

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

**WEDNESDAY, 20 MAY 2026
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:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
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
- Kristin Hankins, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Joshua Schroeder, Historic Preservation Planner I
- 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
- Annie Liang-Zhou
- Britt Scudilla, GMH Communities
- Cheryl Feldman, Ridge Park Civic Association
- Christine Clawson, Chestnut Hill Conservancy
- David Traub, Save Our Sites
- Gary Mueller
- Greg Prichard
- Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
- Jay Farrell
- Jian Wei
- Joan Kirschner
- Katherine Missimer, Esq., Klehr Harrison
- Kevin McMahon

Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department
Marlene Schleifer, Ridge Park Civic Association
Mary McGettigan
Michael Phillips, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Paul Toner, Esq.
Rev. Richard Brown III, Galilee Baptist Church
Sherman Aronson
Steven Peitzman

DRAFT

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 459 ROXBOROUGH AVE

Name of Resource: Galilee Baptist Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Galilee Baptist Church

Nominator: Historical Commission

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the Galilee Baptist Church at 459 Roxborough Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. The nomination contends that Galilee Baptist Church satisfies Criterion J by exemplifying the cultural, social, and historical heritage of community. The Galilee Baptist Church has been an important Black community institution in the Roxborough/Manayunk neighborhood for 125 years.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 459 Roxborough Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:07:33

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Rev. Richard Brown III represented the property owner and spoke in support of the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cohen observed that a cupula previously sat above the entrance tower and contributed to the asymmetry of the facade. The cupula, pedimented entrance, and round-headed window contributed to form a cohesive front facade.
- Ms. Milroy noted that the cupula emboldened the design. She wondered if similarly designed church buildings from this period are found in Philadelphia. She asked if the congregation's first pastor, who was from Virginia, might have influenced the design.
- Mr. Cohen said that Kennedy & Kelsey, which designed the church, was a prominent Philadelphia architectural firm.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that Black congregations rarely had the resources to hire such prominent firms.
- Ms. Milroy was curious about the congregation's founders, their occupations, and if they had possible relationships with Manayunk's mill owners.
- Mr. Laverty asked how the building was chosen for nomination.
 - Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff responded that the congregation requested the nomination.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society commented in support of the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman of the East Falls Historical Society commented in support of the nomination.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Galilee Baptist Church was constructed 125 years ago to serve the small but growing Black community in Roxborough and Manayunk.
- The church building by Kelsey & Kennedy has undergone little change, except for the removal of the cupula above the entry tower, since its construction.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion J by exemplifying the cultural, social, and historical heritage of community.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 459 Roxborough Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J.

ITEM: 459 Roxborough Ave					
MOTION: Satisfies Criterion J					
MOVED BY: Milroy					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
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	5				1

ADDRESS: 580 PELHAM RD AND 333 W UPSAL ST

Name of Resource: The Wolstenholme Twin

Proposed Action: Designate

Property Owner: Jim Onesti, Phila Prop LLC

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate 580 Pelham Road/333 W. Upsal Street, known as the Wolstenholme Twin, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends the property satisfies Criteria D, E, and J. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the Wolstenholme Twin embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Flemish Renaissance Revival style. The nomination documents that the architectural firm of Boyd & Boyd designed the twin house and argues that the house satisfies Criterion E because the architectural firm’s accomplishments have significantly influenced the development of the City of Philadelphia and the region. Finally, under Criterion J, the nomination asserts that the Wolstenholme Twin, as part of the larger Pelham real estate development, and housing prominent Philadelphia businessmen, is representative of the early economic, social, and historical heritage of the West Mount Airy community as it transitioned from a large private estate to a modern suburb of Philadelphia.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 580 Pelham Road and 333 W. Upsal Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:22:45

