

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

**WEDNESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2024  
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM  
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING:** 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Comment</b>
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:

- Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons attended the online meeting:

- Allison Weiss, SoLo/Germantown Civic Association
- Alan Nochumson, Esq., Nochumson P.C.
- Alex Braden
- Alex Goldberg, Esq., Nochumson P.C.
- Angel Rodriguez
- Mark Sellers, Awbury Arboretum
- Barbara Hauck-Mah, Bella Vista Neighbors Association
- Bruce Bohri, DPD
- Carolyn Adams
- Chanel Ward Biddle
- David Traub, Save Our Sites
- Jax Lowell
- Jay Farrell
- Jim Dragoni

Judith Robinson  
Kathy Dowdell  
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society  
Kenneth Johnson  
Lara Rhame  
Laurie Wexler  
Liz Szot  
Marie-Line Germain  
Mathen Pullukattu  
Michael Ramos  
Nancy Pontone  
Nick Dobrowolski  
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance  
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance  
Racquel Ward  
Ralph Marano, Bella Vista Neighbors Association  
Russell Fulton, West Central Germantown Neighbor  
Sandy Ward  
Sherman Aronsen  
Sherry Stone, Philadelphia Tribune Newspaper  
Steven Peitzman  
Suzanne Ponsen, West Central Germantown Neighbors  
Tom Beck  
Tuomi Forrest, Historic Germantown

## **AGENDA**

### **ADDRESS: 2435 N COLLEGE AVE**

Name of Resource: Dixie Hummingbird Headquarters

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Demetrius A McCain

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia; Laurie Wexler

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2435 N. College Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. A three-story brick rowhouse with fieldstone façade stands on the property. It was the home of James B. Davis and headquarters of the Dixie Hummingbirds gospel music group from 1951 to 1984. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation A for its association with Mr. Davis, the founder and longtime manager of The Dixie Hummingbirds, an iconic and impactful American gospel music group. It further argues that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation J, for its use by The Dixie Hummingbirds as their headquarters for many years and its association with the music landscape of Philadelphia, particularly as it relates to the African American community.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2435 N. College Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING:** 00:09:15

#### **PRESENTERS:**

- Mr. Till presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Laurie Wexler and Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- Ms. Stark summarized the nomination highlighting the importance of the Dixie Hummingbirds to music history.
- Ms. Wexler, the nominator, commented that the work of James B. Davis and the Dixie Hummingbirds represents a rich and important contribution to the history and fabric of the city.
- Ms. Milroy complimented the nomination and added that she started listening to the Dixie Hummingbird's music while reviewing it.
- Ms. Barucco also complimented the nomination and the Hummingbirds and added that the building appears to be the only one left on its block with a fieldstone façade and that should be pointed out in the description. She also mentioned that the nomination describes the cornice as being made of "simple siding" and that siding is likely covering an older design. She went on to say that she would like to know more about the material used for the windowsills and that the rusticated foundation deserves to be highlighted as well.
- Mr. Cohen followed up on Ms. Barucco's comments. He thought the nomination was very well researched. However, he pointed out that the nomination describes the building as having rounded arched lintels while in fact they are segmental arches made of individual stones. He also thought it was curious that the property, along

with five others, seems to have initially been offered as a rental based on the deed history. He wondered whether that could be confirmed and if so, what was happening in the neighborhood at that time. He would have liked to know who the original owners were.

