

Public comment for 1910 Chestnut Street

Preserve Boyd Theatre marquee

From joe cesa <joe1phillypa@gmail.com>
Date Thu 5/21/2026 6:58 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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It's been recently reported that Pearl Properties--owners of the apartment built on the ruins of the Boyd Theatre, wish to withdraw from their agreement to preserve the historic theatre's marquee--one of the few remaining elements of the theatre. Here is the article:

<https://www.inquirer.com/real-estate/commercial/boyd-theatre-marquee-historical-preservation-pearl-properties-20260520.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawR7wjtleHRuA2FlbQlxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjlwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEei7n77VcHEnda1piaqBtsYhWuFKVqYneupzyLRRc0RhWA9s-hjy-5jTaqSS0 aem KfuM0FUz9Ou216TwBdKU9g>

They made an agreement, they should be held to it. In my opinion, they made a meagre attempt to "restore" the marquee; now they wish to back away from even this poor gesture. When is America's most historic city going to live up to its title and preserve the remaining bits that make it unique from big box bland majority?

Joseph Cesa
citizen, taxpayer, voter

Boyd Theater, 1910 Chestnut St - Proposed Facade Redo for May 26

From Karen Colizzi Noonan <karencolizzinoonan@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 10:34 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

Cc Howard B Haas <HowardBHaas@aol.com>

 2 attachments (531 KB)

MacArthur CVS Washington DC.jpg; State Thr Target Ann Arbor MI.jpg;

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Please acknowledge receipt of this email:

Dear Ms. Chantry,

I've become aware of the proposal to remove the marquee and vestibule walls of the former Boyd Theater, located at 1910 Chestnut St. in Philadelphia. Please allow me to speak to the detriment of such a move:

As a theater architecture historian with 30+ years of experience there is strong precedent for reusing the facade and incorporating it into any new business that eventually occupies the space. In my 10 years as a former President of Theatre Historical Society of America, this situation has presented itself where former theater buildings are re-used following the end of their public performance era. I visited the Boyd in person and am aware of its particular importance to the community.

While the current marquee "only" dates back to a 1950s reconfiguration, it is still an important piece of Chestnut Street's history and should be retained to support 20th century architectural history. Philadelphia is steeped in early American history, yet that story does extend into the more "modern" era as well.

A retained facade, honoring the building's history, can be a tribute to the past as well as a useful modern advertising method.

Attached are two photos that show successful incorporation into existing facade development. Many others exist, but they do serve to illustrate the creativity and respect that these projects demonstrate.

I urge your commission to consider the historical importance of the streetscape of Chestnut Street and retain the facade including the marquee and the vestibule walls to be incorporated into any reuse plan.

Karen Colizzi Noonan
Former President, Theatre Historical Society of America (2003-2013)
Current Theater Historian & Consultant
147 High Street Geneva, New York
Contact: 315-945-7445

c.c. Howard Haas/Friends of the Boyd

MACARTHUR

CVS/pharmacy

1HourPhoto
\$6.99

NO PARKING
ANYTIME
ON WEEKENDS
OR HOLIDAYS

Brighter



1910 Chestnut St, for May 26

From howardbhaas@aol.com <howardbhaas@aol.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 11:17 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>; psteinke@preservationalliance.com
<psteinke@preservationalliance.com>; jayfar@jayfar.com <jayfar@jayfar.com>

 8 attachments (3 MB)

Photo Eight, Boyd ironwork at Vestibule.JPG; Photo Five, Boyd 1928, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.jpg; Photo Four 1405 Locust, 2023-07-15 H Haas.jpg; Photo One, Boyd 1957, Friends of the Boyd.jpg; Photo Seven, Boyd Vestibule Walls.JPG; Photo Six, Boyd 1971 Friends of the Boyd.jpg; Photo Three, 1519 Chestnut, 5-21-26 H Haas IMG_8614.jpg; Photo Two 1529 Chestnut, 7-22-21 H Haas.jpg;

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Dear Ms. Chantry and the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission::

Friends of the Boyd, Inc., the nonprofit organized in 2002 to save the Boyd Theater, **asks the Philadelphia Historical Commission to deny the property owner's request** regarding 1910 Chestnut St, to remove the marquee and vestibule walls.

A marquee is always a defining characteristic of a historic movie palace. In 1953, the support beams of the original 1928 marquee were reused for the current "Cinerama" marquee, designed by prominent architect William H. Lee. The Boyd was famous and popular as the only theater in the region for Cinerama films, and the marquee remained in use until the theater's 2002 closure. When IPIC Theaters obtained a demolition permit, they stipulated at PHC they would keep the Boyd's front and restore the marquee to 1928. The current owner used the demolition permit to demolish the auditorium, but obtained PHC approval to keep the current marquee, which they beautifully refurbished pursuant to the 1950's photo we shared, attached Photo One.

A grandfathered, heritage marquee is viewed as an asset, for advertising purposes, to commercial tenants, including at the two former movie theaters on the 1500 block of Chestnut, Arcadia (1915 to 1978) now Five Below 1529 Chestnut St, and Trans-Lux later Eric's Place (1934 to 1993) 1519 Chestnut St, now Foot Locker. The Fox Locust (1927 originally for movies, to 1980) 1405 Locust St is now Estia restaurant. Attached photos Two thru Four. Bankroll did not fail at the Boyd because of the marquee!

Lists by Andy Molholt, Philadelphia, PA of Philadelphia former movie theaters with non religious tenants and retaining their marquee, and by Ken Roe of London UK of same that he recalls in California are below my signature. As PHC notice was provided right before the Memorial Day holiday, our efforts for Tuesday's hearing are hampered, but we may provide more in the future.

The 1928 **Vestibule walls**, designed with the rest of the Boyd, by prominent architects Hoffman-Henson, **are elegant**, iron with decorative features, glass, and granite. They are an iconic, original look of the Boyd. **They stretch further into the building** than the applicant's

photos show. Attached are 1928 and 1971 photos, and closeups, Photos Five thru Eight except the decorative glass has been replaced. **When the current owner obtained permission from the PHC to add new doors and glass to enclose most of the Boyd's vestibule, the PHC stipulated at the hearing that despite the new entry, the exterior vestibule walls remained Exterior legally protected!** The vestibule walls were originally for very small retail stores in both sides of the Boyd's entry, and Bankroll did not fail because of those walls. The vestibule also has the original beautiful Art Deco terrazzo floor, which protected, also should stay. Please visit the Boyd and view the Vestibule area and see how a commercial tenant won't refuse to lease the huge Boyd space due to these features!

The recent PHC approval to cut larger windows at the Drexel building at 15th & Walnut seems minor in comparison. **The Boyd's marquee is integral to its facade and its removal would be like removing a nose from a person's face, a butchered look!** The Boyd's marquee has also been a feature that has distinguished Chestnut St since 1928.

Friends of the Boyd continue to have many supporters in Philadelphia and the region. We respectfully ask you to deny the application to remove the Boyd's marquee and vestibule walls. Please leave 1910 Chestnut St intact.

Kim- can you please email me receipt of this public comment?

Sincerely,
Howard B Haas, Esq.
President, Friends of the Boyd, Inc.

LIST BY ANDY MOLHOLT OF FORMER PHILADELPHIA MOVIE THEATERS RETAINING MARQUEE, EXCLUDING RELIGIOUS REUSES

*Bromley Theater
5810 Old York Road
[Bromley Theatre in Philadelphia, PA - Cinema Treasures](#)
Currently, Precious Baby Learning Academy

*Esquire Theater
5717 N Broad Street
[Esquire Theatre in Philadelphia, PA - Cinema Treasures](#)
Currently, Dollar Tree

* Hollywood Theater
2846 N 22nd Street
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/40848>
Currently operating as Best Nail Beauty Supply.

* Holme Theater (AKA The Pennypak)
8045 Frankford Avenue
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/9141>
Currently operating as a Dollar General.

* Jeffries Theater
344 Conarroe Street
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/14750>
Currently operating as Roger Ross Plumbing.

* Lancaster Theater

4545 Lancaster Avenue
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/65407>
Currently operating as Quickie Radiator & Storage.

* Lawndale Theater (AKA The Abbey)
6613 Rising Sun Avenue
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/20822>
Currently operating as Early Learning Children's Academy.

* Locust Street Theater (AKA The Fox Locust)
1411 Locust Street
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/22730>
Currently operating as Estia, a Greek restaurant.

* President Theater
2304 Snyder Avenue
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/9679>
Currently operating as the Grand Yesha Ballroom.

* Rio Theater
2011 Frankford Avenue
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/26878>
Currently operating as Stationary Engravers.

