

**PUBLIC COMMENT FOR  
4889 UMBRIA STREET**



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**Plush Building, Manayunk**

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**From** Tina Krovetz <tkrovetz@gmail.com>

**Date** Tue 5/19/2026 7:01 AM

**To** preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

**Cc** Barbara Hoekje <barbara.hoekje@gmail.com>; cherylgailfeldman203 <cherylgailfeldman203@gmail.com>

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Dear members of the Committee on Historic Preservation and Historical Commission:

I am a long term resident of the Manayunk neighborhood and want to see the Plush building preserved. It is a visual reminder of our industrial past and is a familiar visual feature of our neighborhood.

As a member of the Ridge Park Civic Association I have been involved in research of properties that are of historic significance to our neighborhood. This building is certainly one of them. It is a landmark on Umbria Street.

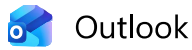
While I acknowledge the need for more housing in Philadelphia, I am sorry to see that the development of this particular property offers no entry point for home ownership to residents but is merely a profit making rental venture for the developers. I feel very strongly that if we are to create denser housing in our neighborhoods to house the many people who need it we owe it to their future security to also offer ways to become owners, not just renters. With ownership comes stewardship of one's own home and of neighborhood assets; with renting comes deterioration of value and little investment in either the property or neighborhood.

I support the designation of the Plush building as a historic building in our neighborhood. It would be a huge loss not to protect it now. I urge you to listen to the neighbors here who want to make sure we do not lose another one of our landmark buildings.

Thank you,

Tina Krovetz

[Friends of Turtle Park](#)



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## Plush Manufacturing Building

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**From** Nora N <nora.jane.n@gmail.com>  
**Date** Mon 5/18/2026 8:28 PM  
**To** preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Members of the Committee on Historic Preservation,

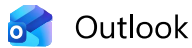
I have lived on Ogle street since 2020 and I greatly support the historic nomination of the Plush Manufacturing building.

We live in a neighborhood that is rapidly changing, and although some change can be good, the Plush Manufacturing Building is a visual reminder of Philadelphia's history of being a textile manufacturing hub. I went to Philadelphia University for Textile Design, so our textile history is very important to me. I think it would be a detriment to our neighborhood to knock down such an iconic building and replace it with something modern.

In an age where people's jobs are being lost to ai, it is important that we remember and honor our histories

Thank you so much for your time

Best,  
Nora



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**Plush Manufacturing, Umbria Street**

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**From** christine walinski <christinewalinski@gmail.com>

**Date** Mon 5/18/2026 9:11 PM

**To** preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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May 18, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee on Historic Preservation:

I am a long term resident of 4860 Ogle Street, we bought our house two weeks before I had my first son. The Plush Manufacturing Building is right at the end of our street. We have passed it on our way to work, preschool, elementary school, on the way to the train into center city and on countless walks. It is a reminder of the history of our neighborhood. My family and I fully support the historic nomination of this building.

I would disagree with those who think the building is not an "established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood" and unless you live, work or play here you cannot truly speak to the importance of buildings such as this representing an important historical time period. Furthermore, there is currently a large community of woodworkers and students in the building at Philadelphia Woodworks, Javies, a Gymnastics Gym and a vintage furniture company- all bringing in COMMUNITY MEMBERS supporting small businesses. This is exactly what makes our neighborhood what it is.

There should be no reason that corporate developers would oppose this nomination if they were truly interested in preserving some of the rich history of this neighborhood's industrial buildings. I often find myself saying "our children are watching" lately. There are a lot of things happening in and around our city and beyond that are not for the betterment of its citizens and communities-the people who live in, raise families in, and believe in making a neighborhood the best it can be. Preserving historical buildings such as this one only adds to the richness of a very fast changing area of Philadelphia.

Thank you,

Long term resident, parent, teacher, artist and human who believes in beautiful things like historical buildings, sunsets, wooded trails, a neighborhood stroll and leaving some good things for our children.

Christine Walinski and Family



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## Support for 4889 Umbria designation

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From Barbara Hoekje <barbara.hoekje@gmail.com>

Date Tue 5/19/2026 10:11 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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May 19, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee on Historic Preservation:

I am a long term resident at 4869 Ogle Street around the corner from the Plush Manufacturing Building at 4889 Umbria. I support the historic nomination of this building wholeheartedly.