- Ms. Cooperman added that she also would have liked to learn more about the original owners of the property. She went on to say that the nomination also lacks a discussion of the building's form and context, and it would have enhanced the nomination if those aspects were addressed. She explained that sometimes a written description can illuminate aspects of a building that photographs alone cannot. Knowing more about the building's form and makeup helps with regulation going forward. She also commented that she would have liked to learn a bit more about the people who lived in the area.
- Ms. Miller disagreed with her colleagues' earlier comments and stated that, although she does not have a background in architecture, she recognizes that the importance in this nomination is focused on the Dixie Hummingbirds and that, while it would be nice to know more about the history and the building, she does not want to diminish the importance of the group and the impact they had in both Philadelphia and across the world. She added that it was a wonderfully written nomination, and she could feel the enthusiasm of the author while reading it and feels that it shows that even in the parts of the city that feel quieter and unassuming, there is tremendous history with which most people are not familiar.
- Ms. Milroy added that the period of significance for the nomination starts in 1951, so in this case, it is correct that it focused on the Hummingbirds and their relationship to the property instead of the earlier history. It really sounds like the house served as the epicenter of their music. She compared it to the Sun Rah House in Germantown. She wondered about other rowhouses in the city that may have served as headquarters for musicians.
  - Ms. Cooperman clarified that she and the other Committee members did not mean to imply that the history related to the Dixie Hummingbirds was not important, but she wanted to make sure that the basic facts of the property were properly included as well. She added that she agreed with Ms. Miller in that the Black community in the city was often doing extraordinary things not through the traditional institutions that are already well known, but in their own homes and neighborhoods.
- Mr. Laverty commented that this property serves as a great addition to what seems to be a growing list of important sites in the city related to music history. He pointed out the property's close proximity to Girard College, which at the time had an all-white student body. He thought it was a great nomination and added that he saw the blue state historical marker in front of the house just a few weeks prior. Before seeing that marker and reading this nomination, he was not aware of the connection between the Hummingbirds and Philadelphia.
- Ms. Milroy commented that she wanted to underscore the significance of the building's survival and emphasized that the purpose of nomination is to preserve the physical structure in which these important events occurred.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Judith Robinson commented about the nature of designating properties related to Black history and cautioned that designation may bring undue financial hardship to the owners of properties such as this one. She urged the Committee to take that potential for hardship into consideration.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property at 2435 N. College Ave was the home of Dixie Hummingbirds' founder and manager, James B. Davis from 1951 to 1984.
- The property additionally served as the headquarters of the Dixie Hummingbirds while James B. Davis lived there.
- The Dixie Hummingbirds were and are a significant and impactful gospel musical group that is important to music history.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation J, for its use by The Dixie Hummingbirds as their headquarters for many years and its association with the music landscape of Philadelphia, particularly as it relates to the African American community.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2435 N. College Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

<b>ITEM: 2435 N COLLEGE AVE</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate; Criteria A and J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Lavery</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Barucco</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
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	6				

**ADDRESS: 5015 MCKEAN AVENUE**

Name of Resource: Overleigh

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Kingkiner Bros, LLC

Nominator: SoLo/Germantown Civic Association

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5015 McKean Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the Tudor style dwelling at the property, known as “Overleigh,” satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and E. The nomination claims satisfaction of Criterion A through the property’s association with William Tatem Tilden, Sr., who commissioned the design and served Philadelphia as a civic and educational leader, and through association with his youngest son William Tatem Tilden II, known more popularly as “Big Bill” Tilden, one of the greatest tennis players of all time. The nomination claims that the building satisfies Criterion C as a distinctive specimen of residential design in a revival style used during the Gilded Age. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criterion D as a representative example of the Tudor Revival style and satisfies Criterion E through its association with the notable Germantown architect George T. Pearson. The period of significance is listed in the nomination as 1893 to 1927. The Historical Commission staff suggests amending the period of significance to include only the years the house was inhabited by the Tildens, from construction of the house in 1893 until its sale following the death of William Tilden, Sr. in 1915.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria A, C, D, and E, with an amended period of significance ending in 1915.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING:** 00:30:05

**PRESENTERS:**

- Mr. Maust presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Allison Weiss represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Mr. Cohen stated that the nomination was well researched. He noted that he would have liked more clarification on the reference to buildings in Kent, England and that the citations should have been more specific to allow future scholars the ability to find the sources.
  - He further commended the nomination as expanding on the existing research about George T. Pearson, especially by documenting his commissions for John B. Stetson in Philadelphia and in Florida.
- Ms. Cooperman commented that there was not a list of standards for any given architectural style for architects working in this period and she urged nominators to avoid rote listing of features associated with a particular style as though a particular percentage of such features will prove or disprove such a categorization.
- Ms. Milroy asked whether Pearson was truly “Largely unknown in the annals of American architectural history,” as the nomination claimed?
  - Mr. Cohen described the architect as more famous in his time than he is today.