* Tyson Theater
7043 Castor Avenue
<https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/23294>
Currently operating as LN Flooring Corp.

Hopefully this is helpful!
Let me know what else I can do to help!!!
- Andy
267 342 3498

-Andy Molholt
<https://ambymoho.website>

LIST BY KEN ROE OF LONDON, UK, of US former movie theaters in California he recalls that retain their marquee. He edits the worldwide cinematreasures.org website

Email 5-21-26 from Ken:

There must be quite a few which have retained their marquee's.
From the top of my head.....
In California,

Los Angeles
Downtown on Broadway there is:

Rialto Theatre, now Urban Outfitters clothing store with neon retained and used.
Roxy Theatre, Retail
Cameo Theatre, Retail
Arcade Theatre, Retail

Tower Theatre, Apple Store

Studio City

Fox Studio City Theatre, Bookstar store

There must be quite a few which have retained their marquee's.

From the top of my head.....

In California,

Los Angeles

Downtown on Broadway there is:

Rialto Theatre, now Urban Outfitters clothing store with neon retained and used.

Roxy Theatre, Retail

Cameo Theatre, Retail

Arcade Theatre, Retail

Studio City

Fox Studio City Theatre, Bookstar store (I think the neon is still in use?)

San Diego

Loma Theatre, Barnes & Noble book store (again I think the neon is used)

Santa Monica

Mayfair Theatre, Shoe Palace store

Oxnard

Vogue Theatre, Discount Store

Ken

San Diego

Loma Theatre, Barnes & Noble book store (again I think the neon is used)

Santa Monica

Mayfair Theatre, Shoe Palace store

Oxnard

Vogue Theatre, Discount Store

Ken



LOWELL THOMAS PRESENTS
SEVEN WONDERS
OF THE WORLD

SEE IT THROUGH UNDER CINERAMA

CINERAMA

SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD

HURNT
CONDITIONED

1918

AIR COND



PHILLY
SPORTS
TECH.
ROOM

STYLE.
Beauty.



PLAY.
PARTY.
CANDY.
NOW.

CREATE.
DRINKS.

five BELOW
hot stuff. cool prices.

five BELOW
hot stuff. cool prices.

Gianni's
BAR & GRILL

1527.



Foot Locker



Foot Locker

NO PARKING
AUTHORIZED
ONLY POLICE
VEHICLES ONLY



LOW FLOOR ZONE 888-591-3636
PASSENGER VEHICLE
LOADING ONLY
30 MIN LIMIT
MON-SUN
→

PARKING
LOADED LOADING ONLY
1 HR LIMIT
6:00AM-4:00PM
←

LOADING ONLY
15 MIN LIMIT
4:00PM-12:00AM
8:00AM-12:00AM
←

CONSTRUCTION ZONE AHEAD
REDUCE SPEED



Photo By: E. C. LUKES

BOYD THEATRE, PHILADELPHIA, PENN. ~ from IRVIN R. ELAZER Collection ~ # PA ~

"Fiddler
on the Roof"

Sam Eric

Sam Eric

"Fiddler on the Roof" UA

Reserved
Seats

"Fiddler on the Roof"

3 ACADEMY AWARDS

"FIDDLER ON THE ROOF"
TODAY 8 30

NOW PLAYING



NOW PLAYING



BOX OFFICE
OPEN
12-00
9-00



B732

Oppose Pearl Properties' Request to Remove the Boyd Theatre Marquee — 1910 Chestnut Street

From N Diamond <navdiamond1@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 7:33 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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>

> I am writing as a concerned Philadelphia resident and advocate for our city's historic built environment to urge you to deny Pearl Properties' application to remove the marquee and alter the Chestnut Street facade of the former Boyd Theatre at 1910 Chestnut Street.

>

> The Boyd Theatre opened on Christmas Day 1928 and stood for nearly a century as Philadelphia's last great Art Deco movie palace — and the last of its kind on Chestnut Street. The fight to save it catalyzed one of the most important chapters in Philadelphia's preservation history, ultimately spurring the expansion of the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places to protect additional buildings and entire neighborhoods. What remains of the Boyd today — its Chestnut Street facade, its grand lobby, and most critically, its iconic marquee — is not merely a remnant of a lost theater. It is a symbol of what this city's preservation movement fought for and what the Historical Commission exists to protect.

>

> Pearl Properties has already taken a great deal from this site. The auditorium was demolished in 2015. The Foyer to Sansom Street was lost. The Bankroll restaurant that briefly occupied the lobby space closed in 2023, leaving the building vacant. Now, Pearl is seeking to remove the marquee entirely and install a new, flush storefront — a move that the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia has rightly described as something that would "drastically degrade the historic character of the building."

>

> I respectfully ask the Commission to consider the following:

> 1. The marquee is not incidental to the building's historic character — it is central to it. Any prospective retail or commercial tenant stands to benefit from, not be burdened by, one of Center City's most recognizable architectural features. As the Preservation Alliance has noted, other former theaters along Chestnut Street have successfully leveraged their historic marquees as business assets.

>

> 2. The Commission must hold the line on what was explicitly preserved through prior agreements and rulings. The surviving Chestnut Street facade and its marquee represent the negotiated minimum — the floor of protection, not a ceiling. Permitting Pearl Properties to now undo that is a breach of the spirit of those earlier preservation commitments.

>

> 3. Allowing further alteration sets a dangerous precedent for every other building on the Philadelphia Register. If a developer can return years later to chip away at what was specifically preserved, the Register loses its meaning and the public loses trust in the process.

>

> Philadelphia is a city that takes pride in its history. The Boyd Theatre's story is part of that history — as are the thousands of residents, advocates, and preservationists who fought for decades to save what they could. I urge you not to let the remaining fabric of this landmark be further erased in the name of expediency for a developer that has already received extraordinary latitude at this site.

>

> Please deny Pearl Properties' application and uphold the historic integrity of the Boyd Theatre.

>

> Thank you for your time and service to this city.

>

> Respectfully,

> Citizens and lovers of Philadelphia

>

>

Boyd Theater

From Tyler Forst <tylerjforst@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 7:37 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Philadelphia Historical Commission,

I am writing to urge the Commission to deny the request to remove the historic marquee from the Boyd Theatre. The marquee is one of the last remaining visible architectural elements of a building that holds significant cultural and preservation history in Philadelphia.

The Boyd Theatre played an important role in the city's historic preservation movement, and the marquee continues to contribute to the character and identity of Center City. Removing it would erase another piece of Philadelphia's architectural heritage and further diminish the historic integrity of the site.

I strongly encourage the Commission to protect and preserve the marquee for future generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Tyler Forst

267-746-1506



Outlook

1910 Chestnut St. marquee

From Matt H <wndsofchng06@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 3:55 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Hello,

As a citizen of Philadelphia who appreciates our history and architecture, I'm writing to ask that we keep the original marquee at Boyd theatre.

Thanks

Matt Herman

101 Tasker Street

919-949-1436

1910 Chestnut St.

From Jason Lempieri <jl@rethinktankdesign.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 5:42 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Ms. Chantry:

I'm writing to express my concern over potentially losing the marquee at the former Boyd's on 1910 Chestnut Street.

The marquee is an historical vestige that additionally serves a purpose as an entrance indicator and inclement weather canopy.

We have lost many historically worthy structures in what is supposed to be a city rooted in the founding fabric of American architecture.

The proposal further removes any indication of what the building was and further diminishes the stature of the structure.

Thank you for your time,

Jason Lempieri

RETHINKTANK

RETHINKTANKDESIGN.COM

1023 FITZWATER STREET

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19147 USA

267.205.0244



WWW.TOMBINO.SHOP

1910 Chestnut St

From MARK MAKURATH <mrm600@msn.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 5:12 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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I am writing to request that you deny the request to remove the Boyd's beautiful marquee and the Vestibule walls. It is a shame that this is all that is left of this landmark. Please do the right thing to preserve the historic architectural integrity of what is left of this beloved former movie palace!

Mark Makurath

324 S. 3rd Street

Philadelphia, PA 19106

Sent from my iPhone 15Pro



Outlook

1910 Chestnut Street

From Earl Marsh <earlmarsh57@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 10:02 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Dear Ms. Chantry,

I am writing to ask that the proposed modification of the facade of the remains of the historic Boyd Theater be denied. The replacement of this intact Art Deco marquee and canopy with a generic, flat storefront would be a terrible loss to the character of the street and city.

Thank you,
Earl Marsh
2130 Pine St.
Philadelphia, PA

The Boyd Facade

From Michael McGettigan <mcget@outlook.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 9:45 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>; paul@preservationalliance.com <paul@preservationalliance.com>

Cc isaffron@phillynews.com <isaffron@phillynews.com>; Kenyatta Johnson <Kenyatta.Johnson@Phila.gov>; Stephanie Farr <sfarr@inquirer.com>

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The BOYD MARQUEE is important in multiple ways.

