

ADDRESS: 37-39 N 2ND ST

Name of Resource: Surface parking lot

Proposed Action: Rescind Individual Designation

Property Owner: 37 N. 2nd Street Philadelphia (USLCF I) LP

Applicant: Matt McClure, Esq., Ballard Spahr

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to rescind the individual designation of the property at 37-39 N. 2nd Street. At its 6 January 1977 meeting, the Historical Commission individually designated several dozen buildings in Old City, including the property at 37-39 N. 2nd Street, which at the time included a four-story, nineteenth-century commercial building, known historically by various names including the Second Street House, Madison House, and Gould & Co. Furniture/Union Depot. In April 1985, the property was ravaged by a six-alarm arson fire, and subsequently declared Imminently Dangerous and ordered demolished by the Department of Licenses. The building was demolished soon thereafter, and the property has been used as a surface parking lot since 1985. The property was a vacant lot at the time of the Old City Historic District designation in 2003 and is classified as non-contributing in the district inventory.

Pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations, the Commission may rescind the designation of a building and remove its entry from the Philadelphia Register if:

- a. The resource has ceased to satisfy any Criteria for Designation because the qualities that caused its original entry have been lost or destroyed;
- b. Additional information shows that the resource does not satisfy one or more Criteria for Designation; or,
- c. The Commission committed an error in professional judgment when it determined that the resource satisfied one or more Criteria for Designation.

In the case of 37-39 N. 2nd Street, the individual resource that was designated in 1977 has ceased to satisfy any Criteria for Designation because the qualities that caused its original entry have been lost. The property remains in the Old City Historic District with a classification of non-contributing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission rescind the individual designation of 37-39 N. 2nd Street, pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1.a of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations, as the resource has ceased to satisfy any Criteria for Designation because the qualities that caused its original entry have been removed through demolition.



Figure 1: Current parcel boundary in orange.



Figure 2: View of the property at 37-39 N. 2nd Street looking east from 2nd Street, January 2023.



Figure 3: Context view of the property at 37-39 N. 2nd Street looking east from 2nd Street, January 2023.



Figure 4: Extension of lot to Cuthbert Street, looking south from Cuthbert Street, January 2023.



Figure 5: 1977 designation photograph of 37-39 N. 2nd Street. Historical Commission files.



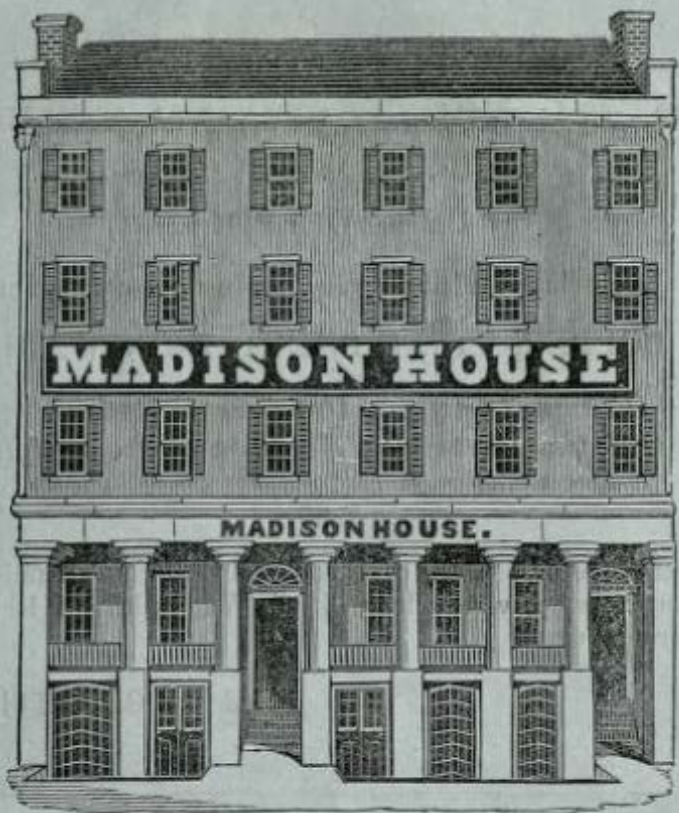
Figure 6: Photograph of firefighters at 37-39 N. 2nd Street in April 1985 in the aftermath of the six-alarm fire. Historical Commission files.