- Mr. Laverty asked for clarification about the staff’s recommendation that the period of significance should be amended to end at 1915. He wondered how this would impact the carriage house/garage, built later.
  - Mr. Maust answered that since the nomination focused on the Tildens’ occupancy, which ended in 1915, and Pearson’s design of the house in 1893, that 1915 would be a fitting end to the period of significance, excluding the garage which was built in 1927.
  - Mr. Cohen stated that the garage was a fitting addition in style to Overleigh itself, but that the staff’s recommendation made sense.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Oscar Beisert, representing the Keeping Society, spoke in support of the nomination.
- Suzanne Ponsen, representing West Central Germantown Neighbors, spoke in support of the nomination.
- Steve Peitzman spoke in support of the nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- George T. Pearson was an influential architect of the late nineteenth century and had a great impact on the built environment of Northwest Philadelphia.
- The house at 5015 McKean Avenue is a good example of both the Tudor Revival style and Pearson’s particular style.
- The nomination documents the Tilden family’s impact on the neighborhood and the city.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion A by exploring the legacy of the Tilden family who commissioned the building and lived there for many years.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria C and D as an example of the Tudor Revival style, a subset of the Queen Anne style.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion E as a project of architect George T. Pearson, who produced several buildings which have already been listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5015 McKean Avenue satisfies Criteria A, C, D, and E, with an amended period of significance ending in 1915.

**ITEM: 5015 McKEAN AVE**

**MOTION: Designate; Amend period of significance to end in 1915.**

**MOVED BY: Cohen**

**SECONDED BY: Milroy**

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	6				

DRAFT



**ADDRESS: 606 S 9TH ST**

Name of Resource: Tripoli Barber Supply Company

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: KRMP 604 LLC & KRMO 606

Nominator: Bella Vista Neighborhood Association

Staff Contact: Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, daniel.shachar-krasnoff@phila.gov

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate a portion of the property at 604-06 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The proposed boundary is limited to the four-story building at 606 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street constructed c. 1924 and excludes the portions of the property to the north at 604 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street as well as those fronting on Percy Street. The nomination contends that the Tripoli Barber Supply Company building satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the building is a distinctive example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style with some early Art Deco elements. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Tripoli Barber Supply Company has exemplified the evolving cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Bella Vista neighborhood business community for almost 100 years. The building was constructed as a store and manufacturing and distribution point for the DiPuppo brothers, who ran a barber and beauty supply business in a South Philadelphia neighborhood in the early twentieth century.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 606 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING:** 52:17

**PRESENTERS:**

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Barbara Hauck-Mah of the Bella Vista Neighbors Association represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Mr. Cohen opined that the buildings style is not easily defined; it is not fully Art Deco or classical. The building sits on a classicized base, but the upper stories feature striated brick in modulated buff colors with recessed joints characteristic of the 1910's and 1920's. These elements reflect Lombardic or Romanesque architecture of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and are reminiscent of buildings such as 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal and the University Museum.
  - Ms. Cooperman agreed.
- Mr. Laverty declared that the ambitious design would have been quite appropriate on Chestnut or Walnut Streets in Center City. He expressed additional surprise that the design has survived intact to the present day.
- Ms. Milroy expressed curiosity regarding the large second-floor window, which appears to provide a second floor for window displays.
- Ms. Barucco complimented the nomination's authors Barbara Hauck-Mah and Lawrence Weintraub.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Oscar Beisert, representing the Keeping Society, spoke in support of the nomination.
- David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, spoke in support of the nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- This nomination designates a portion of the property at 604-06 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street that was constructed circa 1924.
- The boundary is limited to the four-story building at 606 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street constructed c. 1924. It excludes the portions of the property to the north at 604 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street as well as those fronting on Percy Street.
- The building’s stone base has Renaissance design elements while the upper stories feature striated brick in modulated buff colors, recessed joints, and pilasters.
- The building was constructed as a store and manufacturing and distribution point for the DiPuppo brothers, who ran a barber and beauty supply business in a South Philadelphia neighborhood between 1911 and 1973.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The building is distinctive with design elements of the Italian Renaissance and Art Deco, satisfying Criterion D.
- The Tripoli Barber Supply Company exemplified the evolving cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Bella Vista neighborhood business community for almost 100 years, satisfying Criterion J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 604-06 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, the Tripoli Barber Supply Company, satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