- 1) The city crafted an agreement with Pearl Properties. Pearl execs signed it; such clear, signed agreements with the city must be respected. This is especially important because Pearl was granted many breaks in exchange for demolishing most of the Boyd. Now they "Want egg in their beer" as my mom would say. If Pearl can break their word, why should other in this city respect agreements, the law, our government?
- 2) The idea that a wealthy, powerful development firm like Pearl can claim hardship is dishonest, non-factual and must be rejected.
- 3) Most importantly: Citizens and visitors to Philadelphia orient themselves to a city by more than street signs or GPS cues. Physical landmarks are important. They make up our "habitat" and if we destroy enough of them, it's disorienting and can lead to population loss, and all sort of other decisions against a city, many made unconsciously. We don't know why we need them, but **these buildings serve the same function as the stars do for sailors, for migrating birds: The Furness Building at Penn, the Robinson Building on Market Street, and so many others make up our cityscape. We navigate by them, we attach our memories to them.** This is not a precious, "preservationist" issue. It affects all of us.
- 4) Just as other property owners have done when push comes to shove, Pearl Properties' directors need to adjust their rental expectations and get a deal done, not cry poor to break their agreement. More importantly, they need to be educated as to the value of this marquee. The vibe here is that a couple of ignorant corporate clients are telling Pearl, "Lose that marquee, give us a K of P mall front – and we can stick up our bland flat sign logo and do a deal." Then, some years later, REI or Five Below or whoever folds up or moves and that marquee is lost forever. Hard nope. **Stand up for preservation on this one!**

Sincerely,

— Michael McGettigan / Trophy Bikes PHL

1910 Chestnut St.

From TomBABOS <tomboston2@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 5:29 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Mayor Chantry,

Please do not allow the destruction of this once beautiful building again. They ruined the interior when they tried to open this "Bankroll" mistake that closed within months of opening. We didn't need that kind of establishment in the city and certainly few all want to preserve any/all of the historically beautiful old buildings still standing in our city.

Enough demolition was done to hundreds of beautiful old buildings (many by the celebrated architect Frank Furness) and everything that could possibly be done to save any other old buildings in the city should be done to preserve the culture and beauty of our city.

Thank You
Tom Nulty



Outlook

1910 Chestnut St.

From susie perloff <myunclesusie@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 7:28 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Please deny the request to remove the Boyd's beautiful marquee. We old-timers love this building.

--

Susie Perloff

myunclesusie@gmail.com

215-985-1001

1910 Chestnut St.

From Gina Renzi <gina@therotunda.org>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 8:32 PM

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Hello

I'm writing to ask that you protect the marquee of the old Boyd Theater, at 1910 Chestnut Street. Please deny the property owner's request to remove the marquee and vestibule walls. We have nothing left like this in Center City. Please save what little is left of movie palaces in this area of the city that used to have so many. A marquee is always a defining characteristic of a historic movie palace. In 1953, the support beams of the original 1928 marquee were reused for the current "Cinerama" marquee, designed by prominent architect William H. Lee. The Boyd was famous and popular as the only theater in the region for Cinerama films, and the marquee remained in use until the theater's 2002 closure. When IPIC Theaters obtained a demolition permit, they stipulated at PHC they would keep the Boyd's front and restore the marquee to 1928. The current owner used the demolition permit to demolish the auditorium, but obtained PHC approval to keep the current marquee, which they beautifully refurbished.

A heritage marquee is viewed as an asset, for advertising purposes, to commercial tenants, including at the two former movie theaters on the 1500 block of Chestnut, Arcadia (1915 to 1978) now Five Below 1529 Chestnut St, and Trans-Lux later Eric's Place (1934 to 1993) 1519 Chestnut St, now Foot Locker. The Fox Locust (1927 originally for movies, to 1980) 1405 Locust St is now Estia restaurant. Bankroll did not fail at the Boyd because of the marquee! The recent PHC approval to cut larger windows at the Drexel building at 15th & Walnut seems minor in comparison. The Boyd's marquee is integral to its facade and its removal would be like removing a nose from a person's face. The Boyd's marquee has also been a feature that has distinguished Chestnut St since 1928.

Friends of the Boyd continue to have many supporters in Philadelphia and the region. I am one of them. I respectfully ask you to deny the application to remove the Boyd's marquee and vestibule walls. Please leave 1910 Chestnut St intact.

Thank you!

gina

--

Gina Renzi

Director

The Rotunda

4014 Walnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104

gina@therotunda.org

[https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.therotunda.org%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728326297%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=w209ZkhpmHYaBY3ZeybcQ%2BSNsSw%2BwcaTQuxE4MMa6mU%3D&reserved=0)

[url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.therotunda.org%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728326297%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=w209ZkhpmHYaBY3ZeybcQ%2BSNsSw%2BwcaTQuxE4MMa6mU%3D&reserved=0](http%3A%2F%2Fwww.therotunda.org%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728326297%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=w209ZkhpmHYaBY3ZeybcQ%2BSNsSw%2BwcaTQuxE4MMa6mU%3D&reserved=0)

Facebook: [https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Ftherotundaphilly&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728358336%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=YiPKbmWYRVgclYCZuLe5ort5k3d9wsMtC2Mx5aTaKGY%3D&reserved=0)

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[url=https%3A%2F%2Finstagram.com%2Fthe_rotunda_philly&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728377297%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=g092%2BZG1ppaRUUZZDGEgvDkjsW%2BEZNQLMJLnXG94xY%3D&reserved=0](https%3A%2F%2Finstagram.com%2Fthe_rotunda_philly&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728377297%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=g092%2BZG1ppaRUUZZDGEgvDkjsW%2BEZNQLMJLnXG94xY%3D&reserved=0)

Pronouns: She/her/hers

Land Acknowledgement: We recognize and acknowledge that The Rotunda and related programs stand on the Indigenous territory known as "Lenapehoking," the traditional homelands of the Lenape, also called Lenni-Lenape or Delaware Indians. Their descendants today include the Delaware Tribe and Delaware Nation of Oklahoma; the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, Ramapough Lenape, and Powhatan Renape of New Jersey; and the Munsee Delaware of Ontario. These are not only nations of the past, but are indeed living, thriving people today. Learn much more about these and other communities at Native American and Indigenous

Studies at Penn: [https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnais.sas.upenn.edu%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728393455%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2xcO3nylaZNnuc%2FwVliHQgehzu%2F4Y1ljOES%2Bh0pOS94%3D&reserved=0)

[url=https%3A%2F%2Fnais.sas.upenn.edu%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728393455%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2xcO3nylaZNnuc%2FwVliHQgehzu%2F4Y1ljOES%2Bh0pOS94%3D&reserved=0](https%3A%2F%2Fnais.sas.upenn.edu%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ckim.chantry%40phila.gov%7C8d2f29a41739479df61e08deb79979ec%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C639150067728393455%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIiIAiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoiTWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C40000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2xcO3nylaZNnuc%2FwVliHQgehzu%2F4Y1ljOES%2Bh0pOS94%3D&reserved=0)

1910 Chestnut St.

From Sol Siegel <solouisiegel@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 2:36 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Dear Ms. Chantry,

I support the request of the Friends of the Boyd, Inc., to deny the property owner's request to remove the marquee and vestibule walls from 1910 Chestnut St., the former Boyd Theater. As Friends of the Boyd have already pointed out, the previous tenant did not fail because of these historic features, dating back almost a century, and when they're gone, they're gone forever.

Thank you,
Sol L. Siegel

1910 Chestnut St. - don't allow removal!

From Nancy Sokolove <nancysokolove@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 6:41 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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It would be more than sad to lose the beautiful, historic marquee at the Boyd's building. Philadelphia's diverse architecture should be celebrated, and removal of this would continue a sad tradition of sometimes not seeing the beauty and uniqueness of our great city.

I really hope that this removal is denied.

Thanks for your consideration and allowing me to express my opinion.

Sincerely,
Nancy Sokolove



Outlook

Subject: 1910 Chestnut Street

From movie01@aol.com <movie01@aol.com>

Date Thu 5/21/2026 4:37 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a member of the Philadelphia film community, I'm writing in hopes of preserving the historic marquee at the Boyd. Enough bad stuff has already happened to that theater. Here's hoping this last vestige can remain.

Thank you.

Alan Cylinder

1910 Chestnut Street

From Todd Schwartz <toddpschwartz@gmail.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 8:01 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Greetings: I want to express my profound objection to the removal of the beautiful marquee currently located at the subject property.