To me, and to many of us who live in the neighborhood, the "Plush Building" is a visual reminder not only of the industrial past (Criterion J) but is in fact an "established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood." (Criterion H).

I was pleased to read the Staff recommendation that the building meets Criterion J.

Criterion H is also met for those of us who live in this rapidly developing neighborhood. It is our landscape and a familiar place, not only for those who grew up on the block whose mothers worked there in the 1960's and '70's but for the many who have learned woodworking in the woodshop or simply walked by for years in our daily commute or errands.

Joni Mitchell has a famous line in one of her songs, "Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've lost 'til it's gone." This line haunts me as one after another building has been torn down in Roxborough, replaced by large buildings without an attachment to the cultural history or an understanding of the patterns of life in the neighborhood.

The planned massive construction project "Umbria Place" (384 apartments) is a development project that has received zoning "by right" permission because of its mixed industrial-residential (IRMX) zoning. The current industrial tenant in the Plush Building is Philadelphia Woodworks, which has been a resource for our neighborhood for many years.

To my understanding, the Plush Building's current industrial use, therefore, is the very reason that the "Umbria Place" construction can take place at the scale it has planned. Thus I hope that the developers will join with us to support this nomination that honors the heritage of the neighborhood and the site where they are building.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hoekje



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## Support for 4889 Umbria Street Historic Designation

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**From** Cheryl Feldman <cherylgailfeldman203@gmail.com>

**Date** Tue 5/19/2026 10:49 AM

**To** preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

 1 attachment (17 KB)

Support for 4889 Umbria Street Historic Designation Final.docx;

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May 19, 2026

To: Dr. Farnham and Historic Designation Committee Members, Philadelphia Historical Commission

From: Ridge Park Civic Association Executive Board

Historic preservation is a key part of the Ridge Park Civic Association's mission. We have been heartened by the opportunity to help create two districts in our boundaries, the Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic Historic District and the Gates Street Historic District. Historic designation has been key to maintaining the historic character of this beautiful neighborhood, especially because of the large amount of demolition of historic properties resulting from development on both major streets and smaller streets throughout our Civic boundaries.

The Civic became aware of development interest in the Plush factory, which occupies a portion of 4889 Umbria Street, four years ago. We contacted Oscar Beisert over the course of the last four years to discuss the submission of a historic nomination. We specifically set out to raise the funds to cover the cost of the research and submission of the historic nomination.

We are encouraged that the Civic's nomination satisfies Criterion J. We disagree with Commission Staff recommendations stating that the Plush building does not meet Criterion H as "an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City." The Plush factory is an anchor on Umbria Street, with a history that includes living neighbors who worked in the building. Area residents and businesses see the Plush Factory, with its familiar red brick façade and signage that is still very clear, as a wonderful representation of the neighborhood's industrial past. The Plush Factory, because of its industrial design, its signage, and its prominence on the street, is truly a familiar visual feature. The Plush Factory remains one of the few historic buildings located in the unique industrial corridor west of Manayunk proper. There are plenty of familiar visual features, such as the Plush building, in the form of historic buildings in many Philadelphia neighborhoods. When these buildings are demolished, we are demolishing history. In this case, we would be demolishing a visual reminder of the significant industrial history of Manayunk/Roxborough that long term neighbors are proud of and new neighbors admire.

We also believe, as stated in our nomination, that the Plush building satisfies Criterion E. The nomination describes the importance of the architect, W.E.S. Dyer, who specialized in textile mill architecture. The nomination, in our opinion, made a strong case for "his role as a designer of highly functional, purpose-built industrial environments tailored to specific manufacturing processes." The Plush building was one

of several buildings constructed by Dyer, contributing to his reputation as a “regional figure in industrial architecture and engineering.”

A Philadelphia Inquirer article on December 18, 2025 included the Plush property development as one of the largest Philadelphia area developments planned for 2026, stating that the 384-unit [“apartment building”](#) is the largest in recent memory for the Northwest Philadelphia neighborhood of Roxborough.” To comply with the IRMX zoning, the developer committed to keeping the industrial businesses housed in the Plush Factory as part of the development site.

