landscape history and preservation. She stated that she appreciates that the applicant has invoked the preservation ordinance and its specific definition of a site but noted that the applicants may not be familiar with some landscape concepts. She stated that what the nomination calls an extensive pleasure grounds the applicants have referred to simply as a lawn. She stated that it is not simply a lawn but has landscape features. She stated that open space is not just open; it is filled with landscape. And the landscape is an essential feature of a suburban country estate. A lawn is not simply a lawn. She acknowledged that the City does not really have mechanisms for regulating landscapes because changes in plantings do not require building permits. She stated that the historic landscape provides a context for the historic buildings. The Historical Commission designated historic buildings in their historic landscape, which provides a context.
- Ms. Miller stated that a site is a location of human activity. She noted that she is an archaeologist. She noted that the applicant claim that there is nothing on the open land, that it is merely open space, but she disagreed. What looks like a lawn may have been the site of a greenhouse and there may be vestiges of that greenhouse below the ground surface. She noted that the applicants stated that the gardens are no longer extant. She disagreed and stated that evidence of those gardens will be found below the ground surface. She stated that it is not as though the gardens are

- not there anymore. They are there but you just cannot see them because they are underground. She said that the same goes for the lost buildings. They remain on the site but are underground. Ms. Miller continued, stating that the large open areas of the site have the potential for holding archaeological evidence of prehistoric inhabitation. Ms. Miller stated that, if amended, the designation should be amended to include Criterion I, the archaeology criterion, because evidence of former features of the site may be found beneath the ground surface.
- Mr. Farnham advised the Committee members that the Historical Commission's attorney had informed him that the Committee may recommend restricting the designation within the bounds already set, but it may not expand the designation to include additional Criteria for Designation without additional documentation and notice to the property owner. The property was not designated for its archaeological potential and the designation cannot be amended to add Criterion I at this time.
 - Ms. Barucco stated that the Committee on Historic Designation was so caught up in extending the Period of Significance to include the convent buildings during its first review of the nomination that it overlooked important aspects of the property. She stated that the Committee should have included Criterion I because the landscape features that have been lost above ground may survive below ground. She stated that the subsurface remains of the landscape features are the "crux" of the designation.
 - Ms. Cooperman stated that the landscape is a "design," but the City's historic preservation ordinance does not provide a means for regulating plantings. However, the setting is essential to the buildings. She opined that the designation should not be changed.
 - Mr. Farris stated that this property is under contract in St. Joseph's University, which has a due diligence period. Given the Historical Commission's and Committee on Historic Designation's schedules, the owner and equitable owner were obligated to submit this application at this time to complete their due diligence quickly. He stated that they have reached out to the community and are very interested in engaging with the community. If this process moves forward, there will be opportunities for community engagement, especially because this project will require special zoning legislation. Mr. Farris assured everyone that they intend to work with the community even though they were obligated to submit this application quickly. They will continue with outreach efforts and seek to speak with the community before the Historical Commission's February meeting.
 - Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Farris to explain the amendment to the application that was submitted yesterday.
 - Mr. Farris explained that the original application proposed to relocate the boundary of the designation to include the footprint of the house only. He stated that, after reviewing the staff's original recommendation against such a limited boundary and discussing the matter with the staff, they adjusted their application to propose a larger designated area as in defined in the marked-up aerial photograph that they submitted with the letter indicating the amendment. He indicated that that proposed boundary is shown in the image currently displayed at the meeting.
 - Ms. Barucco objected to receiving the amendment to the application the day before the meeting. She thanked the applicants for being willing to compromise and provide some setting for the historic buildings, but asserted that she did not have sufficient time to consider the changed boundary.

- Ms. Miller asked about how land was included in the original designation. She stated that she did not understand.
- Ms. Barucco asked what the Committee was doing. She stated that she was confused.
- Mr. Reuter, the Historical Commission's attorney, explained that the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) uses street addresses to decide which building permit applications to forward to the Historical Commission for review. All building permit applications for 5848 City Avenue are forwarded to the Historical Commission. If the boundary is amended as proposed, the staff would look at each building permit application forwarded from L&I to determine if it proposed work would impact anything within the red-line boundary. If it did, the staff would review the application as it normally does, approving or sending to the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission for review. If the application only proposed work at the property outside the red-line boundary, the staff would approve the application without further review, regardless of the work proposed. He noted that the applicants are claiming that no significant historic resources survive outside the red boundary line.
- Mr. McClure agreed with Mr. Reuter and stated that their application has two parts. First, they are proposing to redefine the boundary of the designation as is shown on the marked-up aerial photograph. Second, they are proposing that the designation be described as a "building," not a "site." He stated that the nomination is unprecedented in that it treats the property as a site and then seeks to designate various features throughout the site. He stated that he has never seen such a designation in his 23 years of practice before the Historical Commission. He asserted that there is no basis for such a designation in the preservation ordinance, legal or otherwise. He stated that designations of buildings include land around them, like the backyard of a house, but the land itself is not designated as a separate resource; the land is regulated as a feature of the house, but it is not regulated on its own as a separate resource.
- Ms. Barucco countered that the history of the site includes the history of the buildings and the landscape. They are all integral to the history. She asserted that the entire site and all of its features should be designated.
- Mr. McClure countered that many of the features called out in the nomination as significant cannot be regulated and many called out do not exist and may never have existed. It is as though the Historical Commission found the blueprint for a building that had been demolished and designated the building based on the blueprint. In this case, the Historical Commission designated the Bauman Plan, not a set of physical features that exist. He reported that he has invited the staff to walk the property to see what does and does not exist. He stated that the nomination provided the Bauman Plan rather than an accounting of features at the property and asked the Historical Commission to regulate based on it. The nomination is essentially designed to stop any new, reasonable development at the site. He stated that St. Joseph's University would like to reuse the property in an appropriate way through a process that will involve the community.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that the property is a country estate with buildings and a landscape. The landscape is a critical component. She acknowledged that landscapes necessarily change but features remain. Ms. Cooperman stated that she would make a motion to reject the application to amend the designation.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Historical Commission found that the property at 5848 City Avenue satisfied Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J and designated it as historic on 13 November 2020.
- The current application proposes to restrict the designation to the main house, carriage house, gardener's cottage and some of the land surrounding and connecting those buildings.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Although buildings have been added, altered, and removed, and landscape features have been altered and removed, the property at 5848 City Avenue remains a country estate with buildings in a landscape setting and merits designation in its entirety under Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission reject the application to amend the designation of 5848 City Avenue.

ITEM: 5848 City Ave					
MOTION: Reject application to amend the designation of 5848 City Ave					
Moved BY: Cooperman					
SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen					X
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:56:25

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

ITEM: Adjournment**MOTION: Adjourn****MOVED BY: Miller****SECONDED BY: Barucco**

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	3				3

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:

- 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;
- Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;
- 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;
- Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation;
- 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;
- Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.