Philadelphia is a unique American city because of our preservation efforts that showcase our past while educating our future. To demolish the wonderful marquee would not only be a disservice to the neighborhood but it will deny generations of an important historical narrative.

Thank you for your indulgence.

Best,

Todd Schwartz
South Philadelphia

1910 Chestnut St.

From John Wilson <jgwilson3@gmail.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 7:24 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Dear Ms. Chantry and Members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission,

I am writing to respectfully urge the Commission to deny the pending request to remove the marquee and vestibule walls of the former Boyd Theatre, located at 1910 Chestnut Street.

The Boyd's marquee is among the most recognizable remnants of Philadelphia's once-vibrant movie palace era. It is not merely a decorative feature, it is a defining architectural element that speaks to the building's historic identity and its place in the cultural memory of this city. The vestibule walls similarly represent irreplaceable original fabric that, once removed, cannot be authentically restored.

I understand that the property is undergoing redevelopment, and I respect the legal processes that govern that work. My concern is solely with the preservation of these specific architectural elements, which carry significant historic and aesthetic value for Philadelphia and its residents.

The Philadelphia Historical Commission exists precisely to safeguard features like these from permanent loss. I trust the Commission will weigh carefully the irreversibility of their removal and act to protect what remains of this landmark's original character.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Philadelphia's architectural heritage.

Respectfully,

John Wilson

Sent from my iPhone

1910 Chestnut Street

From rabanth@aol.com <rabanth@aol.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 12:04 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Paul Steinke <psteinke@preservationalliance.com>

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I am writing to urge the Historical Commission to preserve both the marquee and vestibule of the old Boyd Movie Theater.

These are the two most important items in identifying this building as an old theater. So much has been removed from this important landmark

that the Commission fought and eventually won a PA Supreme Court battle to save. The Commission has already sacrificed so much over time on this building,

These important items are the exterior elements that convey the significant history of the building. Please don't give up these important elements.

Randal Baron



PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

for greater philadelphia

May 21, 2026

Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Members of the Historical Commission,

The Preservation Alliance writes in opposition to the proposal to remove the Boyd Theater marquee and vestibule walls and replace them with a conventional storefront system.

The Boyd Theater's 2008 Philadelphia Register nomination describes its distinctive façade, noting "The Boyd Theater, by virtue of its Art Deco façade including the recessed lobby, is a familiar landmark on Chestnut Street... The theater presents its principal façade to Chestnut Street, which is further enlivened with shop fronts, the ticket booth, recessed vestibule for easy ingress and egress, lighted marquee, and elaborate façade and fenestration."

Although the marquee dates to a 1950s-era alteration, the Historical Commission has repeatedly recognized it and the recessed vestibule as integral components of the building's architectural identity and historic significance. The current proposal represents a substantial departure from prior Commission approvals that required the retention and restoration of these features.

In June 2015, the Historical Commission approved redevelopment plans that included "the restoration of the extant marquee, which dates to the 1950s, when the theater was modified for Cinerama." The motion also clarified that the "newly enclosed vestibule remains within the Historical Commission's jurisdiction."

Earlier approvals similarly centered on preservation of the Chestnut Street headhouse, arcade, and marquee as part of the framework that justified extensive demolition under hardship provisions. In 2014, preservation advocates, including the Preservation Alliance and Friends of the Boyd, agreed to withdraw legal challenges, in part, on assurances that the Chestnut Street headhouse, including the theater experience embodied by the façade, arcade, and marquee, would be rehabilitated and preserved.

The staff report correctly acknowledges that removal of the marquee and vestibule walls "does not comply with a strict reading of Standard 9." In reality, the proposal conflicts more broadly with the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards because it removes highly visible character-defining features.

The Boyd Theater has already lost the majority of its historic fabric through earlier hardship approvals. The surviving headhouse, marquee, and vestibule are what remain to communicate the building's history and identity to the public realm. Their preservation was repeatedly promised, reviewed, and approved by this Commission and should not now be reversed.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Historical Commission to deny the application to remove the marquee and vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut Street.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Steinke". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Steinke" clearly distinguishable.

Paul Steinke
Executive Director



Outlook

1910 Chestnut St.

From Janice Baker <janicebaker@ymail.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 10:27 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Please preserve the beautiful facade of this building. It is unique and adds to the amazing historical architecture of our city.

Janice Baker

1910 Chestnut

From howardbhaas@aol.com <howardbhaas@aol.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 10:30 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>; psteinke@preservationalliance.com
<psteinke@preservationalliance.com>; ingasaffron@gmail.com <ingasaffron@gmail.com>; jayfar@jayfar.com
<jayfar@jayfar.com>

 1 attachment (569 KB)

1910-Chestnut-Street-Boyd-Theatre-Brochure_Site-Plan-MSA.jpg;

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Hello, Kim,

Friends of the Boyd need to add one additional item into the public record, regarding the application to remove the Boyd's Vestibule walls. Attached.

As the property owner's application does not have any rendering which so specifies, attached is a map diagram from the past from a realtor for the property owner. The **Vestibule walls** are for what is labeled in the map diagram as **Arcade Area**, which stretches quite a bit of a distance and all of which was for decades previously outside, which is why it is Exterior legally protected. No matter what front enclosure currently exists or may exist in the future, the Vestibule walls for the two small retail stores that were on each side of the Boyd's entry, are protected by the Exterior designation.

We hope this diagram map will be helpful to clarifying what's at stake.

Thank you most kindly.

Howard B. Haas, Esq.
Philadelphia, PA
President, Friends of the Boyd, Inc.



Rittenhouse Square • Philadelphia, PA

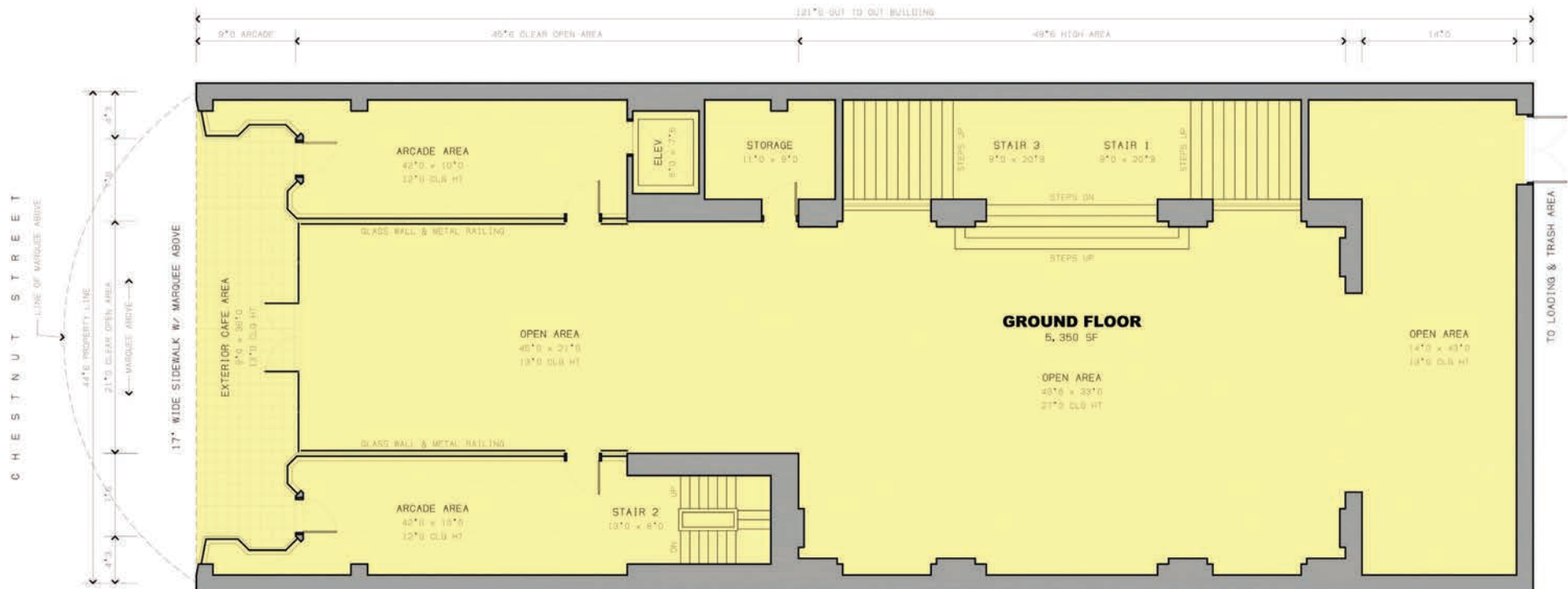
1910 CHESTNUT STREET

Ground Floor Site Plan

For more info, please contact:

BRITTANY GOLDBERG
bgoldberg@MSCretail.com
215.568.2600 x723

JACOB COOPER
jcooper@MSCretail.com
215.568.2600 x714



1910 Chestnut St

From Paul Black <pvwb@att.net>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 10:38 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Hello Kim,

I am writing to ask you to deny the request to remove the Boyd's current marquee and vestibule walls. Both are important historical elements of the Boyd's entry and should be preserved.

