

# NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT

## PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

### PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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

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

Street address: 10151 Academy Rd

Postal code: 19114

#### 2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Maple Grove School

Current/Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building

☐ Structure

☐ Site

☐ Object

#### 4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☒ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: Residential

#### 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

*Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.*

#### 6. DESCRIPTION

*Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.*

#### 7. SIGNIFICANCE

*Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.*

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1854 to 1936

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1854

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Samuel Sloan

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Joseph K. Vandergrift

Original owner: Board of Controllers of the Public Schools of the First District of Pennsylvania

Other significant persons: \_\_\_\_\_

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

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

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

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Please attach a bibliography.*

**9. NOMINATOR**

Organization Philadelphia Historical Commission Date March 7, 2025

Name with Title Jon Farnham, Executive Director Email jon.farnham@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor Telephone 215-686-7660

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: March 7, 2025

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: March 7, 2025

Date of Notice Issuance: March 13, 2025

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Peter A. Lamlein

Address: 10151 Academy Rd

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19114

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: April 16, 2025

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: May 9, 2025

Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

## 5. Boundary Description

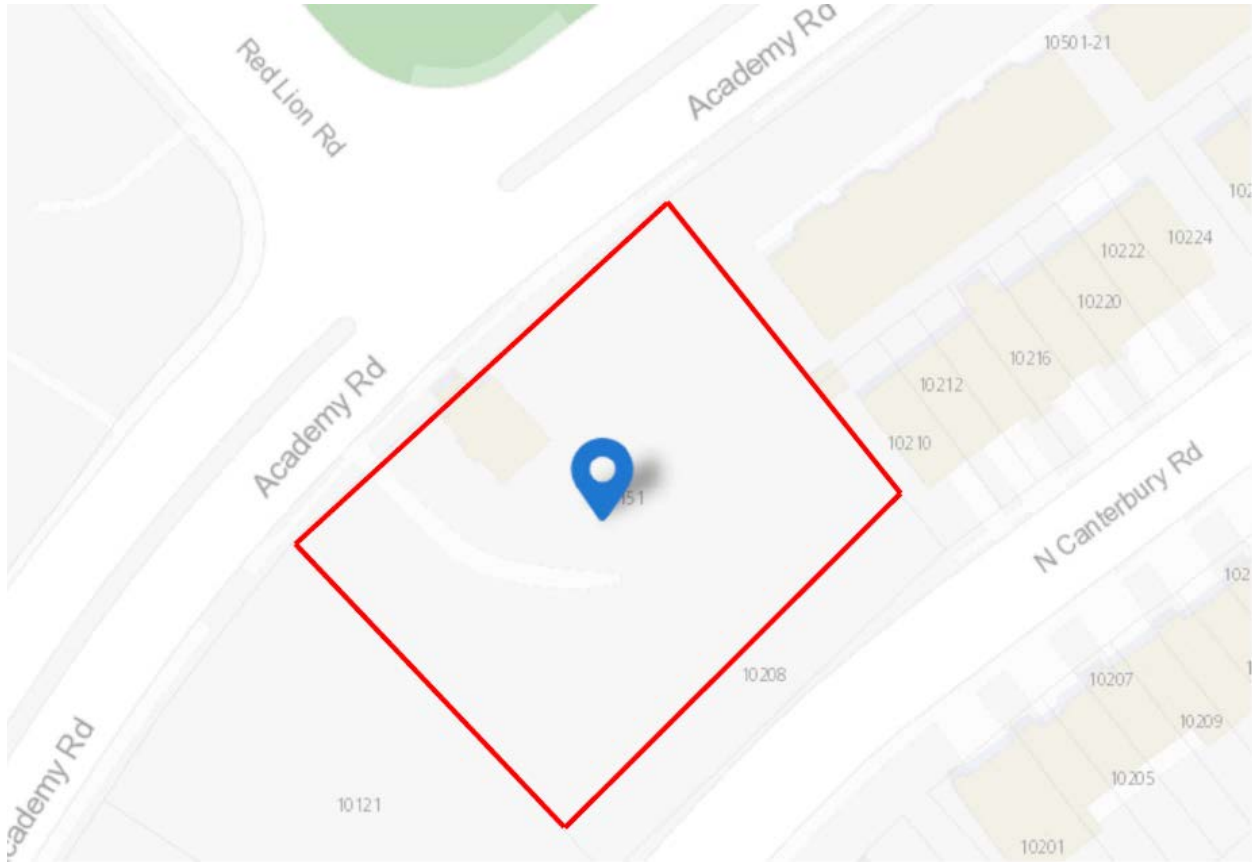


Figure 1. The boundary identifying the parcel at 10151 Academy Road. (Source: Atlas)

All that certain lot or piece of ground situate in the Thirty-fifth Ward in the City of Philadelphia beginning at a point on the Southeast side of Academy Road, the said point being 16 feet and 6-½ inches measured South 38 degrees, 55 minutes, 35 seconds East from a point on the center line of Academy Road which point is 96 feet 5-3/8 inches, measured North 55 degrees, 15 minutes East from a point formed by the intersection of the center line of Academy Road with the center line of Red Lion Road, thence extending from beginning point South 38 degrees, 55 minutes, 35 seconds East 208 feet and ¾ inches to a point, thence extending South 47 degrees, 1 minute, 59 seconds West, 215 feet and 5-7/8 inches to a point, thence extending North 40 degrees, 57 minutes, 45 seconds West 203 feet and 10-5/8 inches to the Southeast side of Academy Road, thence extending North 55 degrees 15 minutes East 95 feet and 4-1/4 inches to the place of beginning excepting thereout part of the bed of Academy Road.