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT		91879 CITY OF PHILADELPHIA DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES & INSPECTIONS PUBLIC SERVICE CONCOURSE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BUILDING					
APPLICANT: COMPLETE ALL ITEMS MARKED WITH CORNER WEDGE.			PERMIT NUMBER				
FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION: Submit Plumbing and Electrical Plans separately to the Mechanical Services Section.			DISTRICT				
LOCATION OF WORK (Street Address)	PERMIT FEE	TRACT	WARD				
37-39 11. 2nd St	\$620.00		5				
ISSUED TO (Name of Owner or Contractor)	ADDRESS	AREA	TYPE				
Robert Hawthorne Inc.	2900 E. Philadelphia						
OWNER'S NAME	ADDRESS	OPER.	NEW D.U.				
City of Phila.		1					
PLAN NO.	OCCUPANCY	D.U. ADD.	D.U. DEM.				
	7-rem fire						
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORK		ESTIMATED COST					
Complete Dem. <i>Already ID on a rem of CITY ORDERED DEMOLITION first - AND/OR BRIBED</i>		ALTERATION					
		ADDITION					
		AIR CONDITIONING					
		SPRINKLERS					
		OTHER					
		TOTAL EST. COST					
		\$					
OTHER INSPECTION REQUIRED	ADDITIONAL PERMITS REQUIRED	ALLOWABLE PROJECTIONS	DATE OF APPLICATION				
			4/24/85				
IS APPLICATION RESULT OF VIOLATION		WATER REGULATION #26 CHARGES					
<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES, GIVE VIOLATION NO. _____		PL. AREA AMOUNT VOUCHER \$					
IS DEMOLITION NECESSARY		NO. STRUCTURES TO BE DEMOLISHED					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		STRUCTURES ARE					
		<input type="checkbox"/> Row <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Detached <input type="checkbox"/> Single					
FOUNDATION - COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION							
FOUNDATION TO BE LAID ON			SOIL LOAD				
<input type="checkbox"/> UNDISTURBED NATURAL SOIL <input type="checkbox"/> INORGANIC, CLEAN SANDY FILL <input type="checkbox"/> APPROVED PILES, ETC.			Tons				
THIS SECTION FOR OFFICE USE ONLY							
CLASSIFICATION		TYPE	PRINCIPAL OCCUPANCY				
<input type="checkbox"/> ADDITION <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERATION <input type="checkbox"/> AIR CONDITIONING <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DEMOLITION <input type="checkbox"/> FOUNDATION		PRESENT BLDG.					
<input type="checkbox"/> NEW BUILDING <input type="checkbox"/> SIGN <input type="checkbox"/> WARM AIR SYSTEM <input type="checkbox"/> ST. OF OCCUPANCY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		NEW BLDG. OR ADDITION	"T" Dome				
THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY CONSTRUCTION SECTION ONLY							
	NO.	MATERIAL OF ENCLOSURES	STORY	GROSS AREA EACH FLOOR	OCCUPANCY	NO. APARTMENTS, OCCUPANTS, SEATS	LIVE LOAD
Smokeproof Towers			Base				
Exterior Stairs			1				
Stairs			2				
Exit Base	Size		3				
Exit Doors	Size		4				
STANDPIPES		SPRINKLERS		LOCATION OF SPRINKLERS			
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO					
OFFICE APPLICABLE - NAME AND TITLE OF PRINCIPAL OFFICER OF BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION			ADDRESS		PHONE		
ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER			REG. NO.		ADDRESS		
CONTRACTOR			REG. NO.		ADDRESS		
CONTRACTOR - NAME AND TITLE OF PRINCIPAL OFFICER OF BUSINESS			ADDRESS		PHONE		
APPLICANT (Full Name)			ADDRESS		PHONE		
All provisions of the building laws and city ordinances will be complied with, whether specified herein or not. Plans approved by the department form a part of this application.							
I hereby certify that the statements contained herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.							
I further certify that I am authorized by the owner to make the foregoing application, and that, before I accept any permit for which this application is made, the owner shall be made aware of all conditions of the permit.							
I understand that if I knowingly make any false statement herein I am subject to such penalties as may be prescribed by law or ordinance.							
Information for contractors is from Philadelphia Tax on Improvements, 1983, as provided. May be obtained by contacting the Controller's Division of Taxes, P.O. Box 200, City Hall Annex, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103-0200.				APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE			
				Robert Hawthorne Inc.			

81-3 (Rev. 4/79)

Figure 7: Building permit application for complete demolition, April 1985. Historical Commission files.

ADDITIONAL HISTORIC IMAGES AND MAPS:



MADISON HOUSE,
NO 39 NORTH SECOND STREET.

Philadelphia, January 1, 1837.

The undersigned, having assumed the management of the above Hotel, respectfully solicit the patronage of the Public, believing this House to be surpassed by no other in point of location, being within a short distance of Market Street, the Banks, and the centre of Mercantile Business.