Regards,

Paul

Paul Black
100 N. 22nd Street, #115
Philadelphia PA 19103

1910 Chestnut Street

From Katherine Dowdell <kdowdell@farragutstreet.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 11:03 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

Cc Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>; Paul Steinke <psteinke@preservationalliance.com>; Hanna Stark <hstark@preservationalliance.com>

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To the Philadelphia Historical Commission/Architectural Committee:

I strongly encourage the Architectural Committee to deny the proposal to significantly alter the façade of 1910 Chestnut Street, the former Boyd theater. The removal of the marquee, and the flattening of the front wall with glass, will destroy two very distinctive features of the building – features specifically called out in the nomination:

“The Boyd Theater, by virtue of its Art Deco façade including the recessed lobby, is a familiar landmark on Chestnut Street. The Boyd was designed to take full advantage of its Chestnut Street address. The theater presents its principal façade to Chestnut Street, which is further enlivened with shop fronts, the ticket booth, recessed vestibule for easy ingress and egress, lighted marquee, and elaborate façade and fenestration. The recessed, open, outer vestibule of the Boyd Theater is a unique feature along Chestnut Street and in Center City in general.”

By any definition, the marquee and the recessed entrance are character-defining features of this building. While it is true that the original marquee was replaced, the current marquee dates from 1955 – well within the period of significance, and certainly a distinguishing feature in its own right. The recessed entrance is likewise significant to the building, and should not be eliminated by creating a flat glass entry.

Please deny this application – thank you.

Kathy Dowdell

1910 Chestnut Street - Boyd Theater (*sp Theatre)

From Jay Farrell <jayfar@jayfar.com>

Date Fri 5/22/2026 11:59 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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May 22, 2026
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

To all concerned at PHC and its committees:

I strenuously insist that the application for façade alterations of The Boyd Theater (*sp Theatre) at 1910 Chestnut Street — including removal c. 1950s CINERAMA-era marquee — must be DENIED.

The marquee — as it was spectacularly re-worked from the original 1928 marquee — is a vital visual feature marking the Cinerama-chapter of the Boyd's nearly 100 year history. The original two small shops flanking the vestibule space are also vital character-defining elements of the exterior that must be preserved.

What's more, the applicant giving the rapid failure of Bankroll as their prime example of why they consider the property non-viable for leasing with the marquee intact is a very weak argument. A PREPONDERANCE OF EVIDENCE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THAT BANKROLL FOUNDER PAUL MARTINO RAN IT INTO THE GROUND BEFORE IT EVEN OPENED. Clearly Bankroll was a flawed concept that failed largely due to Martino's chutzpah and incompetence.

Please DENY the application to remove the marquee and vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut Street.

Thank you.

Jay Farrell

--

[Philadelphia Industrial & Commercial Heritage](#)

A public Facebook group to promote appreciation of Greater Philadelphia's industrial and commercial history and advocate for historic preservation and adaptive re-use.

THE EVERETT
47 WEST MAIN STREET
MIDDLETOWN, DEL.

May 22, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL TO KIM.CHANTRY@PHILA.GOV

Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: 1910 Chestnut Street

Dear Commission members:

In the matter regarding the proposed removal of marquee and vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut Street, formally known as the Boyd Theatre, please consider as perspective the experience of the historic Everett Theatre in Middletown, Delaware.

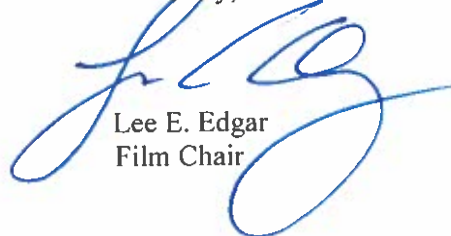
The significance of a marquee to the identity of a theatre and the community which surrounds it cannot be understated. Theater buildings are celebrated and often preserved for outstanding architecture and, be it modest or grand, marquees are widely regarded as iconic elements of the theater façade. Be it small town or bustling city, history has show that theater marquees are a defining feature within the community they call home.

Conduct a web search for "Middletown, Delaware", and one will find images of The Everett's marquee to be among the most frequent results. A theater marquee is more than branding – it is the designated stop for parade performers, the backdrop for key scenes in Hollywood films, and the landmark where friends plan to meet. Consider the beloved holiday classic film *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946); ask a passer-by on the street about the "old movie house" in Bedford Falls, and many will recall "Oh! The Bijou theater!" – a recollection committed to memory solely because of the marquee.

The Everett Theatre first opened on November 9, 1922 and, like the Boyd Theatre, is one of the few remaining movie palace's designed by the famed architectural firm of Hoffman-Henon Co. of Philadelphia. We've many patrons who visit owing to the Hoffman-Henon legacy; naturally, photographs are taken...standing under the marquee. So beloved is our marquee, that when DelDOT planned the installation of a crosswalk, safety signage was purposely designed to not obstruct its view.

The same significance can likely be said for the marquee at 1910 Chestnut Street and its importance to not only the handsome architectural façade to which it is mounted, but its significance to the Center City neighborhood. I hope this perspective is helpful as you deliberate the question before you.

Sincerely,



Lee E. Edgar
Film Chair

1910 Chestnut St, for May 26

From howardbhaas@aol.com <howardbhaas@aol.com>

Date Tue 5/26/2026 8:31 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>; psteinke@preservationalliance.com
<psteinke@preservationalliance.com>

 2 attachments (9 MB)

Casino Theatre, San Diego IMG_7644.jpeg; Screenshot-2023-10-30-at-10.57.47-AM.png;

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Good morning, Kim,

Photo this weekend by Paul Steinke while on vacation in San Diego of reuse of 1930s marquee of former Casino Theater in San Diego. A powerful image showing how the Boyd marquee can be reused!

And a photo of the Boyd's Vestibule showing the Vestibule walls, from realtor MSC's website. What looks like a ticket booth was for Bankroll, not original.

Howard B. Haas



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1910 Chestnut St

From Joan Kirschner <kirschner.joan@gmail.com>

Date Tue 5/26/2026 7:17 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Hello Kim Chantry,

I am a Philadelphia resident who is concerned about the loss of our historic and iconic buildings. Please preserve the Boyd's marquee and vestibule walls. It is already a great loss that its auditorium was demolished, but if we can retain at least these aspects of the theater's building, it is to our credit as a great city.

I saw many movies there as a child with my parents and grandparents. Going there was a very special experience that I remember with great fondness. Let's preserve our history!

Sincerely,
Joan Kirschner



Outlook

1910 Chestnut Street

From Stephen Westover <swestover@gmail.com>

Date Tue 5/26/2026 2:51 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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I urge the Philadelphia Historical Commission to deny the request to remove the Boyd's marquee and the vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut Street. These architectural elements are an important part of Philadelphia's historic character and cultural memory.

Stephen Westover | swestover@gmail.com

1910 Chestnut Street

From Lori Cook <lacookdesign@gmail.com>

Date Tue 5/26/2026 1:59 PM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Ms. Chantry

I am writing to ask that you please deny the request to remove the Boyd's marquee and Vestibule wall.s The Boyd is the last movie palace in Philadelphia. I am still absolutely appalled that the theatre was demolished especially when so many people wanted to preserve this beautiful Art Deco building. Please vote to keep the marquee and lobby in tact and preserved as part of Philadelphia's wonderful architectural history.

thank you
Lori Cook

1910 Chestnut Street

From charg98@aol.com <charg98@aol.com>

Date Sun 6/7/2026 9:20 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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To: Philadelphia Historical Commission members:

Please deny the property owner's application to remove the marquee and vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut St, the former Boyd Theater. For many years, I served on the Board of Friends of the Boyd, Inc., and volunteered many hours because our historic movie theaters are important. I fondly recall seeing movies at the Boyd and believe its marquee and original entry walls should survive.

I live near the former President movie theater (1936 to 1975) which is located at 2308 Snyder Ave. The marquee is still there, stating Grand Yesha Ballroom. That organization is now an event venue.

Thank you for reading this.