OPA Account No. 661011500

Parcel No. 153-N10-0003

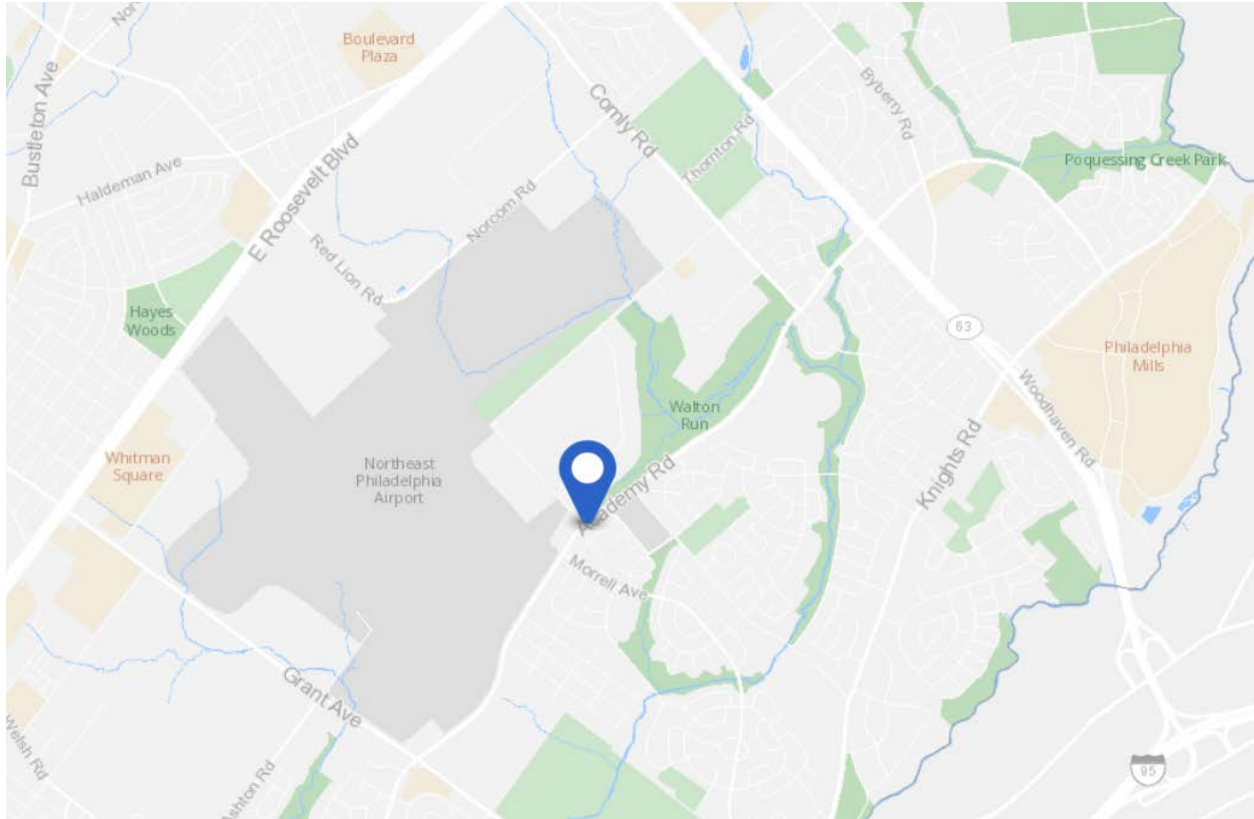


Figure 2. The property at 10151 Academy Road is located on the southeast side of Academy Road in Northeast Philadelphia. The Northeast Philadelphia Airport is located across Academy Road to the north and west. The area to the north is primarily industrial. The area to the south and east is primarily residential with some commercial uses. (Source: Atlas)



Figure 3. The property at 10151 Academy Road is located in Northeast Philadelphia, on the border separating the former Moreland and Byberry Townships. (Source: Atlas)

## 6. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Located on the southeast side of Academy Road at its intersection with Red Lion Road, the property at 10151 Academy Road is a large, wooded lot of about 0.85 acres. A driveway runs off Academy Road near the southwest corner of the property. A two-story cut stone building stands along Academy Road to the northeast of the driveway. The building is rectangular in plan with its gable end facing the street. The front façade is framed by broad, simple pilasters and a corbel table at the gable (Figure 4). The building has four dormers, two per slope of the roof, which are later additions, and a central brick chimney, which replaced the original cupola. A one-story porch with a shed roof extends off the front façade of the building toward Academy Road. An asymmetric porch with shallow gable roof extends off the southwest or front façade toward the driveway; it is a later addition. The first-floor front windows are arched, four-over-four, double-hung windows in squared openings with paneled shutters. The windows flank a doorway with a louvered storm door. The second-floor front windows, which were added later, are four-light casements. An arched louvered opening is located at the peak of the front gable; it too was added later. The side windows are double-hung sash with paneled shutters. The rear façade, which is not visible from the street, includes a central doorway with a small projecting roof, a projecting bay window to the left of the doorway, and a pair of coupled small windows to the right. The two second-floor rear windows are small, four-light casements like those on the front façade.



Figure 4. View of 10151 Academy Road. (Source: Cyclomedia)





Figure 5. 10151 Academy Road. (Source: Google)

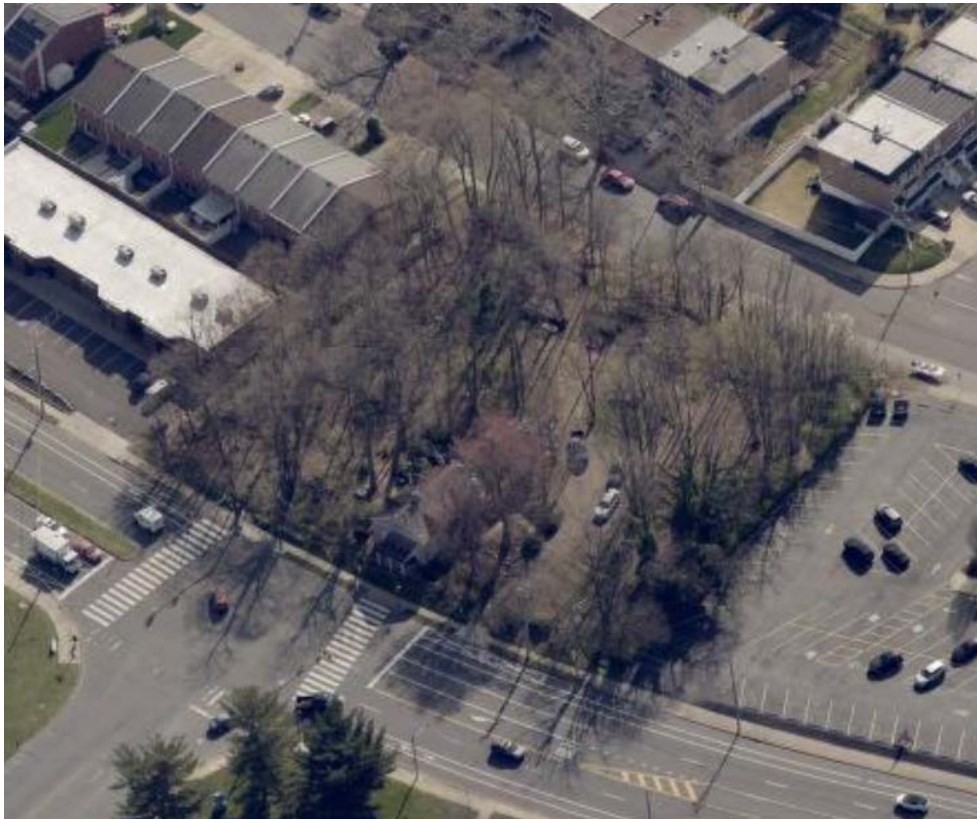


Figure 6. Aerial photograph of the property at 10151 Academy Road, looking to the east. (Source: Pictometry)



## 7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former Maple Grove School at 10151 Academy Road is architecturally and historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation E and J, which are enumerated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. The Maple Grove School is the work of Samuel Sloan, an architect whose work has significantly influenced the development of the City of Philadelphia, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the United States, satisfying Criterion E. The Maple Grove School exemplifies the heritage of the community, the former Moreland and Byberry Townships, satisfying Criterion J.