<b>ITEM: 604-06 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate; Criteria D and J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Barucco</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Miller</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
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	6				

**ADDRESS: 704-10 S 6TH ST**

Name of Resource: Coroneos Brothers

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Multiple condominium owners

Nominator: Bella Vista Neighbors Association

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the four-story building at 704-08 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The proposed boundary excludes the non-historic former garage on the parcel formerly known as 710 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The nomination contends that the Coroneos Brothers building, constructed in 1920, satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J. Under Criterion C, the nomination contends that the building reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Classical Revival style of architecture with Beaux Arts influence. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Coroneos Brothers building exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, as a purpose-built store and warehouse for the Coroneos brothers, who brought their grocery import/export business to an area of South Philadelphia that welcomed numerous immigrants and their businesses in the early 1900s.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the Coroneos Brothers building on the parcel at 704-10 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING:** 01:11:00

**PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Ralph Marano of the Bella Vista Neighbors Association represented the nomination.
- Attorney Alan Nochumson, current tenant and former owner Sandy Ward, owner Lara Rhame, and owner Chanel Ward Biddle represented the condominium association of property owners.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Mr. Marano explained that several years prior, he spoke with Sandy Ward, a current tenant and former owner of the building, and she told him that the owners would welcome a historic designation of the property. He stated that several months after submitting the nomination, he was contacted by a different condominium unit owner who was opposed, which surprised him. He stated that he then met with the attorney representing the condominium association and attempted to clarify any misconceptions regarding historic designation. He noted that the Bella Vista Neighbors Association also submitted a letter to the Historical Commission, supporting any future potential hardship applications. He concluded that the Bella Vista Neighbors Association stands by the nomination.
- Mr. Nochumson spoke in opposition to the historic designation on behalf of the condominium association, which includes four units. He clarified that the building has been condominiums since 1987. He stated that the nomination focuses primarily on Criterion for Designation J, but that the sources provided regarding Greek neighborhood in Philadelphia do not mention Bella Vista as a neighborhood with a Greek identity. He stated that the two Greek churches referenced are not in the vicinity of the subject property. He concluded that the property therefore cannot

- exemplify the cultural, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community. He pushed back on the idea that historic significance could be attributed because someone died in the construction of the building. He stated that the Wikipedia entry for Bella Vista talks about communities of Italian, Irish, African, Vietnamese, and Mexican descent, but not Greek. He concluded that Criterion J cannot be met if there is no deep-rooted history of a Greek community in Bella Vista. Moving to discussion of Criterion C, Mr. Nochumson stated that the buildings referenced in the footnote link for this style of architecture are not warehouses. He noted that only one paragraph in the nomination was provided to document satisfaction of Criterion C. He claimed that this building is a “Frankenstein” building in that it is not one specific style. He suggested that it must be one style in order to satisfy Criterion C. He stated that the nomination has factual inaccuracies and does not provide sufficient evidence for historic designation. He outlined how the current owners maintain the building well and do not need additional oversight from the Historical Commission.
- Sandy Ward, the developer of record for the property in the early 1980s, former owner, and current tenant of a unit owned by her daughter, testified about the condition of the building when she purchased it, and the work done to it since that time. She explained that the building was in total disrepair and was boarded up when she and her partner purchased it for their respective business needs. She stated that all windows and doors were replaced at that time, the parapet and front steps were replaced, the first floor was shored up, black slate was installed along the first floor, light posts were installed, and brick was repointed. She stated that there is currently an issue with water infiltration that needs to be addressed through repointing. She stated that the windows get resealed and caulked every five years. She summarized that much of the façade is not original or has been repaired, and the building is well-maintained by its ownership.
  - Lara Rhame, owner of the adjacent non-historic unit at what was 710 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street but is now part of the address 704-10 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, stated that her address is mentioned throughout the nomination. She stated it is incorrect and should be removed. She claimed that no work to the building was permitted once the owners received notice of the proposed designation.
    - Mr. Farnham clarified that there is nothing in the notice letters or the nomination process which precludes work to the building at any point in the process. He stated that property owners are always able to submit building permit applications, and these would have been reviewed in the normal course while the property was pending review for historic designation. He further clarified that the nomination makes clear that the portion of the building at 710 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street is not included in the designation. The Historical Commission is using that address because City law requires City agencies to use addresses assigned by the Office of Property Assessment for regulatory purposes. He concluded that the Historical Commission is not seeking to regulate the shorter building portion of the property, but rather is seeking only to regulate the four-story building adjacent to it, which is part of the 704-10 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street city-recognized address. The nomination clearly indicates which parts of the property are proposed for designation.
  - Chanel Ward Biddle, a condominium unit owner, announced her participation in the meeting.
  - Ms. Cooperman explained the role of the Historical Commission and its jurisdiction to review building permit applications for exterior work to historically designated

