

April 9, 2025

Dr. Jonathan Farnham
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102



Re: 7716 Navajo Street Nomination for Historic Designation – Supplement

Dear Dr. Farnham:

This letter provides supplemental information concerning the above-referenced nomination in response to concerns raised by the property owner. Per the Historical Commission staff's summary of the nomination, we understand that the owner "asserts that the nomination is incorrect regarding architectural style" and that the building "is a California Bungalow Arts and Crafts style building but was later altered with the addition of Doric and Corinthian columns and other features that might be considered indicative of the Italian Villa style."

We have been in touch with the property owner and have asked him for documentation of these assertions so that we may incorporate them into our nomination, but we have not received any documentation. In any case, because we take these assertions seriously, we have performed additional investigatory research, including by retrieving copies of the original 1910 building permit for the property and the 1914 building permit for alterations to the property (see attached as Exhibit A).

The 1910 building permit does not include significant information regarding the building's design, but provides that the building would be constructed of "stone and brick" with a "peak" and "tile" roof, and wood cornices. The 1914 building permit refers to the addition discussed in the nomination, and, significantly, also refers to the installation of a "new portico." The architect for both permits is listed as Herbert C. Wise; the nomination includes a letter from a later owner of the property that asserts that the original property owner "sent [the] architect to Italy to copy an Italian villa." Based on the 1947 photograph included in the nomination, it seems clear that there were no material alterations to the property between 1947 and the present day, and we have not reviewed any materials documenting any alterations to the property between 1914 and 1947.

Given this evidence, we conclude that the building's current style – which the owner agrees could be considered indicative of the Italian Villa style – is the same style produced by the original architect of the building, at least as early as 1914. We speculate that the impetus for the 1914 addition and the inclusion of the new Italian Villa portico was the owners' growing family, and, perhaps, their somewhat delayed ability to afford updates to the exterior of the building that matched their Italian Villa aspirations. Thus, any material alterations to the property are likely over 110 years old and were designed by the original architect, so we believe that the nomination sufficiently satisfies criterion for historic designation (d), as an example of the "Italian Villa" – or perhaps "Italian Eclecticism" – style.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Gest", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Gest
Executive Director, Chestnut Hill Conservancy

Exhibit A – Building Permits

1910 Permit (Source: City of Philadelphia Archives)

B. & B.—Form 23

"B"

COPIED.

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

CLASS BUILDING 3 PERMIT NO. 600 5584

MATERIAL Brick FEE, \$ 1886

PLAN NO. 1886

Application for Permit for Erection of Dwellings.

Application is hereby made to the Bureau of Building Inspection of the City of Philadelphia, for the approval of the detailed statement of the specifications and plans herewith submitted, for the erection of the dwelling _____ herein described. All provisions of the Building Law shall be complied with in the erection of said dwelling _____, whether specified herein or not.

(Contractor's name) Geo. C. Korb

Philadelphia, August 10th, 1910

Address 116 W 16th St. Phila da

If it be desired to erect temporary frame shop, state size 12^{ft} x 16^{ft}
(Must be removed on completion of work).

- State how many dwellings are to be erected, One
- State the number of families to each house, One
- What is the street and the number thereof, or the side of the street and distance from the nearest cross street? Sw E. Mather St. & Moreland Ave 92rd Ward
- Size of lot.—No. of feet front about 250^{ft}; No. of feet deep, about 250^{ft}
- Front building.—No. of feet front 99^{ft}; No. of feet deep, 26^{ft} x 20^{ft} 18^{ft}
- Back building.—No. of feet wide 95^{ft} 20^{ft}; No. of feet deep, 17^{ft} 17^{ft} 17^{ft}
- No. of stories in height.—Front building, 3; Back building, 3
- Give total height.—Front building, 42^{ft}; Back building, 39^{ft}
- What will be the depth of foundation walls from curb level or surface of the ground? 9^{ft} and 5^{ft}
- Upon what kind of soil will the foundation be laid? Gravel & Brick
- What will be the footing, stone or concrete? stone; If stone, give size and thickness, 26" x 8"
- If piers are used, give size _____; Footing, _____
- Give thickness of foundation walls, 18" 21"; Of what materials constructed? stone
- What will be the thickness of the upper walls? 13" Brick

STORIES	FRONT WALLS	SIDE WALLS	REAR WALLS	PARTY WALLS	STORY HEIGHT
Basement,	<u>9' 6" 18"</u>	<u>9' 6" 18"</u>	<u>13' 6" 18"</u>		<u>9'</u>
First story,	<u>9' 9" 19"</u>	<u>9' 9" 19"</u>	<u>9' 9" 19"</u>		<u>8' 9"</u>
Second story,	<u>9' 10" 19"</u>	<u>9' 10" 19"</u>	<u>9' 10" 19"</u>		<u>8' 0"</u>
Third story,	<u>8' 0" 19"</u>	<u>1' 8" 19"</u>	<u>8' 10" 19"</u>		<u>8' 0"</u>
Fourth story,					
Fifth story,					
Curtain walls,					