### MAPLE GROVE SCHOOL



Figure 7. Detail with areas of Moreland and Byberry circled, from Thomas Holme, *Map of improved part of Pensilvania [Pennsylvania] in America, divided into counties, townships and lotts.*, 1681.

The area at the northeastern edge of Philadelphia, which had been occupied by Native Americans for millennia, was settled by Swedes in the middle of the seventeenth century. In 1675, four brothers, Nathaniel, Thomas, Daniel, and William Walton, arrived from England and settled along the Poquessing Creek. They named the area Byberry in honor of their hometown in England. They were joined by other settlers in 1682, and Byberry Township was recognized by the Court of the Quarter Sessions in 1703. In 1682, William Penn sold nearly 10,000 acres of land to Nicholas More located on the main branches of the Poquessing and Pennypack Creeks, to the west of what would become Byberry, and named it the Manor of Moreland. In 1718, the Court of Quarter Sessions created the Township of Moreland from previous More family holdings and adjacent land. In 1784, Montgomery County was created from parts of Philadelphia County. The former Moreland Township was divided into two townships, one in



each county, both with the same name. In 1854, Byberry Township and the Moreland Township located in Philadelphia County were consolidated into Philadelphia County.

In 1800, a log school house with one classroom and detached, unheated toilets was erected on Academy Road on the boundary separating Byberry and Moreland Townships.<sup>1</sup> Silas Walton and Edward Duffield donated the land for the school.<sup>2</sup> Duffield also helped establish Lower Dublin Academy. Known as the Byberry and Moreland School, the subscription-based institution educated children from both townships (Figure 8).<sup>3</sup>

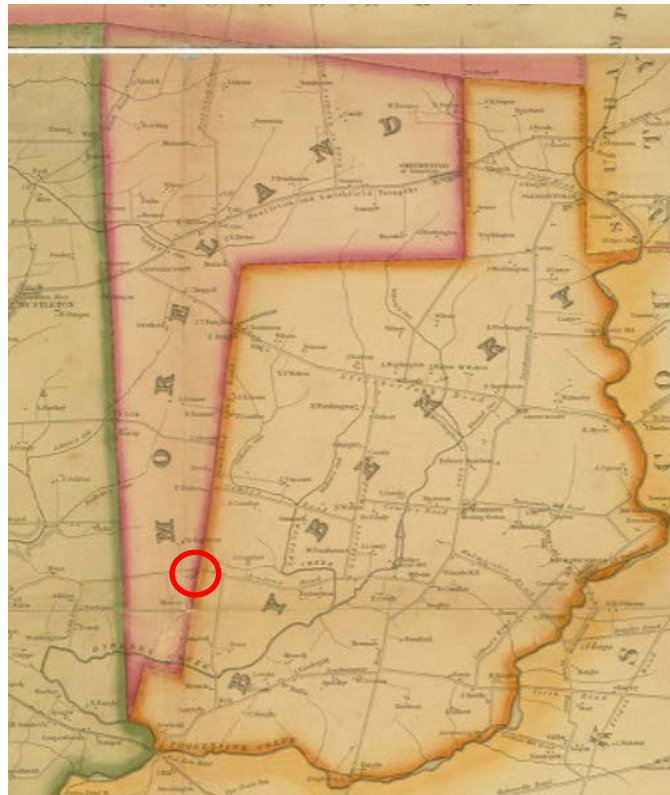


Figure 8. A detail of Moreland and Byberry Townships with the Byberry and Moreland School House circled, from Charles Ellet Jr., *A Map of the County of Philadelphia from Actual Survey Made the direction of Charles Ellet, Jr. Civil Engineer, and in accordance with the Act of Assembly passed June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1839, 1843*. (Source: PhilaGeoHistory)

<sup>1</sup> Franklin Davenport Edmunds, *The Public School Buildings of the City of Philadelphia from 1853 to 1867*, Philadelphia, vol. 1, 1913, pp. 25-27.

<sup>2</sup> Deed, EF-4-317, August 28, 1800, City of Philadelphia, Department of Records.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph C. Martindale, *A History of the Townships of Byberry and Moreland in Philadelphia, PA*, (Philadelphia: T. Ellwood Zell, 1867), pp. 109-110.

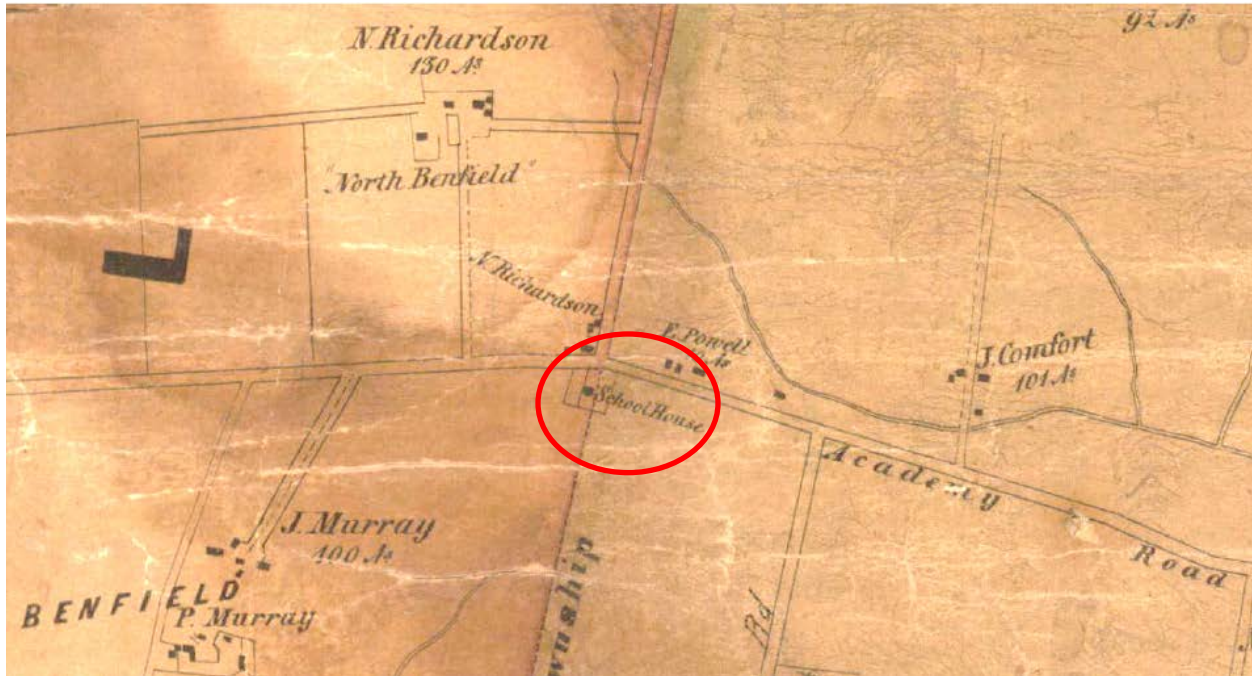


Figure 9. A detail showing the Byberry and Moreland School House circled, from J.C. Sydney, Surveyor, *Plan of Townships of Byberry and Moreland*, 1849.