The House has been recently fitted up and furnished in every part with new Furniture, in the selection and manufacture of which, the best taste and skill have been employed. The Table will be furnished with all the varieties of the season, and the Bar with the choicest Liquors, which, with the utmost care and attention, the Proprietors trust will ensure to the

MADISON HOUSE
the favourable notice of their Friends and the travelling Public.

Respectfully,
Your obedient servants,

JOHNSON & BURDEN.
HENRY JOHNSON, formerly of Second Street House.

The House is brilliantly illuminated with Gas.

Figure 8: 1837 McElroy's Philadelphia Directory advertisement. Available at the Internet Archive.



Figure 9: 1879 Bater's Panoramic Business Directories, Unit Block 2nd St, East Side. Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

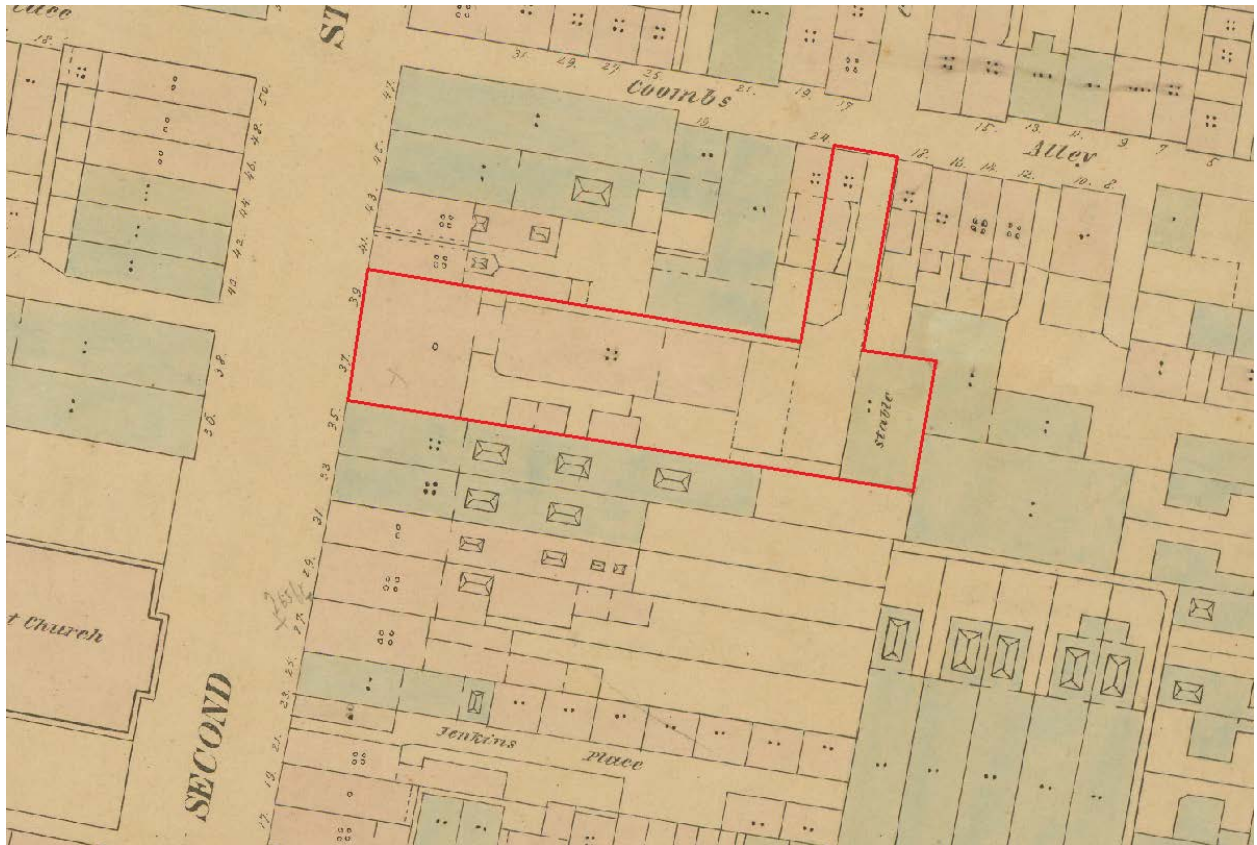


Figure 10: 1858-60 Hexamer map. Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

