

**REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**TUESDAY, 25 AUGUST 2026
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
DAN MCCOUBREY, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Committee members joined him:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, Chair	X		
John Cluver, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Justin Detwiler	X		
Nan Gutterman, FAIA	X		
Allison Lukachik		X	
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Sam Weiner		X	

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner III
Kristin Hankins, Historic Preservation Planner II
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner II
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner II
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner III
Joshua Schroeder, Historic Preservation Planner II
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons were present:

Alexander Blumenthal
Anastasia Fedotova, MGA
Andy Gray
Anthony Williams III
April Easley Sudler
Ari Weber
Beth Miller
Beth Van Why, Becker & Frondorf
Brett Feldman, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Casey Furman
David Sidoti
David Traub, Save Our Sites
Gil Oh

Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Jake Blumgart
Jay Farrell
Jerry Roller, JKRP Architects
Katie Broh, MGA
LaTae Johnson
Michael Smart
Mike Buckley
Morgan Baird, College of Physicians of Philadelphia
Owen Felty
Paul Schwedelson
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Rev. Dr. April Sudler
Sara Pochedly, Toner Architects
Stephanie M. Pennypacker
Stephanie Magagna, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Stuart M. Schmidt

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 4619-25 LONGSHORE AVE

Proposal: Construct elevator addition
Review Requested: Final Approval
Owner: CDE Investments LLC
Applicant: Andy Gray, Toner Architects
History: 1908; Tacony Club; Clyde S. Adams, architect
Individual Designation: 5/10/2019
District Designation: None
Staff Contact: Ted Maust, theodore.maust@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes erecting an elevator tower at the rear of the building at 4619 Longshore Avenue, the former Tacony Club. The tower would engage the rear wall of the building through a small connector and communicate with the parking lot through a small vestibule. New openings would be created at four levels of the rear of the building, and the rear dormer would be extended to meet the tower.

The Historical Commission recently completed a conceptual review of this project. During that review, discussion by the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission focused on the impact to historic window openings and the cornice.

During those reviews, the applicants were encouraged to explore the feasibility of a connector, reducing the width of the point of connection with the rear wall. Some Commissioners expressed concern about the impact to the rear cornice but acknowledged that elevator access to the top floor may be necessary to make the redevelopment of the property financially viable and asked for additional information supporting that necessity.

The current proposal responds to the previous feedback by including a connector to avoid interfering with any of the historic window openings besides the rear dormer.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct three-story elevator tower with connector and vestibule.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - Recommended: Constructing a new addition that results in the least possible loss of historic materials so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:05:11

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architects Sara Pochedly and Andy Gray represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Stein asked for clarification of the scope of the project. She asked if the project included work beyond the elevator tower.
 - Ms. Pochedly replied that the owner is only currently planning to repair or replace the roof and reopen window openings. She stated that that work will satisfy historic preservation standards and should be able to be approved by the staff.
- Mr. Cluver asked why the architects included a limestone base on the elevator tower.
 - Mr. Gray answered that the base on the tower is designed to coordinate with the stone watertable at the base of the historic building.
 - Mr. Cluver clarified that, while the building has a stone watertable on the primary elevations, it does not continue to the rear. He suggested that, while a base or water table of some sort would be good, the tower and vestibule should be brick and not ornamented in a way that is inappropriate for a secondary façade.
 - Ms. Pochedly asked what Mr. Cluver thought about the proposed limestone band at the cornice level.
 - Mr. Cluver did not object to the proposed band.
 - Ms. Gutterman suggested using a decorative brick course there rather than stone.
 - Mr. Detwiler agreed and suggested that a contrasting color of brick could be used on that decorative band.
- Ms. Stein expressed the opinion that the connector should be masonry, specifically brick, rather than the fiber-cement cladding, at least up to the cornice. She explained that a wood element between two masonry volumes might not be durable.
 - Ms. Pochedly inquired whether Ms. Stein's comments were related primarily to aesthetics.
 - Ms. Stein agreed that her concern was aesthetic in nature.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that it is sad that the cornice of this building is not being restored as part of this project. He urged the applicant to save any cornice elements that need to be removed so that they can be used for a future restoration.
 - Mr. Gray responded that the design team also would like to restore the cornice and hopes that this project can be a first step toward making the building useful again.
- Ms. Stein circled back to ask for more information about the window restoration and wanted clarification that they would be restored to a high standard.
 - Mr. Detwiler added that the windows should match the historic appearance shown in the archival image of the building. He asked if any historic tax credits were being used for the project. He asked because that would entail an "intense" review of the window details.
 - Ms. Pochedly replied that the owner has chosen not to pursue state or federal tax credits.
- Mr. McCoubrey thanked the applicants for their work on this project. He also suggested that they produce an additional drawing, a section through the connector.
 - Mr. Detwiler agreed and also thanked the applicants. He suggested that the

section drawing would help the Historical Commission to understand the entire project if the elevations were shown in greater detail, including the windows to be installed.

