

Public comment received for 4221 Pine Street



December 11, 2025

Philadelphia Historical Commission  
Re: 4221 Pine St

Dear Philadelphia Historical Commission,

The University City Historical Society (UCHS) is keenly interested in the application to legalize the roofing at 4221 Pine Street given the precedent this sets within the newly formed Southeast Spruce Hill Historic District. The 4200 block of Pine consists of monumental twin homes developed by William Kimball circa 1900, including the subject property with its spectacular Flemish gable dormer, applied ornamentation, modillioned cornice, and slate mansard roof. This block is a photogenic favorite of West Philadelphia, appearing frequently in promotional materials and social media accounts owing to its beauty, integrity, and historic character.

We oppose this application given the incongruous color, shape, finish, and texture of the brown replacement asphalt shingle. The brown shingles sit in jarring contrast to the grey slate of both the adjacent and the attached properties and to the slate which it replaced.

UCHS advocates for the architectural and cultural resources of West Philadelphia. We believe that affordability and preservation are not mutually exclusive, and we actively support alternative replacement materials and assemblies that do not detract from the architectural character of our historic properties. This application sets an important precedent for future work within the Southeast Spruce Hill Historic District. We therefore urge the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to deny this application so that the owner can work with the PHC staff to select a more appropriate material.

Yours truly,

Amy Lambert  
UCHS Board President