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Milroy praised the nomination, noting the building's distinctive design. She asked about its history and asked why Flemish architecture was so appealing at the time. She connected Flemish stepped-gable forms to Northern European mercantile architecture, suggesting they symbolized rising capitalism and merchant success, which provided an appropriate "gateway" into the Pelham development.
 - Ms. Barucco noted that the style was exotic.
- Mr. Cohen described the Queen Anne architectural movement as the precursor to eclectic design, mixing classical and medieval elements. He emphasized Boyd & Boyd's versatility across styles and their harmonious compositions. He also stressed the building's importance as the development's introduction and expressed dismay that demolition was ever considered.
- Ms. Cooperman supported adding Criterion H, arguing that the building's placement and visual impact make it a deliberate gateway marker.
 - Mr. Cohen asked if Ms. Cooperman believed there was enough information in the nomination to support the addition of Criterion H.
 - Ms. Cooperman asserted that she believed there was.
- Mr. Laverty noted Wendell & Smith's expertise in placement of their buildings, whether in Overbrook, Wayne, or Pelham. He emphasized that this was their last major project and that the placement was intentional – stepping off the train, one immediately sensed a different environment.
- Ms. Milroy added that Drexel and Stotesbury's 1893 land purchase occurred just before Drexel's death, situating the development at a transitional moment.
- Mr. Cohen returned to the Flemish Revival theme, noting it conveyed an inventive, middle-class village identity. He observed that Flemish Renaissance was not a widespread suburban style, but architects had freedom to mix vocabularies in Pelham.
- Mr. Laverty highlighted Wendell & Smith's extensive photographic documentation and noted how early photographs show the houses more prominently before tree growth obscured details.
 - Ms. Barucco, on this note, praised Greg Pritchard's preservation work which made these photographs easily accessible.
- Ms. Milroy pointed out a Palladian window on the side facade, calling it a witty design gesture.
- Ms. Barucco admired the building's placement on the triangular lot which ensures its gables address all directions.
- Ms. Cooperman suggested that the nomination should have explicitly listed non-

- contributing secondary structures like the shed and gazebo to avoid confusion.
- Mr. Beisert confirmed those structures were not intended to be included and acknowledged the omission. He asked whether others had noticed the angled L-shaped eaves, a feature even noted in Cornelius Weygandt's diary.
 - Ms. Cooperman and Mr. Cohen agreed that the angled wings were unusual, more exposed than typical, and improved light and air for each unit.
 - Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Beisert about the uncertainty regarding the Boyd & Boyd attribution.
 - Mr. Beisert responded that the attribution is documented in the Pelham surveys but lacks primary architectural records.
 - Mr. Cohen also questioned the description of the stable's brick color.
 - Mr. Beisert responded that it appears to be Roman brick, though may be darker than buff, and noted he could not inspect it closely.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Greg Prichard commented in support of the nomination.
- Allison Weiss of SoLo Germantown Civic Association 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:

- The nomination supports multiple Criteria, including the addition of Criterion H.
- The building was deliberately placed as an architectural gateway to the Pelham development.
- The property contributes to the intentional high-quality suburban planning of Wendell & Smith as seen in Pelham and Overbrook Farms.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion D, as it embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Flemish Renaissance Revival style.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion E, as a design by the architectural firm of Boyd & Boyd, whose accomplishments have significantly influenced the development of the City of Philadelphia and the region.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion J, as a representative of the early economic, social, and historical heritage of the West Mount Airy community as it transitioned from a large private estate to a modern suburb of Philadelphia.
- The property satisfies Criterion H, owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, which represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 580 Pelham Road and 333 W. Upsal Street satisfies Criteria for Designation D, E, J, and additionally Criterion H.

ITEM: 580 Pelham Rd and 333 W Upsal St					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria D, E, H, and J					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Lavery					
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

ADDRESS: 132 N 10TH ST

Name of Resource: Tetlow Manufacturing Company
 Proposed Action: Designation
 Property Owner: Teresa C. and Ronald M. Lee
 Nominator: Annie Liang-Zhou
 Staff Contact: Alex Till, alexander.till@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 132 N. 10th Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The five-story brick commercial building was constructed c. 1885 by Henry Tetlow as the factory of the Tetlow Manufacturing Company, an early cosmetics manufacturer. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation A and D. Henry Tetlow introduced a number of influential changes to the cosmetics industry in the nineteenth century including his discovery of the use of zinc oxide as a non-toxic and inexpensive base for face powders. For its association with Tetlow and the history of the cosmetics industry in America, the property satisfies Criterion A; it has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation, and is associated with the life of a person significant in the past. In addition, the property satisfies Criterion D because it is a remarkably intact example of a late nineteenth-century industrial building that embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Italianate and Romanesque styles.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 132 N. 10th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and D.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:45:31

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Till presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Annie Liang-Zhou represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Liang-Zhou gave a brief overview of the nomination. She pointed out that it originated as an assignment from the Historic Preservation program at the University of Pennsylvania. She highlighted the social history of the building and its location in