Charlene Nolten
Philadelphia, PA

Photographs received from Howard Haas
June 8, 2026
for presentation to PHC



1529 Chestnut, Arcadia, 2026 Howard Haas



1519 Chestnut, Eric's Place, 2026 Howard Haas



1405 Locust, Fox Locust, 2023 Howard Haas



1836 Chestnut, Aldine, 2026 James Fennell



Westmont, NJ 2026 Steven Synder



San Diego, 2026 Paul Steinke



Boyd 1953 Children, Free Library



Boyd 1958 Gigi Premiere, Ray Meyer



Boyd 1967 Premiere, Free Library



Boyd 1983 Star Wars, AP



Boyd 1957, Friends of the Boyd, Inc.



Boyd 2026, Friends of the Boyd, Inc.



Boyd Terrazzo, 2026 Friends of the Boyd

1910 Chestnut Street

From Matt Lambros <matt@mlambrosphotography.com>

Date Tue 6/9/2026 8:40 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>

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Dear Ms. Chantry,

I am writing to oppose the proposed removal of the Boyd Theatre's 1953 Cinerama marquee and original 1928 vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut Street.

I am an architectural photographer and the creator of After the Final Curtain, a long running project documenting historic theaters across the United States. I have visited and written about the Boyd, and I am familiar with many former movie palaces that have been successfully reused for retail, restaurant, office, and other commercial purposes while keeping their historic facades and marquees intact.

The Boyd is one of the last surviving pieces of Philadelphia's movie palace history. The auditorium is already gone. Because of that, the remaining Chestnut Street facade, marquee, vestibule, and lobby are even more important. They are not decorative extras. They are the public face of the building and the pieces that still tell people what the Boyd was.

The clearest example is only one block away. The former Aldine Theatre at 1826 to 1830 Chestnut Street, at 19th and Chestnut, is now a CVS. It no longer operates as a theater, yet the building still retains its historic theater identity, including its marquee. That example matters because it is not theoretical. It is on the same commercial corridor as the Boyd. It shows that a former theater building can be leased for modern retail use without stripping away the features that make it historically and visually distinct.

The argument that the space cannot be rented with the marquee and vestibule intact also does not match what has happened in other cities.

The Tower Theatre in Los Angeles was adapted into an Apple Store. Its theater identity, facade, vertical sign, and marquee were restored as part of the retail conversion.

The Alabama Theatre in Houston was adapted first as a bookstore and later as a Trader Joe's. The theater marquee remained part of the building's identity and became a major part of its appeal as a retail space.

The Varsity Theatre in Palo Alto was converted into a Borders bookstore, and its lighted marquee was refurbished as part of that work.

The Westmont Theatre in Haddon Township, New Jersey was converted into a Planet Fitness while retaining the historic theater frontage and marquee presence.

These examples show that a historic marquee does not prevent successful reuse. In many cases, it helps. It gives the tenant visibility, identity, and a connection to the surrounding streetscape that a flat storefront cannot replace. These are just a few examples.

Removing the Boyd marquee and vestibule walls would make the surviving building less distinctive, not more rentable. It would erase the pieces that make 1910 Chestnut Street different from any other commercial space on the block.

I respectfully ask the Philadelphia Historical Commission to deny the application to remove the 1953 Cinerama marquee and original 1928 vestibule walls. The owner should be asked to pursue a reuse plan that works with the building's remaining historic features instead of stripping them away.

Sincerely,

Matt Lambros
After the Final Curtain

June 9, 2026

RE: Boyd Theatre Marquee, 1910 Chestnut Street

Dear Members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission,

I am writing to strongly urge you to prioritize the preservation of the Boyd Theatre's defining historic features—especially its projecting marquee—as you consider the future of this important place. Features like the marquee are not incidental; they are at the heart of what makes a historic theatre building recognizable, memorable, and meaningful to the public.

For generations, theatre marquees have acted as beacons along commercial streets, creating energy, visibility, and a natural place for people to gather. The Boyd's marquee does exactly that. It shapes how people experience the street and immediately signals the building's identity in a way that replacement signage simply cannot. Once these elements are removed, something essential is lost—the Boyd becomes disconnected from its history, its original purpose, and the shared memory of it as a former movie palace.

Preserving projecting theatre marquees can successfully coexist with new uses. In Downtown Los Angeles, the former Rialto Theatre—now an Urban Outfitters—still has its marquee, which continues to enliven the street and ground the building in its history. The Tower Theatre, now occupied by Apple, offers another example, where the marquee and key architectural features were retained, creating a space that feels both new and deeply rooted in its past. See attached images of both theatres today, complete with their projecting theatre marquees.

These projects make clear that preservation and adaptive reuse can and should go hand in hand. In fact, it is often these distinctive elements that give a project its identity and make it successful over time.

As a former Philadelphia resident and a board member of the Friends of the Boyd, this issue is especially meaningful to me. I respectfully urge the Commission to ensure that the Boyd Theatre's marquee and other character-defining features are retained. The owner made a commitment to preserve this portion of the building, even as the auditorium was lost. Keeping that commitment matters—not just for the building itself, but for maintaining a visible, tangible connection to Philadelphia's architectural and cultural heritage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Adrian Scott Fine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized 'A' and 'F'.

Adrian Scott Fine
President & CEO

Los Angeles Conservancy



Tower Theatre, adapted for Apple Store, Los Angeles



Rialto Theatre, adapted for Urban Outfitters, Los Angeles

1910 Chestnut Street

From Deb Robbins <deborahnp@gmail.com>

Date Tue 6/9/2026 6:00 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

I am writing to oppose the proposed removal of the Boyd Theatre's 1953 Cinerama marquee and original 1928 vestibule walls at 1910 Chestnut Street.

As one of the last surviving pieces of Philadelphia's movie palace history, the Boyd's facade, marquee, vestibule, and lobby showcase what a treasure the Boyd was in its day.

Apparently the argument is that leaving the marquis intact makes the property "unrentable." Respectfully, I beg to differ. The former Aldine Theatre (19th and Chestnut) is now a CVS but still retains its historic theater identity, including its marquee. Clearly the marquee does not deter CVS customers from patronizing the store. On the contrary, it can be a bonus. If someone asks oh where can I go nearby to get my so-and-so drugstore item, it helps to say "look for the marquis on 19th Street." Personally, I get a frisson of pleasure when heading over to the familiar marquis for CVS-type merchandise. A former theater building can be leased for modern retail use without stripping away the features that make it historically and visually distinct.

The argument that the space cannot be rented with the marquee and vestibule intact also is inconsistent with experiences in other cities including the Tower Theatre in Los Angeles (Apple Store), the Alabama Theatre in Houston (Trader Joe's), the Varsity Theatre in Palo Alto (Borders) and the Westmont Theatre in Haddon Township NJ (Planet Fitness).

These examples show that a historic marquee does not prevent successful reuse. Often, it helps, providing visibility, identity, and a connection to the surrounding streetscape that a flat storefront cannot replace.

Removing the Boyd marquee and vestibule walls would make the surviving building just one more uninspiring box. We can do better.

I respectfully ask the Philadelphia Historical Commission to deny the owner's application to remove the 1953 Cinerama marquee and original 1928 vestibule walls. The owner should pursue plans that work with the building's beautiful historic features instead of discarding them.

Thanks for your kind attention.

Deborah Robbins

Villanova PA

--

Deb Robbins

610-574-5783

Tuesday June 9, 2026

Kim Chantry

Historic Preservation Planner Supervisor

City of Philadelphia

Good afternoon Kim:

I am writing to ask you to strongly encourage the Philadelphia Historical Commission to deny the application to remove the marquee from the Boyd Theatre as well as the vestibule area just inside the entrance to the venue.

The Boyd is an important architectural and historical landmark that has defined this portion of the downtown area since 1928. The plan to flatten the recessed entrance not only would harm the architectural appeal to the façade, but simply be like every other flat retail façade that could be found anywhere. The Boyd marquee should be celebrated as a unique architectural icon of Downtown Philadelphia.

I remember the first time visiting the Boyd during a national conference in Philadelphia in the early 2000s. I thought, my gosh how could a city so rich in history and architecture let this venue be destroyed?

There are many examples around the country where former movie theaters have been incorporated into adaptive re-use projects, while still including marquees, vestibules, and terrazzo entrances. A marquee ablaze with color can be such a welcoming sight and bring life to any city block. (See attached examples.)

I have been involved with theater preservation for a number of years, working with several major movie theater chains, historic preservation organizations including the Theatre Historical Society of America, and today being a steward of the historic Detroit Opera House, also a former movie palace similar to the Boyd.

Thank you for allowing me to present my views.