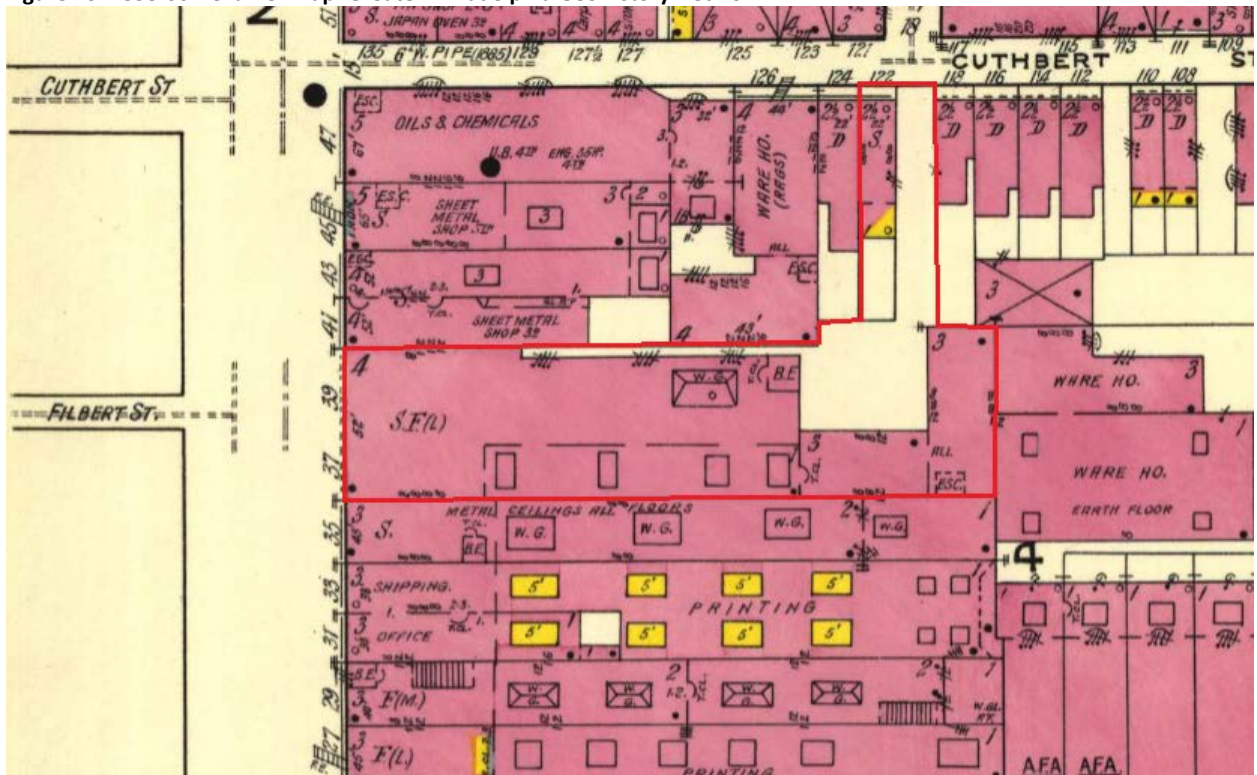


Figure 11: 1916 Sanborn map. Penn State University.

1735 Market Street, 51st Floor
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July 6, 2023

Via E-mail

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph. D.
Executive Director
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: Rescission Request for 37-39 North Second Street (the "Property")

Dear Dr. Farnham:

We represent Parkway Corporation, the owner of the Property. The Historical Commission originally designated the Property for listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places on January 6, 1977, under the prior iteration of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. The then building on the Property, however, was demolished in 1985 due to a determination by the City of an imminently dangerous condition due to severe damage caused by a fire. After the building's demolition, the Property was converted into a parking lot. In 2003, the Property was identified as *non-contributing* to the Old City Historic District, however, the Old City Historic District inventory noted that the Property was previously designated as historic in 1977.

To confirm the status of the Property as not individually designated as historic, we hereby submit this request to rescind the designation of the Property pursuant to Historical Commission Rules & Regulations Section 5.14.b. This Section of the Regulations authorizes the Historical Commission to remove entries from the Register of Historic Places when the qualities that caused the original entry on the Register have been lost or destroyed. In this case, the building was designated for qualities that were lost when the building was legally demolished, thus there is no longer a basis for the individual designation. This instance is what the Historical Commission refers to as a "phantom designation." The Historical Commission routinely removes phantom designations (e.g., the removal of the phantom designation for 40-42 S. 2nd Street). We respectfully request that the Committee on Historic Designation consider this request at its July 19, 2023 meeting, and that the Historical Commission consider the request at its August 11, 2023 meeting. We understand that rescinding the individual designation will have no impact on subsequent regulation of the Property, which will be treated as an "undeveloped site" with or without the phantom designation.

For your reference we have enclosed a photograph of the parking lot currently at the Property, which has been in existence since 1988.

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph. D.
July 6, 2023
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Thank you for your consideration, and please let us know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew N. McClure', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matthew N. McClure

MNM/mpg
Enclosure