Between 1800 and 1850, the combined populations of the rural, sparsely populated Byberry and Moreland Townships grew from 941 to 1,622.<sup>4</sup> In 1854, the City and County of Philadelphia were consolidated, merging Byberry and Moreland Townships into Philadelphia. On November 8, 1853, the Trustees of the Powelton School House, as the Byberry and Moreland School was sometimes known, transferred the property at 10151 Academy Road to the Controllers of the Public Schools of the First School District of Pennsylvania (Figure 10).<sup>5</sup> The Controllers hired contractor Joseph K. Vandergrift, who constructed a new, public, one-room, stone schoolhouse on the site for \$1,500 (Figure 11 and Figure 12).<sup>6</sup> The schoolhouse was heated by a stove and included unheated, detached toilets.<sup>7</sup> After the new school building was complete, the old log school building was sold at public auction to Isaac White, who dismantled and removed it.<sup>8</sup> As will be argued later in this nomination, the schoolhouse appears to have been designed by famed architect Samuel Sloan.

<sup>4</sup> John Daly and Allen Weinberg, *Genealogy of Philadelphia County Subdivisions* (Philadelphia: City of Philadelphia, Department of Records, 1966).

<sup>5</sup> Deed, TH-142-352, November 28, 1853, City of Philadelphia, Department of Records.

<sup>6</sup> *Thirty-six Report of the Controllers of the Public Schools of the First School District of Pennsylvania for the Year and a Half Ending December 31, 1854* (Philadelphia: Crissy & Markley, Printers, 1855), p. 90.

<sup>6</sup> *Eighty-seventh Annual Report of the Board of Public Education for the City of Philadelphia for the Year Ending December 31, 1905* (Philadelphia: Walther Print, 1906), p. 10

<sup>7</sup> Franklin Davenport Edmunds, *The Public School Buildings of the City of Philadelphia from 1853 to 1867*, Philadelphia, vol. 3, 1917, pp. 16-19.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph C. Martindale, *A History of the Townships of Byberry and Moreland in Philadelphia, PA*, (Philadelphia: T. Ellwood Zell, 1867), pp. 109-110.

## THE MAPLE GROVE SCHOOL

East side of Academy Road south of Red Lion Road

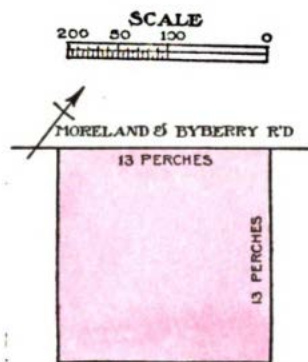


Figure 10. Plot plan for the Maple Grove School on Moreland and Byberry Road, now called Academy Road, from *Franklin Davenport Edmunds, The Public School Buildings of the City of Philadelphia from 1853 to 1867*, Philadelphia, vol. 3, 1917, pp. 16-19.



Figure 11. Maple Grove School, photograph by Franklin Davenport Edmunds, September 10, 1912. (Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)





Figure 12. Maple Grove School, photograph by Franklin Davenport Edmunds, September 10, 1912. (Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)



Figure 13. A detail showing the Maple Grove School House circled, from Samuel L. Smedley, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, Section 25, 1862.



In 1855, the Controllers of the Public Schools of the First School District of Pennsylvania reported that 64 students, 38 boys and 26 girls, were enrolled at the newly built, unclassified Maple Grove School. Elwood F. Dudley was the teacher, and 37 students attended on an average day.<sup>9</sup> In 1887, the *Annual Report of the Board of Public Education* highlighted the small enrollment at Maple Grove School: "Attention is called to the Maple Grove School. The attendance at this school is very small, an average of ten only being reported for the month ending January 20."<sup>10</sup> In 1897, the City of Philadelphia's medical inspector warned that students at Maple Grove School "face a strong glare of morning light which is very trying to the eyes. He noted, however, that "this can be remedied." He also indicated that the "pump water" at the school is "said to be foul" and that "vaccination certificates and records are kept."<sup>11</sup> By 1905, the number of students enrolled at the Maple Grove School had dwindled to 16, with 12 boys and four girls; 14 students attended on an average day, 11 boys and three girls.<sup>12</sup> In June 1918, the Committee on Elementary Schools recommended that the Board of Education "abandon the Maple Grove School and transport the attending pupils daily by bus to the William C. Jacobs School at Bustleton, at an annual savings of \$639."<sup>13</sup> The school closed soon thereafter.

On March 18, 1936, the School District of Philadelphia sold the property at 10151 Academy Road to Andrew and Margaret Lamlein for \$700.<sup>14</sup> The Lamleins converted the Maple Grove School to a residence, inserting a second floor and adding windows, some at dormers. Their son, Peter Lamlein, reminisced about the property in 1992, recounting: "I grew up on a farm in Philadelphia. It was out by the Northeast Airport. We had a big house my father had remodeled and expanded from a one-room schoolhouse built back in 1854. We had lots of land, and all kinds of animals."<sup>15</sup>

The area around 10151 Academy Road retained its rural character until the middle of the twentieth century. Northeast Philadelphia Airport, across Academy Road to the north and west, started as a grass airfield in the 1930s. During World War II, it was expanded and developed by the United States Army Air Corp. After the war, it was turned over to the City of Philadelphia and expanded again. As aerial photographs demonstrate, the area around 10151 Academy Road was converted from open farm and vacant land to a dense residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhood in the years between 1959 and 1970 (Figure 14 and Figure 15). Academy Road at Red Lion Road was widened from a country lane to a four-lane, divided thoroughfare in the early 1960s (Figure 16). Today, the property at 10151 Academy Road provides a glimpse of the landscape in the former Byberry and Moreland Townships, which was primarily open farmland with small settlements until the middle of the twentieth century. The former schoolhouse set on a large, wooded lot exemplifies the heritage of the community, harkening back to the days when Moreland and Byberry Townships were thinly settled, rural, farming communities, and thereby satisfies Criterion for Designation J.

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<sup>9</sup> *Thirty-six Report of the Controllers of the Public Schools of the First School District of Pennsylvania for the Year and a Half Ending December 31, 1854* (Philadelphia: Crissy & Markley, Printers, 1855), p. 90.

<sup>10</sup> *Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the Board of Public Education, First School District of Pennsylvania, for the Year Ending December 31, 1887* (Philadelphia: Dunlap & Clarke, Printers & Binders, 1888), p. 121.

<sup>11</sup> J. Howard Taylor, *Annual Report of the Medical Inspector on the Sanitary Inspection of the Public Schools for the Year 1896* (Philadelphia: Dunlap Printing Company, 1897), p. 218.