Respectfully,

Michael Hauser – mhauser@detroitopera.org

Curator of Architecture and History for the Detroit Opera House

1526 Broadway – Detroit, Michigan 48226

There are many examples of former historic movie theaters with commercial tenants reusing a marquee, often a lit marquee, and original outdoor features including Terrazzo and Vestibules! Attached are photos and brief descriptions.

Photos 1a and 1b are the former **Fox Studio City Theatre** (1938), located at 12136 Ventura Boulevard in Studio City, California with a **bookstore** using its **LIT MARQUEE** and **TERRAZZO FLOOR**.

Photo 2 is the former **Rialto Theatre** (1917, movies) in Downtown Los Angeles at 812 South Broadway, now an **Urban Outfitters**, a Philadelphia based chain, reusing a 1930s **LIT MARQUEE**.

Photo 3 is the former **Alhambra Theatre** (1926, movie palace), at 2330 Polk Street in San Francisco, with a **fitness gym** reusing the **MARQUEE**.

Photo 4 is the former **Loma Theatre** (1945, movies), at 3150 Rosecrans Boulevard in San Diego, with a **bookstore** reusing its **MARQUEE**.

Photo 5a and 5b is the former **Mayfair Theatre** (1911, auditorium demolished, movies) at 214 Santa Monica Boulevard in Santa Monica, with a **shoe store** reusing its **MARQUEE** and **TERRAZZO FLOOR**.

Photo 6 is the former **Varsity Theatre** (1927, movies) at 456 University Avenue in Palo Alto, California with its **LIT MARQUEE** and **VESTIBULE** reused by **Borders Books and Music** (1996 to 2011, since with other retail tenants.)

Final photo is the former **Berkley Theatre** (1940, movies) at 2990 West Twelve Mile Road in Berkley, Michigan (a suburb of Detroit), was converted into a **Rite Aid Drugstore**. However, the City made the chain keep the façade, the **MARQUEE** and the **VERTICAL SIGN**. Ironically, with Rite Aid now gone, it is being converted into a live entertainment venue.



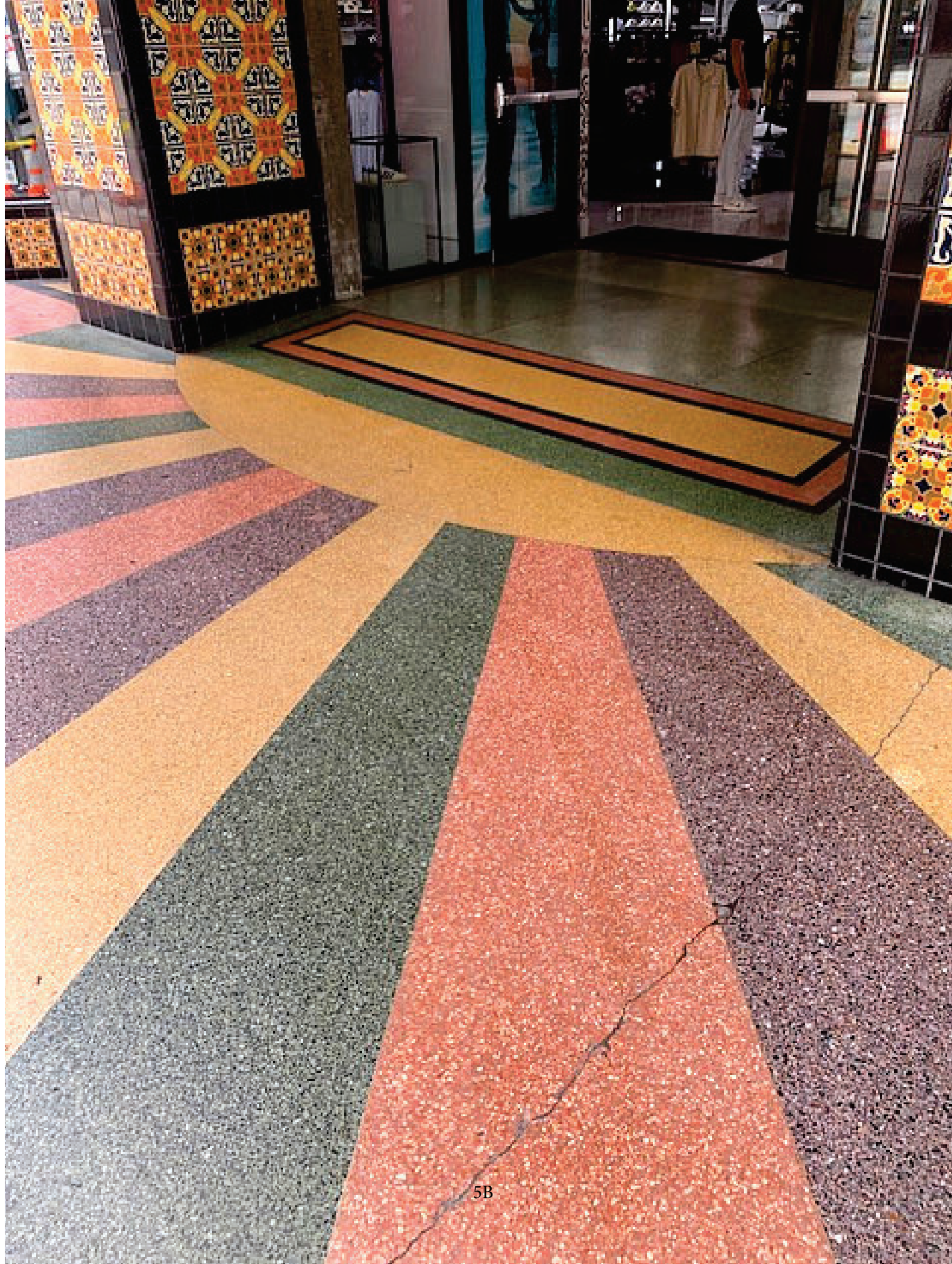














June 11, 2026

Philadelphia Historical Commission
City of Philadelphia Department of Planning and Development
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

To the members of the Historical Commission:

I strongly urge the Historical Commission to deny the proposal to significantly alter the façade of 1910 Chestnut Street, the former Boyd theater. The removal of the marquee, and the flattening of the front wall with glass, will destroy two very distinctive features of the building – features specifically called out in both the local and the National Register nominations.

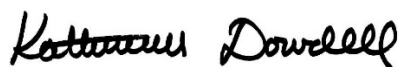
By any definition, the marquee and the recessed entrance, with art-deco inspired terrazzo flooring, are character-defining features of this building. While it is true that the original marquee was replaced, the current marquee dates from 1955 – well within the period of significance, and certainly a distinguishing feature in its own right. The recessed entrance and floor are likewise significant to the building, and should not be eliminated by creating a flat glass entry.

It should be noted that, with the emphasis on the short-term financial challenges of renting this space, removing the marquee and recessed entry will cause significant economic damage in the long term. One of the few, but absolutely strongest, preservation incentives out there is the Federal Historic Tax Incentives program (formerly known as National Historic Investment Tax Credits). Philadelphia is a leader in the use of these tax credits in the state, contributing to Pennsylvania being the leader in the nation. And tax credit projects are not “one and done”; the same building may use federal tax credits over a span of years, for multiple renovations, as did the YMCA on Arch Street in the 1980s for its conversion to the District Attorney’s offices, and then again in the early 2000s for the conversion to the Le Meridien Hotel.

However, in order to take advantage of these tax credits, what must remain are the character defining features of a building, which remind future occupants of the building’s original use. Removing the marquee and the recessed entry at the Boyd would eliminate the very features that the Park Service is looking for, which tell the story of the Boyd to future generations. In informal conversations with people who do, and review, these kinds of projects, the consensus is that the Boyd would not qualify for tax credits without those features. It is those things that let future occupants understand that this was once a grand movie palace, not an ordinary commercial space. The economic damage, along with the damage to the built environment, would be permanent.

Please deny this application.

Very truly yours,



Katherine Dowdell
kdowdell@farragutstreet.com
215-805-0370

Katherine Dowdell

1008 South Farragut Street

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

19143

Cc: Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Jonathan Farnham, Philadelphia Historical Commission
Kim Chantry, Philadelphia Historical Commission
Howard Haas, Friends of the Boyd

From the nominations:

“The Boyd Theater, by virtue of its Art Deco façade including the recessed lobby, is a familiar landmark on Chestnut Street. The Boyd was designed to take full advantage of its Chestnut Street address. The theater presents its principal façade to Chestnut Street, which is further enlivened with shop fronts, the ticket booth, recessed vestibule for easy ingress and egress, lighted marquee, and elaborate façade and fenestration. The recessed, open, outer vestibule of the Boyd Theater is a unique feature along Chestnut Street and in Center City in general.”