Brick & stone

15. Of what materials will the walls be constructed? Stone and Brick

16. Give composition of mortar in foundation walls, Cement 1-3.

17. Give composition of mortar in upper walls, 1-5. Small quantity lime

18. If party walls are to be reinforced, state materials, thickness of reinforcement, and how laid,

19. What will be the materials of front? Brick

20. Will the roof be peak, flat or mansard? peak; and give materials of roofing, tile

21. What will be the means of access to roof?

22. What will be the materials of cornices? Wood

23. Give size of bay windows and where located, 4'x16" Stair Hall

24. Give size of overhanging bath,

25. Give size of frame shed,

26. Give material of floor joists, Hemlock roof rafters, Hemlock

27. Give material of girders, Steel

28. Give material of columns,

29. Give size and distance between centres of joists, girders and columns,

FLOORS	JOISTS	CENTRES	GIRDERS	CENTRES	COLUMNS	CENTRES
Basement,	<u>Cement</u>					
1st floor,	<u>3"x10"</u>	<u>16"</u>				
2d floor,	<u>3"x10"</u>	<u>16"</u>				
3d floor,	<u>3"x10"</u>	<u>16"</u>				
4th floor,						
5th floor,						
ROOF	RAFTERS <u>3"x8"</u>	CENTRES <u>16"</u>	GIRDERS	CENTRES		

30. How many rows of bridging to each tier of beams? one

31. What will be the distance of wooden girders, beams or timbers from all flues? 2 1/2"

32. Will headers and trimmers be hung in stirrup-irons? Yes

33. State if any hot air, steam or other furnaces, Hot Water

34. If the front, rear or side walls are to be supported in whole or in part by iron girders or lintels, give definite particulars as to size of girders, jamb boxes, etc., 2. 10" I. 25 lb under

Visible Main entrance and 2. 9" I. 25 lb. Hall Bay 2 1/2 lb
3. 10" I. 25 lb. 4. 10" I. 25 lb. 5. 10" I. 25 lb. 6. 10" I. 25 lb. 7. 10" I. 25 lb. 8. 10" I. 25 lb. 9. 10" I. 25 lb. 10. 10" I. 25 lb.

35. How much will the building cost? \$ 20,000.00 Twenty thousand

36. Give size of yard space to each house, over 144 sq ft

37. How many buildings are to be taken down?

38. Time of commencing, Aug 10th 1910

If a Wall or part of a Wall already built is to be used, fill up the following:

The undersigned gives notice that _____ intend to use the _____ wall of building _____
as party wall in the erection of the building hereinbefore described, and respectfully requests that the same
be examined and a permit granted therefor. The foundation wall _____ built of _____
_____ inches thick, _____ feet below curb; the upper wall _____ built of _____
_____ inches thick, _____ feet deep, _____ feet in height.

REMARKS.

Owner,	<u>W. W. Adams Jr</u>	Address,	<u>St. Martin Chr.</u>
Architect,	<u>Herbert C. Wise</u>	"	<u>34. S. 16' St</u>
Contractor,	<u>Geo. C. Herbert</u>	"	<u>116 N. 16' St</u>
Applicant,	<u>Geo. C. Herbert</u>	"	<u>116 N. 16' St.</u>

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, }
COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. } ss.

Personally appeared before me the Subscriber, a Notary Public for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, residing in the City of Philadelphia, _____

George C. Herbert
the applicant above named, who, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that the facts above set forth are true to the best of his knowledge and belief. Deponent further says that the foregoing are all the improvements he will make under this permit.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 15th } George C. Herbert
day of August 1910 }

John Dougherty
Notary Public, Phila. Co.

Commission Expires
March 10th. 1912

1914 Permit (Source: City of Philadelphia Archives)

A. 25-14
B. & B. FORM 14
Garage
"A" DWELLING
COPIED

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM
OFF OF THE DIVISION OF
HOUSING AND SANITATION

PRESENT BUILDING—CLASS *3-2* MATERIAL *Brick*
NEW BLDG. OR ADD.—CLASS _____ MATERIAL *Add.*

PERMIT No. *2826*
FEE, \$ *5.00*
PLAN No. *740*

**Application for Permit for Additions, Alterations, Repairs,
One-Story Structures, Frame Buildings, Bay Windows,
Heaters, Boiler and Engine Foundations, etc.**

Philadelphia, *April 24*, 1914

To the BUREAU OF BUILDING INSPECTION.

The undersigned applies for a permit to construct the following described work:
Give the exact location *N. 2nd & Morland and*
Twenty Second Ward

What is the present building used for? *Dwelling*
What will the new building or addition be used for? *" To Garage*

Give definite particulars as to work proposed and materials used
Size of addition 10' x 26' Basement & first story.
also addition 10' x 18 1/2' Basement only.
Walls in Basement 22" thick 1st story wall.
Brick 12" floor to be reinforced concrete
6 1/2" thick Roof 3 x 8 rafters covered
with slag. New Porches
Concrete work. Check as Approved by Mr. Butler

All provisions of the building laws and City Ordinances will be complied with, whether specified herein or not.

If dwelling or tenement, give size of open yard space remaining _____

Time of Commencing *May 1st 1914*
Estimated Cost *5500.00*

Owner *W. W. Adams Jr.* Address *N. 2nd & Morland and*
Architect *Robert C. Warr* " *1332 12th St*
Contractor *Stokes Bros.* " *6723 Myerman St*
Applicant *H. L. Stokes* " _____

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, } ss.
COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA, }

Personally appeared before me the subscriber, a Notary Public for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
residing in the City of Philadelphia, *Henry L. Stokes*

the applicant above named, who being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that the facts above
set forth are true to the best of his knowledge and belief. Deponent further says that the foregoing are all
the improvements he will make under this permit.

Sworn and subscribed to before me, this *27th* day of *April 1914* } *Henry L. Stokes*
John W. Bassford
Notary Public, Philadelphia Co.

NOTARY PUBLIC,
My Commission Expires March 25, 1917.