- Chinatown and described its late nineteenth-century industrial architectural features. She also explained the factory's importance as it relates to the emergence of consumer culture and the increasing economic influence of women.
- Ms. Milroy complimented the nomination and described how she has walked past this building many times but needs to take a close look at it.
 - Mr. Cohen commented that he is happy to see a nomination submitted by a University of Pennsylvania graduate student. He went on to point out a few issues. First, he questioned whether the nomination should include Criterion A as opposed to another one.
 - Ms. Cooperman commented that she sees a good argument made for Criterion A related to the changing economic trends related to women as new consumers.
 - Ms. Milroy added that the connection to Henry Tetlow and his company's significance to the development of the cosmetics industry also supports a Criterion A argument.
 - Ms. Cooperman questioned the construction date of 1885.
 - Mr. Cohen responded that the date makes sense to him and the building has a number of features you could likely find in the Peerless Brick Company's catalogs from the time. He also highlighted the aerial perspective included in the nomination but took issue with the nomination's interpretation of the history of the neighborhood. He described the area as "prosperous" prior to the Civil War, which can be seen both on atlases and in the value provided in the insurance survey included in the nomination. He added that the social history of the neighborhood offered in the nomination could be revised to better reflect this. The neighborhood then changed drastically in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Finally, he suggested the architectural features of the property more relate to general late nineteenth-century industrial buildings than specifically the Italianate or Romanesque styles
 - Mr. Lavery asked if Tetlow owned the house next door and then buy the subject property or did he buy both simultaneously and demolish a building to build the factory.
 - Ms. Liang-Zhou responded that he had purchased both properties around the same time. The deed from that purchase describes an existing four-story building on the lot.
 - Mr. Lavery question whether the neighboring building was used as a residence or perhaps an office by Tetlow.
 - Ms. Liang-Zhou responded that according to a city directory, he lived at 134 N. 10th Street.
 - Ms. Milroy reiterated Mr. Cohen's comment on the neighborhood makeup and added that a lot of people lived east of Market St before the Civil War and this was at that time a fairly prosperous part of the city. She continued to comment on the architecture and highlighted the wider top floor windows. She posited what that interior space was used for and that it could have been useful to have extra light when testing the appearance of cosmetics.
 - Ms. Liang-Zhou responded that she has not been able to view the interior of the building, though she did reach out to the owners to possibly get more information, but has not received a reply.
 - Mr. Lavery asked how the nominator selected this particular building.
 - Ms. Liang-Zhou responded that her documentation class was given a list of buildings in Chinatown to work on and she chose this one immediately after seeing it.

- Mr. Cohen commented that there is a great variety of industrial buildings in this neighborhood and it could make a wonderful historic district.
- Ms. Cooperman pointed out that Henry Tetlow appears to have lived in Mt. Airy by 1890.
- Mr. Cohen pointed out that the nomination described “segmental arched lintels” and suggested that lintels should be described as stones rather than arches.
 - Ms. Barucco commented that this was the nominator’s first nomination and she did a great job.
- Ms. Cooperman commented that she appreciates seeing the title traced all the way back to the beginning, but that extra information is not necessary for each nomination, though she acknowledged that was probably part of the course assignment.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites commented in support of the nomination.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society 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:

- The property at 132 N. 10th Street was the location of the Tetlow Manufacturing Company factory from 1885 to 1922.
- Henry Tetlow and the Tetlow Manufacturing Company had a significant influence on the cosmetics industry in America and the development of consumer culture and the growing impact of women as an economic force.
- The Tetlow Manufacturing Company building is an important surviving example of late nineteenth-century industrial architecture.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion A for its association with Henry Tetlow and the history of the cosmetics industry in America.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion D as a remarkably intact example of a late nineteenth-century industrial building that embodies distinguishing characteristics of late nineteenth-century architectural styles that feature round arches.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 132 N. 10th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and D.

ITEM: 132 N 10th St					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria A and D					
MOVED BY: Lavery					
SECONDED BY: Milroy					
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

ADDRESS: 5604 N 5TH ST

Name of Resource: National Bank of Olney

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Roselia Marquez Torres and Hue Ton

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Ted Maust, theodore.maust@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5604 N. 5th Street, historically the National Bank of Olney, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The two-story, Art Deco-style cast-stone bank building was constructed in 1927 and 1928. The nomination contends that the property meets Criteria for Designation C and D, that it reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style and embodies distinguishing characteristics of that style. The nomination claims that the bank represents the shifting trends of the design of neighborhood banks away from classical models toward a more modern form known as the Art Deco style during the late 1920s. The nomination further argues that the building is eligible under Criterion for Designation E – is the work of an architectural firm whose designs have significantly influenced the development of the city, state, or nation – owing to the national prominence of the architects, Simons, Brittain & English, as specialists in designing banks, especially for small or medium-sized towns.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5604 N. 5th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and E.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:09:17

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance and nomination author Kevin McMahon represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Barucco asked Mr. Maust to clarify the Criteria cited in the nomination; she noted that the form accompanying the nomination had Criteria A, C, D, and J checked, while the text of the nomination and the staff overview listed C, D, and E.