buildings. She encouraged the condominium unit owners to speak to the Historical Commission's staff for additional information.

- Ms. Cooperman clarified that the materials provided by Mr. Nochumson were received after close of business the day prior, and, as such, had only been provided to the Committee just before the start of the meeting. For this reason, the Committee did not have the opportunity to review the materials, which included a signed petition of opposition to the designation from neighbors and friends of the condominium owners, a letter of opposition to the designation from the granddaughter of a Coroneos brother, and current photographs.
- Ms. Cooperman commented on Mr. Nochumson's arguments against Criterion C. She stated that many buildings are a combination of styles, but that does not make them a "Frankenstein." She continued that this is a common issue with nominations that utilize architectural guidebooks as rule books or standards, which they are not. They do not represent an agreed upon rule by which architects designed buildings at a certain time. She likened it to approaching building styles as bird species, where there is no variation. She concluded that builders, owners, and architects were free to combine elements to create new designs.
- Ms. Milroy and Ms. Barucco thanked the property owners for maintaining and preserving the building.
- Ms. Cooperman commented on Mr. Nochumson's arguments against Criterion J. She stated that the locations of the two Greek churches referenced in the nomination, being less than a mile away but not on the immediate blocks surrounding the property, does not detract from the argument for significance to the Greek community. She concluded that a community is a group of people, not necessarily a group of contiguous blocks.
  - Ms. Milroy added that the documentation and history of buildings is an iterative process, and nominations provide a body of evidence which can be built upon. She opined that the nomination made a sufficient argument based on evidence.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the objections presented are not a good argument against the historic significance of the building. He stated that the architectural design is a case of classicism on a budget, with a use of terra cotta and intricate brickwork to create a building that stands out. He suggested that Greektown was not a concentrated cluster, but rather required some travel by the Greek community.
- Ms. Milroy commented on the "Coroneos Bros" sign, which announced the business.
- Mr. Laverty commented that the Coroneos Brothers were making a statement with this building. The white façade stood out against the surrounding red brick buildings. Additionally, white stood for purity, the desire for which made sense in the food industry. He noted that the terra cotta at the top of the building was a more economical method of labeling the building compared to an engraved stone sign.
- Ms. Miller commented in support of the nomination.
- Ms. Cooperman again encouraged the condominium owners to speak with the Historical Commission's staff to clear up any misperceptions regarding historic designation.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Oscar Beisert, representing the Keeping Society, commented in support of the nomination.
- David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, commented in support of the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman commented in support of the nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:**

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Only the four-story Coroneos Brothers building is proposed for regulation by the Historical Commission. The boundary excludes the non-historic former garage on the parcel formerly known as 710 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. However, because the Historical Commission must utilize addresses assigned by the City's Office of Property Assessment, the address proposed for designation is 704-10 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The building reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Classical Revival style of architecture with Beaux Arts influence, satisfying Criterion C.
- The Coroneos Brothers building exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, as a purpose-built store and warehouse for the Coroneos brothers, who brought their grocery import/export business to an area of South Philadelphia that welcomed numerous immigrants and their businesses in the early 1900s, satisfying Criterion J.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the Coroneos Brothers building on the parcel at 704-10 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J.