Civic members asked the developer on more than one occasion about their plans for the Plush Factory, and we were told that there were no plans at this time. “At this time” was the response when queried. Given this response, we had hoped that the developer would support the nomination. The Civic does not want to impede or disrupt the current development plans, and we are not asking the developer to change their plans. The Ridge Park Civic Association has not opposed the proposed development plans, which do not entail changes to the Plush building. We certainly do not believe that the pending City Council legislation should have any impact on preserving this important landmark. The historic nomination was submitted before new legislation was considered, with the intention that the nomination’s determination would be based on the current rules.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Marlene G. Schleifer, President

Cheryl Feldman, Vice President

Barbara Hoekje, Recording Secretary

Pamela DeLissio, Corresponding Secretary

Erin Witzel, Treasurer

**Plush Factory -4889 Umbria Street**

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**From** Joshua Cohen <Joshua.Cohen@phila.gov>

**Date** Thu 6/4/2026 8:28 AM

**To** preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Councilmember Curtis Jones Jr, we support the nomination of the Plush Factory for historic designation. The Plush Factor is an important part of Manayunk's industrial history and deserves to be historically certified. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office.

Regards,  
Josh Cohen

Joshua Cohen  
Chief of Staff  
Office of Councilmember Curtis Jones Jr.  
4<sup>th</sup> District  
404 City Hall  
215-686-3416

June 9, 2026

Statement to the Philadelphia Historical Commission in Support of Historic Nomination for 4889 Umbria Street. Erected 1926-1927.

Nominator: Ridge Park Civic Association

Thank you for considering Ridge Park Civic Association's nomination for historic designation of the Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company's industrial building and connected powerhouse located at 4889 Umbria Street. This nomination is the culmination of four years of discussion and planning by Ridge Park Civic in furthering our goal to preserve Roxborough/Manayunk's industrial past.

We are pleased that, based on its deliberations, the Committee on Historic Designation concluded that the Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company's buildings satisfy Criteria J, H, and E.

We are also pleased that the property owner is not opposed to the designation of the industrial building and powerplant provided that no setbacks beyond the building footprint are included in the designation. Ridge Park Civic Association is in support of amending the nomination to only include the buildings and remove the rear buffer that is included in the original nomination.

The Plush factory is an anchor on Umbria Street that links the rowhouse neighborhood to the east with the industrial corridor west along the Manayunk Canal. It remains one of the few if not the only remaining historic building located in this unique industrial corridor west of Manayunk proper.

Area residents and businesses greatly appreciate the Plush factory, with its familiar red brick façade, its distinctive terracotta sign, and the horizontal length of the building emphasized by the building's prominence on an incline of Umbria Street. The Plush factory, because of its industrial design, its signage, and its prominence on the street, is truly a distinctive visual feature.

The Plush industrial building and powerhouse comprise a significant representation of the neighborhood's industrial past linked to Manayunk's key, historic role in the production of textiles and its continuing legacy as a workplace where local residents held jobs as recently as the 1970's. Today, newer residents look to its familiar presence as a welcoming sign as they climb up and down the steps from the regional rail line or pass by on their errands.

In short, the Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company is a visual reminder of the significant industrial history of Manayunk/Roxborough that long term neighbors are proud of, and new neighbors learn about and admire.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this nomination.

Marlene G. Schleifer, President

Cheryl Feldman, Vice President

June 10, 2026

***Letter of Support for the Historic Nomination of 4889 Umbria Street***

To: Philadelphia Historical Commission  
From: Manayunk Timber, Inc.

Manayunk Timber is a lumber and woodworking business located at 5100 Umbria Street, in close proximity to the Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company.

For a very long time, Umbria Street has served as a unique industrial corridor sitting above the Manayunk Canal and Schuylkill River. On Umbria Street, an industrial production and commerce center thrived surrounded by rowhouse communities providing residences for workers. As apartment complexes are built in increasing numbers, the industrial character of Umbria Street is rapidly disappearing.

Preservation of the Manayunk Plush Manufacturing Company is not just important today as a reminder of Philadelphia's past contribution to the production of textiles, it will be even more important in the future as a visual testament of Umbria Street's industrial past.

We are strongly in support of the historic nomination by the Ridge Park Civic Association of the Plush factory and thank the Philadelphia Historical Commission for the opportunity to preserve this significant industrial landmark.

Sincerely,

Stephen J. Ebner  
President, Manayunk Timber, Inc.