- Mr. Maust acknowledged that there was an error on the form which he had not noticed and which would be corrected. He clarified that the text of the nomination specifically made arguments for Criteria C, D, and E.
- Mr. Cohen admitted to being unaware of the architectural firm of Simons, Brittain, & English, and several Committee members chimed in that the firm was new to them too.
 - Mr. Cohen continued, commenting that this nomination provides insights on other bank designs of the era by showing the transformation from classical forms to more contemporary forms. He highlighted the way in which the voussoirs in the arch elongate toward the top, giving a sense of ascension. He described the design as restrained and noted that the use of cast stone made it a design which looked expensive, but which was affordable for a local bank.
 - Mr. Cohen commended the nominator for the citations from banking industry periodicals, which shed light on the conversations happening at that time about bank design.
- Mr. Cohen shifted to a discussion of the Art Deco style. He noted that scholarship is perhaps overly focused on the 1925 exposition which gave the form its name, and that there are many buildings which we now categorize in the style that emerged somewhat independently.
 - Mr. Laverty contended that a book could be filled with examples of Art Deco buildings which pre-date 1925, even in Philadelphia.
- Mr. Laverty spoke about his memories of shopping along this stretch of 5th Street in his childhood and remembered admiring this façade even then.
 - Mr. Laverty further commended the nomination for identifying the importance of landmark buildings such as this one in “satellite” commercial corridors such as 5th Street and Olney Avenue, Broad Street and Olney Avenue, Germantown Avenue and Chelton Avenue, and 52nd Street and Chestnut Street. These areas outside of the downtown core of the city were very active and warranted such landmarks.
 - Ms. Milroy agreed and cited the image in the nomination for the proposed bank at 69th Street.
- Ms. Milroy asked why the period of significance is identified as a single year.
 - Ms. Cooperman answered that because the Criteria cited were all focused on the design and not the ongoing use of the building, it is conventional to have the year or years of construction comprise the period of significance.
- Ms. Cooperman commented that the era of this building’s construction was one in which banks transformed in image from “temples of financial security” to designs which resembled vaults and which dissuaded attempts to breach them.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The nomination contributes to the understanding of bank architecture in a period of great change, especially as those evolutions were expressed in smaller bank buildings.
- The building is a good example of landmark buildings located in neighborhood commercial centers.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria C and D as it reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style and embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Art Deco style.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion E as the work of an architectural firm whose designs have significantly influenced the development of the city, state, or nation, owing to the national prominence of the architects, Simons, Brittain & English, as specialists in designing banks, especially for small or medium-sized towns.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5604 N. 5th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and E.

ITEM: 5604 N 5th St					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria C, D, and E					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
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	5				1

ADDRESS: 4889 UMBRIA ST

Name of Resource: Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Kerd Associates with Genesis Properties and GMH Communities

Nominator: Ridge Park Civic Association

Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate a portion of the property at 4889 Umbria Street in Roxborough and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Buildings associated with the former Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company stand on the site. The nomination proposes designating the older buildings along Umbria Street, the larger one-story manufacturing building and the smaller power plant, both of which were constructed in 1926 and 1927. The nomination excludes from its boundary the newer buildings along Lemonte Street and the newer beer distributorship building and vacant land along Parker Avenue. The nomination contends that the older Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company buildings are significant under Criterion J as “a representative and tangible expression of Manayunk’s late industrial-era textile economy.” The nomination claims that the site is significant under Criterion E for “its association with William Elmer Seibert Dyer (1880–1955), a specialized industrial architect and engineer whose work contributed to the development of Philadelphia and the larger region as a national center of textile and light manufacturing in the early twentieth century.” The nomination also asserts that the complex of buildings satisfies Criterion H; “owing to its distinctive siting, scale, and industrial character, [it] represents a long-established and

familiar visual feature of the Manayunk neighborhood.” Toward the satisfaction of Criterion H, the nomination highlights “its terra cotta parapet signage reading ‘Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company’.”