<sup>12</sup> *Eighty-seventh Annual Report of the Board of Public Education for the City of Philadelphia for the Year Ending December 31, 1905* (Philadelphia: Walther Print, 1906), p. 226.

<sup>13</sup> "Board to Consider Short School Day," *Inquirer*, June 6, 1918, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> Deed, DWH-80-273, March 18, 1936, City of Philadelphia, Department of Records.

<sup>15</sup> Jim Quinn, "Food: Fresh Start," *Inquirer*, April 5, 1992, p. 556.



Figure 14. Detail of an aerial photograph of the area around the intersection of Red Lion Road and Academy Road, with the property at 10151 Academy Road circled. Excepting the airport runway, most of the nearby land was still undeveloped in 1959. Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Aerial Photographs of the Delaware Valley, 1959. (Source: PhilaGeoHistory)

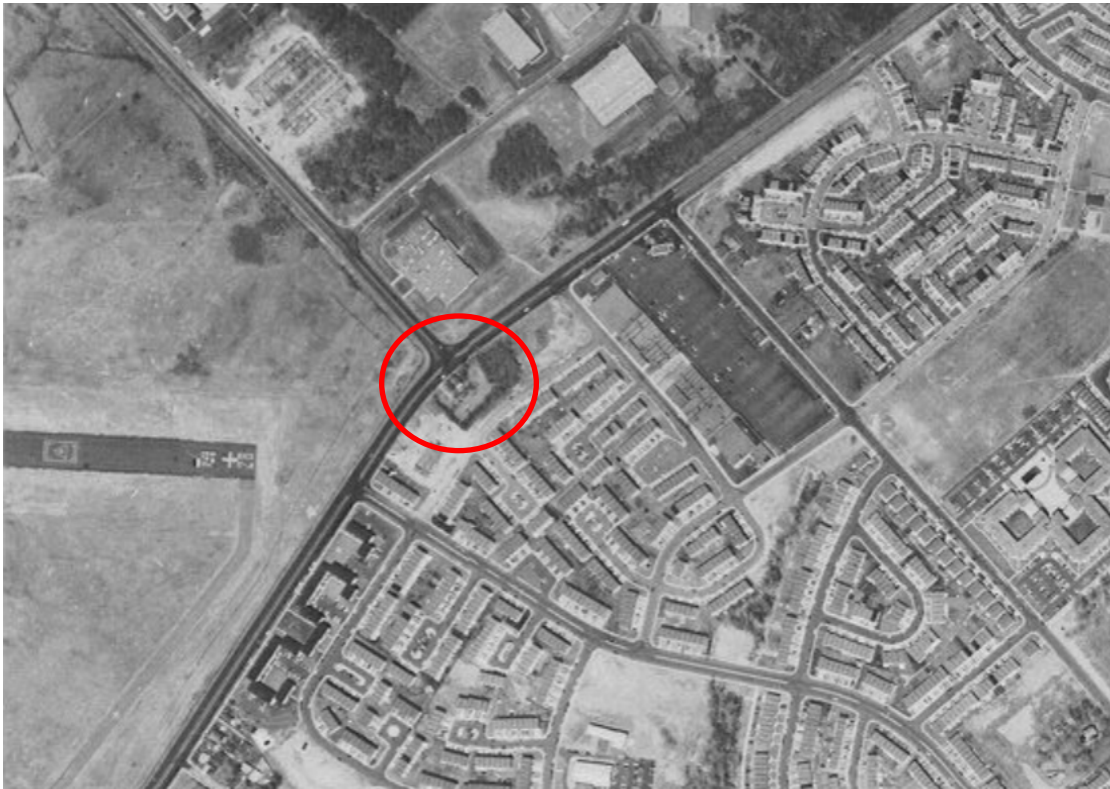


Figure 15. Detail of an aerial photograph of the area around the intersection of Red Lion Road and Academy Road, with the property at 10151 Academy Road circled. By 1970, the former open land around the property in question had been developed for residential, commercial, and industrial uses and Academy Road had been widened to a four-lane, divided thoroughfare. Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Aerial Photographs of the Delaware Valley, 1970. (Source: PhilaGeoHistory)



Figure 16. Looking south on Academy Road at Red Lion Road, March 6, 1961. The property at 10151 Academy Road is located at the left, under the electrical or telephone wires. Both streets are country roads in 1961. Within a few years after this photograph was taken, Academy Road was widened to a four-lane, divided thoroughfare. (Source: City of Philadelphia, Department of Records)



## SAMUEL SLOAN AND THE PHILADELPHIA PLAN

In the eighteenth century in Philadelphia, some children, primarily children of privilege, were educated at private schools including those with religious and charitable missions, but most children, especially those at the lower rungs of the class ladder, received no formal education. A change was signaled in Article 7, Section 1 of the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1790, which stipulated that "The Legislature shall, as soon as conveniently may be, provide by law for the establishment of schools throughout the State, in such a manner that the poor may be taught gratis." No action was taken until 1802, when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed legislation authorizing poor children to be educated at private schools at public expense. Schools that were both publicly funded and publicly administered were not established in Pennsylvania until 1818, when the Pennsylvania General Assembly established the First School District of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. However, the schools established in 1818 were solely for the instruction of children of the indigent; they were not open to the general public. Such schools were considered "charity schools," and were generally held in contempt by Philadelphians. In 1834, Pennsylvania enacted a law to "establish a general system of education by common schools." The law created a system of state-regulated common school districts, eliminated subscription costs for schools and provided teachers with regular salaries, and vested responsibility for the daily operation of public schools in locally elected officials.<sup>16</sup> The most significant reform in public schooling in early nineteenth-century Pennsylvania occurred with the Consolidation Act of 1836, which opened public schools to all students regardless of economic status and helped to rid the stigma of "public" schools as nothing more than "charity" schools for the destitute. The Act of 1836 was regarded as the cornerstone of the public school system in Pennsylvania and established rules and processes for the formation of school districts, the election of school directors and their powers and duties, the organization of school boards, the levying and collection of taxes for school purposes, and the duties of the State Superintendent. Philadelphia's Central High School for boys opened in 1838. The Philadelphia Girls Normal School opened in 1848. By 1850, Philadelphia public schools included one high school, one normal school, 53 grammar, 29 secondary, 130 primary, and 40 other schools. They employed 727 teachers and educated 45,383 pupils.