Boyd theater

From marycos819@gmail.com <marycos819@gmail.com>

Date Wed 7/1/2026 5:47 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Please preserve the historically significant marquee of the old Boyd theater

Mary costello

thank you.

Sent from my iPad

1910 Chestnut Street - Design Advocacy Group Opposes Boyd Theatre Marquee Demolition

From Eli Storch <eli.storch@norr.com>

Date Tue 7/28/2026 10:58 AM

To Kim Chantry <Kim.Chantry@Phila.gov>; preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

Cc dbrownle@sas.upenn.edu <dbrownle@sas.upenn.edu>; George Claflen <gclaflen@claflenassociates.com>; Marsha Moss <marshamoss2@gmail.com>; Nika Faulkner (dagfellow@gmail.com) <dagfellow@gmail.com>; Laura Spina <laura.spina@mbakerintl.com>; Patty Elks <pattyleah9@gmail.com>

 1 attachment (53 KB)

The Boyd Theatre and The Gradual Loss of a Landmark_DAG SC Statement.pdf;

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Dear Kim and Members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission,

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the Design Advocacy Group (DAG), I am writing, as Chair, to share our recently published statement regarding the proposed removal of the historic Boyd Theatre marquee. Please find the statement attached.

DAG strongly opposes the demolition of the marquee and respectfully urges the Commission to reject any application proposing demolition. As outlined in our statement, the marquee is one of the last significant and recognizable surviving features of the historic Boyd Theatre, an important Philadelphia landmark and the city's last downtown movie palace. Its removal would further erode the building's historic integrity and undermine prior preservation compromises that allowed portions of the landmark to remain.

We believe the marquee continues to contribute significantly to the building's architectural character, cultural identity, and presence along Chestnut Street. Approving its removal would set a troubling precedent for the incremental loss of character-defining historic features across Philadelphia.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued stewardship of Philadelphia's historic resources.

Eli Storch AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
Principal

T 267 283 0230 M 610 724 4084
eli.storch@norr.com

THE BOYD THEATRE AND THE GRADUAL LOSS OF A LANDMARK

THE DESIGN ADVOCACY GROUP OPPOSES THE REMOVAL OF THE BOYD THEATRE MARQUEE

The Boyd Theatre, constructed in 1928, occupies a singular place in Philadelphia's architectural and cultural history. As the city's last surviving downtown movie palace and one of its most important Art Deco landmarks, it served generations as a destination for entertainment, civic life, and collective memory. Its marquee announced premieres, welcomed moviegoers, and became one of Chestnut Street's defining visual features. Today, after decades of preservation battles and the loss of much of the original theater, the marquee remains one of the last visible reminders of that history.

Pearl Properties now seeks permission from the Philadelphia Historical Commission to remove the Boyd's historic marquee and alter the recessed entrance to create a conventional retail storefront.¹ This proposal represents far more than the loss of a sign. It would erase one of the few remaining features that allows Philadelphians to recognize the building as the Boyd, especially after the demolition of the auditorium and the loss of much of the theater's historic fabric.

After the theater closed in 2002, preservationists, historians, architects, and community advocates spent more than a decade fighting to save it. Although they were ultimately unable to preserve the auditorium, a compromise retained portions of the façade, entrance sequence, lobby, and marquee—elements secured through sustained public advocacy, legal proceedings, and negotiation.

The current request by Pearl Properties undermines that compromise. The Boyd has already lost its principal interior spaces and much of the historic fabric that once made it one of the city's great landmarks. Its integrity now rests, quite literally, on the marquee: a grand, historically significant, and intact feature that remains the building's final, legible connection to its past.

The applicant argues that removing the marquee and recessed entrance will improve retail viability by creating a more conventional storefront, citing tenant concerns about visibility and layout. But this argument overlooks the marquee's greatest strength: it is the property's most distinctive commercial and civic asset. The marquee projects into the public realm, attracts attention from a distance, creates a memorable pedestrian experience, and establishes a sense of place that contemporary storefront design rarely achieves.

This proposal solves the wrong problem. It assumes success depends on making the building resemble countless others, rather than leveraging the Boyd's historic identity to create a singular destination. That reflects failure of imagination, not a failure of preservation.

Comparable historic theaters throughout the Philadelphia region demonstrate that preservation, entertainment, and commercial activity can coexist. The Bryn Mawr Film Institute, Ambler Theater, and Colonial Theatre in Phoenixville show that historic character can be an economic asset when treated as an opportunity rather than an obstacle. The former Seville Theatre in Bryn Mawr² is especially instructive: its restoration embraced historic features while introducing modern programming, allowing the building's identity to drive its success.

The Boyd possesses advantages those venues never had: a Center City location surrounded by residents, office workers, restaurants, hotels, and transit. A redevelopment strategy that embraces its identity could support a dynamic mix of retail, dining, cultural, and event uses. Instead, the current approach prioritizes conventional retail metrics, maximizing leasable area and minimizing perceived risk, over the building's public value as a designated historic landmark.

¹ Jake Blumgart, "Boyd Theatre Owners Want to Remove Historical Marquee, Angering Preservationists," *Inquirer.Com*, May 20, 2026, <https://www.inquirer.com/real-estate/commercial/boyd-theatre-marquee-historical-preservation-pearl-properties-20260520.html>.

² "Bryn Mawr Film Institute," *Voith and Mactavish Architects*, n.d., accessed June 12, 2026, <https://voithandmactavish.com/projects/bryn-mawr-film-institute/>.

What makes this proposal particularly troubling is that redevelopment has already occurred.³ The residential tower has been built, the auditorium demolished, and the site fundamentally transformed. The marquee no longer stands in the way of investment; that investment has already been realized.

The question before the Historical Commission is therefore not whether preservation will prevent redevelopment. It plainly will not. The question is whether one of the last surviving elements of a designated historic landmark should now be removed simply because a more generic retail configuration is considered preferable in the short term.

Approving this request would weaken preservation standards and set a dangerous precedent: that character-defining features may be removed incrementally, even after significant compromise has already been reached. It would signal that protections afforded to historic properties are negotiable over time, encouraging the gradual erosion of the city's architectural heritage.

The argument that the marquee lacks historic significance is equally unconvincing. Philadelphia has long recognized that signage and marquee structures contribute meaningfully to architectural character, cultural memory, and streetscape identity.⁴ Few examples are more emblematic than the Boyd's.

Removing the marquee would not revitalize the building. It would make it less distinctive, less memorable, and less connected to the history that justified its preservation in the first place. Philadelphia would lose something unique in exchange for something generic.

The Boyd Theatre has already become a cautionary tale in the city's preservation history. The Historical Commission now has an opportunity, and a responsibility, to ensure that its final chapter is not defined by the unnecessary removal of one of its most iconic surviving features.

Too much of the Boyd has already been lost. The remaining elements deserve stewardship, protection, and respect.

The marquee is not merely an architectural feature; it is one of the last public faces of a landmark that once defined downtown Philadelphia's cultural life.

The DAG Steering Committee

The Design Advocacy Group (DAG) is a public forum and advocate for design quality and equity in the planning, architecture, preservation, and physical development of Philadelphia. <https://designadvocacy.org/>

³ Michael Bencik, "The Boyd's Demise and the Philadelphia Demolition Commission," *WHYY*, April 16, 2015, <https://whyy.org/articles/the-boyd-s-demise-and-the-philadelphia-demolition-commission/>.

⁴ Jake Blumgart, "Boot & Saddle Neon Sign in South Philly Receives Historic Protection," *Inquirer.Com*, February 10, 2023, <https://www.inquirer.com/real-estate/commercial/boot-and-saddle-south-broad-street-solar-myth-20230210.html>.

Boyd

From Jennifer Marco <jjaffemarco@gmail.com>

Date Sat 8/8/2026 12:47 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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I think most importantly it is necessary to sell the property. Homeless are using the marquee as a habitat for shade and a respite from weather. It is gathering garbage and looks bleak. Keeping it lit adds no charm or relevance either.

Allowing a structure that would be welcoming and brighter and yes, more modern would negate the feeling of an isolated cave like dwelling.

It's time to sell this property as the primary incentive rather than encourage nostalgic sentiments preventing a sale.

Jennifer and Peter Marco

Center city residents at WPH

BOYD THEATER

From Tally Brennan <TallyBrennan@msn.com>

Date Sat 8/8/2026 12:49 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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There are things more important than corporate profits: there is history, culture, the visual interest and identity of neighborhoods. The Boyd Theater has a role in all these human and humanistic endeavors. It deserves to be spared and repurposed with its present street-facing marquee intact.

Talmage Brennan
1919 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia PA 19103