<b>ITEM: 704-10 S 6TH ST</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate; Criteria C and J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Barucco</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Miller</b>					
<b>VOTE</b>					
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	6				

## **GERMANTOWN URBAN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Multiple

Nominator: Historic Germantown

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

**OVERVIEW:** This nomination proposes to designate the Germantown Urban Village Historic District and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The proposed district includes 65 properties in Germantown and is centered around Market Square along Germantown Avenue and includes cross streets such as Church Lane, School House Lane, and Lena Street. It is composed of residential, commercial, civic, religious, and industrial buildings and multiple vacant lots.

The nomination states the proposed district satisfies Criteria A, C, G, and J as it epitomizes the larger architectural history and development patterns that defined the Upper Northwest, as well as the cultural, political, economic, and social heritage of Germantown. A wide range of architectural styles are included in the district including Georgian, Federal, Colonial Revival and more, reflecting stylistic trends from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. The built environment of the proposed district represents an important combination of streetscapes that interrelate with Market Square at the historic center of Germantown.

The nomination also contends the proposed district includes properties that may possess significance under Criterion I. Specific properties may have the potential to contain intact archaeological resources that have yielded and are likely to yield information important to Germantown's colonial and nineteenth-century history as well as the Battle of Germantown.

The proposed period of significance for Criteria A, C, G, and J is 1703 to 1959. The period of significance for Criterion I is 1703 to 1876.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates the proposed historic district satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, G, I, and J.

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING:** 02:09:00

### **RECUSAL:**

- Ms. Miller recused from the review of the nomination owing to her employment with the National Park Service.

### **PRESENTERS:**

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Tuomi Forrest, Mark Sellers, and Carolyn Adams of Historic Germantown and Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society of Philadelphia represented the nomination.
- Owners Jarrod Anderson, Kenneth Johnson, and Jim Dragoni represented their individual properties located in the proposed historic district and stated their support of the nomination.

### **DISCUSSION:**

- Mr. Farnham informed the Committee that staff recently discovered that a property owner had not been notified regarding a parcel within the proposed historic district. He stated this was recently identified during the GIS mapping of the historic district

- and that the property owner had not received proper notice. Mr. Farnham explained that the property is 37 Church Lane, a vacant lot owned by the Germantown Historical Society, and adjacent to 31-35 Church Lane, which is also owned by the organization. He said that the staff planned to reach out to the owner to discuss the notice problem and to propose an amendment to the nomination to include 37 Church Lane in the inventory.
- Mr. Forrest stated that Historic Germantown manages the Germantown Historical Society and noted he is the de facto director of the organization. He said that, as the owner of that property, the Historical Commission has the Germantown Historical Society's full support on this matter.
  - Mr. Sellers said that Historic Germantown is willing to waive the notice requirement. He said there is no reason to wait for the mailed notice letter and they waive notice requirement on the record at this meeting.
  - Mr. Farnham thanked Mr. Forrest and Mr. Sellers and said the staff would prepare an amendment to the nomination.
  - Ms. Cooperman said she would like clarification on how the boundary for this historic district was determined.
    - Mr. Beisert responded that the boundary was determined to protect Market Square and the buildings around it. He commented that they wanted to include the central square, the cross streets, and the type of development seen in an urban context. Mr. Beisert said that one of the reasons they did not go further south was because of limited resources and reiterated that it was important that Market Square and related cross streets be recognized as they are historically intact and worthy of designation. Mr. Beisert concluded by noting that they would have liked to expand the proposed area for designation but were focused on protecting Market Square and its immediate environs.
  - Ms. Milroy commented that perhaps this was the beginning of an organized campaign to discover similar districts within Germantown.
  - Ms. Barucco said she thought the nomination was very good and a masterwork. She said the nomination laid everything out and the documentation was impressive. She added that the nomination seems like it was a long time coming and is glad to see it. Ms. Barucco said she hopes it is the beginning of more nominations in Germantown and thanked everyone who worked to create the nomination.
  - Ms. Milroy said the nomination is a masterful work of research. She congratulated Mr. Beisert and others who worked on this nomination, observing that this was likely a group effort. Ms. Milroy noted that the history of Germantown also included the history of the Germantown independence movement, which did not get a lot of treatment in the nomination. She noted the independence movement for recognition as an independent borough is still alive in Germantown but perhaps that might be more appropriately addressed in a nomination that centers around the town hall and that district.
  - Ms. Milroy and Ms. Barucco raised the issue of visualizing the historic district while they were reading the nomination. They noted the clarity of the district map shown in the meeting presentation and asked for this to be added to the nomination document.
  - Mr. Lavery said the background research on the nomination is very thorough. He stated that he looks forward to printing it out and having it on his shelf for reference. Mr. Lavery said the nomination was a good example of inter-organizational cooperation led by Mr. Beisert.
  - Mr. Lavery pointed out that the 18 row homes constructed on E. Schoolhouse Lane that have mansard roofs are the early work of builder W.T.B Roberts. He explained