Despite the formalization and growth of Philadelphia's public school system in the early nineteenth century, the county's school facilities were woefully inadequate owing to a reluctance to invest in new school buildings as well as a decentralized public school governance system that left school infrastructure decisions in the hands of myriad community-based school section leaders. In 1845, a breakaway faction of the Committee on Public Schools expressed its dissatisfaction with Philadelphia's school facilities, pointing to the

constant and numerous applications, by the directors and citizens of different sections of the county, for the necessary accommodations, to have their children educated in a respectable and comfortable manner; and in visiting the different schools in the city, the minority of your Committee found many of the school houses which were erected before the improvements in the system required class-rooms, so badly accommodated that both teachers and pupils must necessarily suffer in health for want of such rooms of a proper size; and in all such schools visited by the minority of your committee the universal cry from the teachers was, give us larger and more airy class-rooms.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> John L. Rockey, "Pennsylvania's Free School Laws of 1834 and Their Great Defender Thaddeus Stevens," *Lebanon County Historical Society Journal*, vol 7, no. 10, June 27, 1917, pp. 351-372.

<sup>17</sup> "Minority Report of the Committee on Public Schools," *Public Ledger*, September 11, 1845, p. 4.

In 1849, George M. Wharton, the president of the Board of Controllers of the Public Schools for the City and County of Philadelphia, resigned to protest the City Councils' failure to adequately fund the construction of public-school facilities. In June 1850, the renegade Wharton was returned to the Board of Controllers as its president. Days after his reelection, on July 9, 1850, an enormous fire struck the waterfront in Philadelphia. The fire, which was ignited by an explosion of saltpeter, killed 28, injured 100, and destroyed 367 buildings as it burned through about 18 acres between Water and Second Streets and Vine and Callowhill Streets. Two schools, including the North-Eastern Grammar School at Front and New Streets, were destroyed in the fire.<sup>18</sup> The devastating fire provided justification for Wharton, the city's leading advocate for better school facilities, to launch a committee to explore the establishment of standards for the design and construction of school buildings. Wharton's committee and educators generally asserted that educational outcomes would improve if students and teachers were provided spacious, comfortable, efficient, well-designed buildings. In 1850, Wharton and his committee selected carpenter/architect Samuel Sloan to study school architecture and prepare plans for standardized school buildings. Sloan was charged with designing school buildings with improved classroom layout, lighting, heating, ventilation, and ingress and egress.

Samuel Sloan is considered "one of America's most influential architects." Born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, Sloan trained as a carpenter and relocated to Philadelphia in the mid-1830s. He worked on two important projects early in his career, the Eastern State Penitentiary, designed by architect John Haviland, and the Pennsylvania Hospital for Mental and Nervous Diseases, designed by Isaac Holden. Sloan would go on to develop plans that served as the models for general hospitals, mental hospitals, and schools throughout the United States. About 1850, Sloan transitioned from identifying as a carpenter to an architect, winning important commissions for the Delaware County, Pennsylvania courthouse and jail and an Italianate villa for Andrew M. Eastwick on the site of Bartram's Gardens in Philadelphia. At the same time, Sloan began publishing on architecture and eventually became one of the most prolific American authors on architecture of the mid-nineteenth century. Sloan's *The Model Architect* was first published in parts as articles in 1851 and then as bound Volume One in 1852 and Volume Two in 1853, with later editions in 1860, 1868, and 1873. Sloan published *City and Suburban Architecture* in 1859, with later editions in 1867 and 1873; *Sloan's Constructive Architecture* in 1859, with later editions in 1866 and 1873; *Sloan's Homestead Architecture* in 1861, with later editions in 1867 and 1870; and *American Houses, a Variety of Designs for Rural Buildings* in 1861, with a later edition in 1868. In July 1868, Sloan began to issue *The Architectural Review and American Builders' Journal*, the first architectural periodical to be published in the United States. Sloan also spread his fame through the pages of Louis Godey's *Lady's Book*, which began to publish his designs in 1852. Throughout the 1850s, Sloan enjoyed a rapidly expanding practice, particularly as an architect of hospitals for the insane and schools. From 1852 to 1857, Sloan partnered with carpenter-turned-architect John Stewart. However, the panic of 1857 and 1858, the hiatus in building caused by the Civil War, and a political scandal relating to the Philadelphia City Hall competition significantly impacted Sloan's career. In 1864, he formed a new partnership with Addison Hutton, whose social position brought commissions to the firm. Sloan left the practice in 1857, worked briefly in New York, and then returned to Philadelphia to begin *The Architectural Review*. Sloan had considerable difficulty reestablishing his Philadelphia practice in the 1870s. During this later period, Sloan often worked outside Pennsylvania, particularly in North Carolina, where he designed the Western State Asylum for the Insane at Morganton. Other commissions in North Carolina followed, and Sloan opened an office in Raleigh in 1883, where he died the following year. Sloan was a pioneer of both rational

<sup>18</sup> "Latest Particulars of the Fire," *Public Ledger*, July 11, 1850, p. 2. See also Harry Kyriakodis, "Fire on the Water(front)," *Hidden City*, October 7, 2011, <https://hiddencityphila.org/2011/10/fire-on-waterfront/>

and functional design as seen in his paradigmatic plans for hospitals and schools and of architectural publishing as seen in his periodicals and pattern books. One of the most important American architects of the mid nineteenth century, Samuel Sloan was an architect whose work significantly influenced the architectural, economic, social, and cultural development of the city, state, and country.<sup>19</sup>

Sloan developed the “Philadelphia Plan,” a standardized public schoolhouse plan that could be scaled for different numbers of students, for the Board of Controllers of the Public Schools in 1850. Sloan’s “Philadelphia Plan” called for a single large room on each of a school building’s two or three floors that could be separated into two or four classrooms with moveable partitions; the spatial flexibility allowed students to gather in one large auditorium-like space when needed while providing the option for students to work for classroom instruction in divided spaces with more privacy and fewer distractions. The classrooms opened directly to exterior entrances or staircases for ease of entry and exit. The plan specified large windows to provide maximum light and air and often included a cupola or other roof vent to optimize heating and cooling. Sloan illustrated and publicized the “Philadelphia Plan” in two essays in *The Model Architect* (Figure 17 and Figure 18).<sup>20</sup> Sloan’s school designs of the 1850s established the standard for public school design for the second half of the century in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the nation.<sup>21</sup>

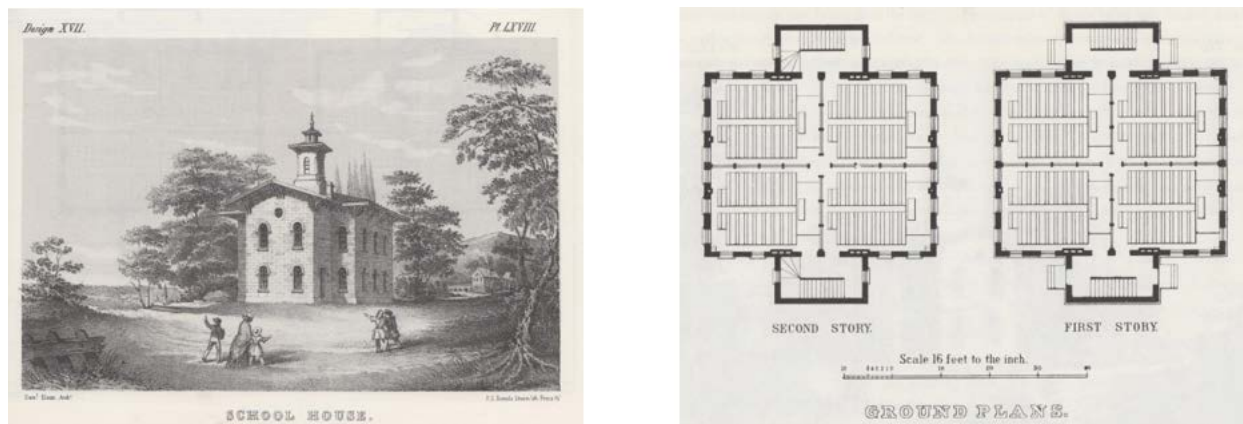


Figure 17. A rendering and floor plan of a “Philadelphia Plan” schoolhouse by Samuel Sloan, from “School-Houses,” *The Model Architect*, vol. 1, 1852.