Planning for the redevelopment of the site at 4889 Umbria Street has been underway for more than one year. The current plan proposes a new multi-family building with 363 residential units and 380 parking spaces and the retention of the nominated buildings. The project has been presented to Civic Design Review twice and zoning permits are ready for issuance. The redevelopment plans have been widely publicized in the press, and the nominator has participated in the public reviews of the plans.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the nominated portion of the property at 4889 Umbria Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J, but not Criteria E and H. While the property may, in fact, satisfy Criteria E and H, the nomination does not present compelling evidence that W.E.S. Dyer was a designer whose work has significantly influenced the development of the city, state, or nation; or that the industrial buildings represent an established and familiar visual feature in the neighborhood.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:23:24

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Paul Toner, Cheryl Feldman of Ridge Park Civic Association, and nomination author Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.
- Attorney Michael Phillips represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Feldman of the Ridge Park Civic Association stated that she was speaking on behalf of the organization’s Executive Board and Preservation Committee. She reported that the Plush Factory has been an industrial landmark in the neighborhood for 100 years. She stated that her organization has discussed nominating this property for designation for four years. She stated that Ridge Park Civic Association has not opposed the development proposed for the site. She stated that the factory is a wonderful representation of the neighborhood’s industrial past. She stated that her organization supports the claims that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation E and H as well as J.
- Marlene Schleifer, the president of Ridge Park Civic Association, attempted to address the Committee on Historic Designation, but she experienced technical difficulties and was unable to be heard.
- Mr. Beisert stated that he amended the boundary of the designation in the nomination when the staff requested that he either describe the other buildings on the site or amend the boundary to exclude them. He asserted that the nominated buildings are a very distinctive visual feature of the neighborhood, especially because of the podium and the incline. The sign also makes the building stand out.
- Mr. Phillips spoke on behalf of the equitable owner. He stated that the owner does not oppose the designation of the main manufacturing building and powerplant, which will be preserved and incorporated into the redevelopment plan for the site. However, he requested that the Historical Commission amend the boundary to include only the two buildings with no open space around them. Including the buffer of open space around the buildings would force changes to the redevelopment plans

- related to grading, loading, and parking.
- Ms. Milroy asked about the transition from tall factory buildings to one-story buildings.
 - Ms. Barucco responded that the change was made to promote the movement of products within the manufacturing space.
- Mr. Laverty stated that the architect Dyer was a major competitor of the Ballinger Company. He added that companies like those provided design services for industrial processes as well as factory buildings.
- Mr. Cohen stated that he supported Criterion H because the building is tied to the identity of the neighborhood.
 - Ms. Barucco agreed.
- Ms. Barucco stated that she is not opposed to changing the boundary as Mr. Phillips has requested.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed and stated that industrial buildings were often built side by side without buffers of open space like you might see with institutional or residential buildings. Building up against these buildings would not be inappropriate from a historic perspective. Industrial buildings and industrial complexes changed over time, so the settings are less important.
 - Ms. Milroy agreed.
 - Ms. Feldman stated that the Ridge Park Civic Association is not opposed to amending the boundary.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that she would abstain from voting on a motion that included Criterion E, related to the significance of the architect, because she did not think that the nomination provided enough information about the importance of Dyer, the designer of the buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia supported the nomination and the inclusion of Criterion H.
- Gary Mueller, a neighbor who lives at 4851 Umbria Street, supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property owner is not opposed to the designation of the manufacturing and powerplant buildings, provided no open space is included in the designation.
- The nominator, the Ridge Park Civic Association, is not opposed to amending the boundary of the designation to exclude the open space.
- Industrial buildings are more routinely built up against one another without open space surrounding them, like one might see with institutional and residential buildings.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company buildings at 4889 Umbria Street are the work of an architect whose accomplishments significantly influenced the development of the region, and therefore satisfy Criterion for Designation E.
- The Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company buildings at 4889 Umbria Street are an established and familiar visual feature of the Manayunk/Roxborough neighborhood, and therefore satisfy Criterion for Designation H.
- The Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company buildings at 4889 Umbria Street exemplify the heritage of the Manayunk/Roxborough community, and therefore

satisfy Criterion for Designation J.

- The designation boundary may be amended to include the manufacturing building and powerplant only, with no open land, as requested by the property owner.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted 4 to 0 with 1 abstention to recommend that the property at 4889 Umbria Street satisfies Criteria for Designation E, H, and J and to express no objection to amending the boundary of the designation to include the buildings only, with no open land, as requested by the property owner.

ITEM: 4889 Umbria St					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria E, H, and J, and no objection to the boundary amendment					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
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	4		1		1

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:57:55

ACTION: The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 11:29 a.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.

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.