that the Roberts would go on to build thousands of houses in Philadelphia and then all of Glenside. Mr. Laverty said this block of homes represents buildings completed in the early years of Roberts' career when he was making the transition from carpenter to builder.

- Mr. Cohen observed that the nomination was a massive enterprise and Mr. Beisert has done a good job of organizing it. He said it is challenging to tell both the larger story and go into the detailed story and it is difficult thing to figure out how to put something together in the most readable way. Mr. Cohen said the nomination is remarkably comprehensive and well researched. He said that the nomination will be used by others for research and that the nominator needs to be careful about citing sources so others can locate these in the future. He also pointed out several grammatical and formatting errors. Mr. Cohen emphasized that none of this should take away from this remarkable body of research.
- Mr. Laverty said the illustrations were great. He noted most were unfamiliar, which underscores the importance of accurate citations.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Steven Peitzman, representing the East Falls Historical Society, commented in support of the nomination.
- Allison Weiss, representing the SoLo Germantown Civic Association, commented in support of the nomination.
- Suzanne Ponsen, representing West Central Germantown Neighbors, commented in support of the nomination.
- 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 nomination inventory is missing one parcel, 37 Church Lane. The owner of the property, Germantown Historical Society, gave permission during the meeting to revise the nomination inventory to include the property.
- The proposed historic district boundary was determined by the nominator to protect Market Square and its immediate environs.
- The area proposed for designation is worthy of recognition and protection.
- The nomination is extremely well researched and written.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the historic district satisfies Criterion A as the district epitomizes the larger architectural history and development patterns that defined the Upper Northwest of Philadelphia.
- The nomination demonstrates the historic district satisfies Criterion C which includes a wide range of architectural styles from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries.
- The nomination demonstrates the historic district satisfies Criterion G, as it includes an important combination of streetscapes associated with Market Square at the historic center of Germantown.
- The nomination demonstrates the historic district satisfies Criterion J, as it represents the cultural, political, economic, and social heritage of Germantown.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion I, as it has the potential to contain intact archaeological resources that have yielded and are likely to

yield information important to Germantown’s colonial and nineteenth-century history as well as the Battle of Germantown.

**COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the Germantown Urban Village Historic District satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, G, I, and J.

<b>ITEM: GERMANTOWN URBAN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT</b>					
<b>MOTION: Designate; Criteria A, C, G, I, and J</b>					
<b>MOVED BY: Barucco</b>					
<b>SECONDED BY: Lavery</b>					
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	5			1	

DRAFT

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:59:12**

**ACTION:** The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- Minutes of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and its advisory Committees 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.
- Application materials and staff overviews are available on the Historical Commission's website, [www.phila.gov/historical](http://www.phila.gov/historical).

## **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:

- (a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;
- (e) 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;
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation;
- (g) 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;
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.