<sup>19</sup> The biography of Samuel Sloan is drawn from Sandra L. Tatman, “Sloan, Samuel (1815-1884),” Philadelphia Architects and Buildings website,

[https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar\\_display.cfm/21518](https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/21518)

<sup>20</sup> Samuel Sloan, “School-Houses,” in *The Model Architect*, vol. 1, 1852; reprinted as *Sloan’s Victorian Buildings* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1980), pp. 69-76; and “A School-House,” in *The Model Architect*, vol. 2, 1853; reprinted as *Sloan’s Victorian Buildings* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1980), pp. 48-49.

<sup>21</sup> On Sloan’s “Philadelphia Plan,” see: Harold N. Cooledge, *Samuel Sloan, Architect of Philadelphia: 1815-1884* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), pp. 27-31; Harold N. Cooledge, “Samuel Sloan and the ‘Philadelphia Plan,’” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 151–154; Jeffrey A. Cohen, “Glenwood Public School,” in James F. O’Gorman, ed., *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics, 1732-1986* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), pp. 100-102; and Shelby Weaver Splain, “Making the Grade: The Architecture of Philadelphia’s Public Schools, Part 1,” Blog of the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office, February 18, 2015, <https://pahistoricpreservation.com/making-grade-architecture-philadelphias-public-schools-part-1/>

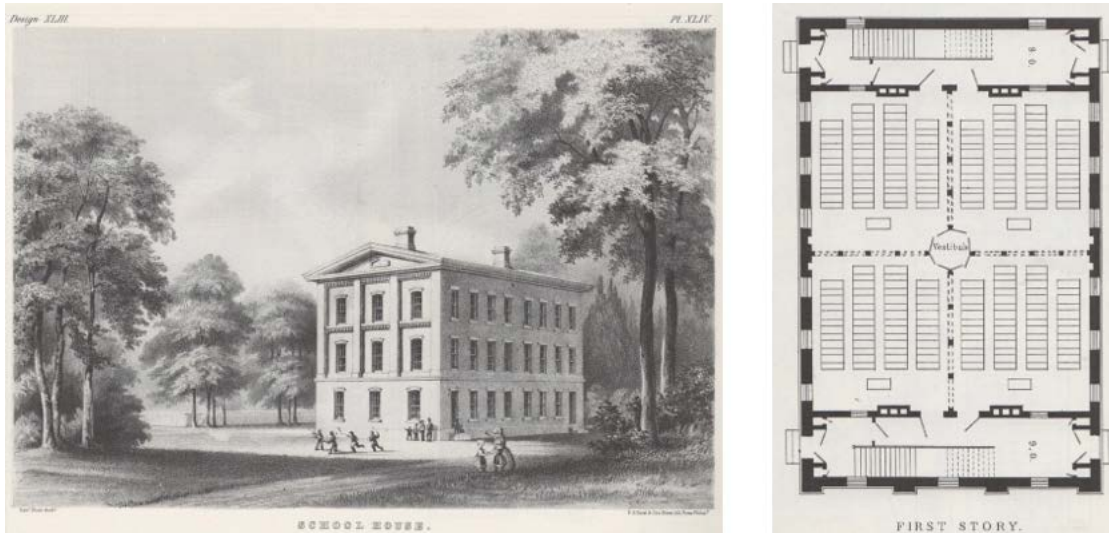


Figure 18. A rendering and floor plan of a “Philadelphia Plan” schoolhouse by Samuel Sloan, from “A School-House,” *The Model Architect*, vol. 2, 1853.

The Board of Controllers of the Public Schools erected numerous public school buildings based on Sloan’s plans in Philadelphia in the first half of the 1850s. The North-Eastern Grammar School on New Street between Front and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets was the first schoolhouse constructed according to Sloan’s “Philadelphia Plan,” replacing the school building lost in the devastating fire in 1850. The North-Eastern Grammar School was described in the *Public Ledger* in 1851:

Premiums were offered some time ago by the Board of Control of the Public Schools for this District, for a design for improved School Houses, and one presented by Mr. Samuel Sloan, has been chosen. This design for the new Grammar School in New street, which is to be three stories in height, capable of containing 300 pupils on each floor, with separate entrances for boys and girls. The building is to be 81½ feet front by 62 feet deep, each floor of which is divided into six equal compartments, one in the front of the central portion is devoted to the entrance hall and staircase to the upper floors, leaving space for five divisions on each floor. These compartments are separated by glass partitions or sashes, which may be raised or lowered, throwing the room into one when needed, or dividing it into five; in either case all of the rooms will be under the eye of the principal. The children in the present schools rehearse their lessons in separate rooms, and time is not only lost in travelling from one room to the other, but the scholars are part of the time removed from the eye of the principal teacher. To ventilate the building, a shaft runs up the centre of the building from the cellar to the cupola, with the proper openings in each of the compartments. The gas from the furnace in the cellar passes through an iron pipe in this ventilating shaft, and in winter the heated iron will of course render stronger the current of air passing up the flue and cause more frequent renewal of the atmosphere of the school rooms. This design seems to be an improvement upon the present fashion of Public School Buildings and will doubtless be generally adopted.<sup>22</sup>

Several other Sloan-designed schools followed the North-Eastern Grammar School. In March 1851, the Moyamensing School Directors announced that a three-story schoolhouse would be

<sup>22</sup> “New Design for School Houses,” *Public Ledger*, March 20, 1851, p. 2.



constructed on the 1000-block of Catharine Street “upon the plan of Mr. Samuel Sloan, recently adopted by the building committee of the Board of Control.”<sup>23</sup> In April 1851, a Sloan schoolhouse was announced for 4<sup>th</sup> and Lombard Streets, to be erected over the summer.<sup>24</sup> In May 1851, the Controllers of Public Schools sought bids to construct schoolhouses in Oxford Township<sup>25</sup> and at the corner of West and Wood Streets in Kensington according to plans and specifications prepared by “Mr. Samuel Sloan, Architect.”<sup>26</sup> In June 1851, new Sloan schoolhouses were announced for Southwark and Haddington.<sup>27</sup> In July 1851, a new Sloan schoolhouse was announced for Ridge Avenue at York Street in North Philadelphia.<sup>28</sup> In 1852, the Controllers of Public Schools sought bids to construct Sloan schoolhouses on New Market between Brown and Poplar Streets in Northern Liberties<sup>29</sup>, Filbert Street between 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets in Center City<sup>30</sup>, Brighthurst Street in Germantown<sup>31</sup>, Charlotte Street in Northern Liberties<sup>32</sup>, Hancock Street in Kensington<sup>33</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets in Center City<sup>34</sup>, Garden (Darien) Street below Buttonwood in Callowhill<sup>35</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> and Thompson Streets in North Philadelphia.<sup>36</sup> In February 1852, the *Public Ledger* reported that “during the last year twelve school-houses were built under Mr. Sloan’s superintendence.”<sup>37</sup> In 1853, the Controllers sought bids to construct a Sloan schoolhouse on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street near Woodland Avenue in Kingsessing<sup>38</sup>, and the Sloan & Stewart-designed Central High School at Broad and Green Streets in the Spring Garden section of Philadelphia.<sup>39</sup> In 1854, the Controllers sought bids to construct the Sloan & Stewart-designed Washington School on Shur’s Lane between Boone and Cresson in

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<sup>23</sup> “New School House,” *Public Ledger*, March 25, 1851, p. 2; and “New School House,” *Public Ledger*, April 2, 1851, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> “New School House,” *Public Ledger*, April 2, 1851, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Wheat Sheaf School: “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, May 6, 1851, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, May 7, 1851, p. 1; and “More Improvements,” *Public Ledger*, May 30, 1851, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> The Watson School was located on Mary or League Street in Southwark. “New School Houses,” *Public Ledger*, June 10, 1851, p. 2; “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, June 21, 1851, p. 4; and “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, June 26, 1851, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, July 22, 1851, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Shunk School: “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, February 12, 1852, p. 2; “New School-Houses,” *Public Ledger*, February 4, 1852, p. 1; and “New Buildings,” *Public Ledger*, December 3, 1852, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Filbert Street School: “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, February 16, 1852, p. 2; and “New School-Houses,” *Public Ledger*, February 4, 1852, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, June 5, 1852, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> George Wolfe School: “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, June 26, 1852, p. 1; and “New Buildings,” *Public Ledger*, December 3, 1852, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, September 16, 1852, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> “The New Normal School,” *Public Ledger*, March 30, 1854, p. 1; and “Dedication of the New Normal School Building,” *Public Ledger*, April 5, 1854, p. 1. The schoolhouse near 10<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets was a normal school for female teachers in Philadelphia’s public schools.

<sup>35</sup> John Quincy Adams School: “New School Houses,” *Public Ledger*, November 5, 1852, p. 2; and “Public School Dedication,” *Public Ledger*, September 28, 1853, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Penn Grammar School: “Corner Stone Laid,” *Public Ledger*, September 4, 1852, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> “New School-Houses,” *Public Ledger*, February 4, 1852, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, June 30, 1853, p. 2; and “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, July 7, 1853, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Central High School: “The New High School,” *Public Ledger*, January 13, 1853, p. 2; and “Dedication of the Central High School Building,” *Public Ledger*, June 29, 1854, p. 1.

Manayunk<sup>40</sup>, the Fayette School in Bustleton (Figure 19)<sup>41</sup>, and the James Pollock School on Fitzwater Street west of 15<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>42</sup> According to the nomination of the “Philadelphia Public Schools Thematic Historic District” to the National Register of Historic Places, the City of Philadelphia constructed 25 public school buildings based on Sloan’s “Philadelphia Plan” in the 1850s.<sup>43</sup> The Maple Grove School is not included in that number.



Figure 19. Advertisement for construction bids for the Fayette School in Bustleton, designed by Samuel Sloan, in the *Public Ledger*, July 19, 1854, p. 4.

No records connecting Sloan directly to the Maple Grove School have been discovered. However, the Fayette School in Bustleton (Figure 20) shares much in common with the Maple Grove School, which was constructed in the same year, 1854, just a few miles to the east in the same Twenty-third School Section (Figure 21). Both schoolhouses are rectangular in plan with large windows with shutters, gable roof, and cupola. The Fayette School is larger and two stories, not one, but both are stylistically identical, with low foundations, framing pilasters, and corbel table at the gable. They are of the same design, but at different scales. One was designed for a larger student body in a village, and the other for a small number of students in a rural area. The Maple Grove School can safely be attributed to Sloan. The Fayette and Maple Grove Schools were both erected by the Board of Controllers of the Public Schools in the Twenty-third School Section in the same architectural style in 1854, when Sloan was designing all of Philadelphia’s new public schools on the “Philadelphia Plan.”

Only two of Sloan’s public schools from the 1850s survive in Philadelphia, the Maple Grove School at 10151 Academy Road and the much-altered Watson School at 141 League Street in Queen Village (Figure 22). The Fayette School, which was much altered and stood on the

<sup>40</sup> Washington School: “School House to Be Built,” *Public Ledger*, May 31, 1854, p. 1; and “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, July 19, 1854, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> Fayette School: “School House to Be Built,” *Public Ledger*, May 31, 1854, p. 1; and “To Contractors and Builders,” *Public Ledger*, July 19, 1854, p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> James Pollock School: “Dedication of a School,” *Public Ledger*, September 6, 1855, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Jefferson Moak, William Sisson, and Elizabeth Mintz, Nomination for the “Philadelphia Public Schools Thematic Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places, 1986.

campus of the Politz Hebrew Academy at 9229 Old Bustleton Avenue as a wing to a larger, newer school building, was demolished in 2012.<sup>44</sup> The Maple Grove School is highly significant as one of two surviving examples of Samuel Sloan's incredibly influential "Philadelphia Plan" schoolhouses.



Figure 20. The Fayette Public School, Samuel Sloan, architect, 1854; photograph by Franklin Davenport Edmunds, September 10, 1912. (Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)



Figure 21. The Fayette and Maple Grove Public Schools, both constructed in 1854.

<sup>44</sup> Zoning permit for demolition, 415527, July 10, 2012, Department of Licenses and Inspections, City of Philadelphia.



Figure 22. The former Watson School, 141 League Street, Samuel Sloan, architect, 1851.  
(Source: Pictometry)

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, the property at 10151 Academy Road, the site of Samuel Sloan's one-room Maple Grove Schoolhouse of 1854, is architecturally and historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation E and J, which are enumerated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. The Maple Grove School was designed by Samuel Sloan, an architect whose work significantly influenced the development of the City of Philadelphia, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the United States, satisfying Criterion E. The Maple Grove School exemplifies the heritage of the community, the former Moreland and Byberry Townships, satisfying Criterion J.



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