- Mr. Gray noted that the applicants had recently submitted an additional section drawing of the elevator tower meeting the cornice and described it as “informational” rather than reflecting any changes from the previously submitted materials.
- Ms. Stein inquired about the hairpin fencing visible in the site photographs and whether there were plans to retain or restore it.
 - Mr. Gray responded that the applicants had determined that the hairpin fencing is not historic but that wrought-iron fencing along the Marsden Street elevation would be repaired and restored. One damaged piece may be replaced. He said the hairpin fencing would likely be replaced.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The proposed massing and location of the elevator tower is appropriate and the use of a connector minimizes impact on historic window openings.
- The use of limestone on the elevator tower and vestibule is incompatible with the all-brick rear elevation.
- The connector should be masonry construction up to the cornice line.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The elevator tower will be compatible with but differentiated from the historic building. application satisfies Standard 9.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided that the limestone areas are brick; the connector siding is brick except above the cornice; and any cornice material removed is retained; with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

ITEM: 4619-25 Longshore Ave MOTION: Approval with conditions MOVED BY: Cluver SECONDED BY: Stein					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner					X
Total	5				2

ADDRESS: 1706-10 WALNUT ST

Proposal: Construct two-story building with mezzanine and roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 1706 Walnut Street Property Holdings LLC

Applicant: Jerry Roller, JKRP Architects

History: vacant lots, buildings destroyed by fire in 2020

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

Staff Contact: Allyson Mehley, allyson.mehley@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the construction of a two-story building with mezzanine and roof deck at 1706-10 Walnut Street. Historically, this lot was three individual parcels with three-story attached buildings. The buildings were contributing resources to the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District. In May 2020, the buildings were severely damaged by fire and deemed Imminently Dangerous by the Department of Licenses and Inspections. The Historical Commission's staff approved the complete demolitions of the three buildings owing to the imminent threat to public safety in December 2020.

The proposed building is planned as two-stories of retail space with a rooftop mezzanine, deck, and elevator. The primary façade is proposed to have limestone masonry cladding, extensive window glazing, and dark bronze aluminum details. The front façade and cornice would align with the adjacent buildings. Based on the application materials, the proposed new construction would be compatible with this block of Walnut Street within the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District and this block of Walnut Street.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct a two-story building with mezzanine and roof deck.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The proposed new construction meets Standard 9 in terms of materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing and is compatible with the historic district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:24:50

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Jerry Roller, attorney Stephanie Magagna, and owner Ari Weber represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cluver inquired about the entrance on the right-hand side located in a deep

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- recess. He expressed concern about the visual impact of the setback on the overall façade design.
- Mr. Roller responded that the setback is a zoning requirement. He pointed out that the upper part of the facade and cornice carry across the full width of the façade unbroken.
 - Mr. Detwiler commented that the proposed design was a perfectly fine design for Walnut Street, but the larger question was the appropriateness of one large building replacing three historic, contributing buildings. He pointed out that although they are now lost, the buildings were part of the visual rhythm of the street. He told Mr. Roller that he appreciated and respected the proposed design but was curious about the thoughts of the other Architectural Committee members regarding the change from three buildings to one. Mr. Detwiler asked if the historic rhythm of the historic buildings be restored.
 - Ms. Magagna stated that the demolition permits were issued to the prior owner, and the site was vacant when they purchased the property. She said that they believe a building scan that was done prior to the demolition but do not have the scan or any salvaged materials. Ms. Magagna stated that they are not pursuing a restoration but are proposing new construction that complies with Standard 9.
 - Mr. Roller said that they considered the historic buildings during the design process but could not recreate three different buildings with three different floor levels from three different eras. He said that the loss of the historic buildings was unfortunate but expressed doubts that a reconstruction approach would be successful on Walnut Street today.
 - Mr. Detwiler said that he was suggesting an approach where the large width of the front façade could be broken down into components with the rhythm of the historic buildings. He contended that he was not saying that the new building cannot be different, but that the front façade could be broken down into a tripartite division rather than a single mass.
 - Mr. Roller responded that their intention was to create a hierarchy within the façade. He pointed out the heavy verticals in the design and how they help create division. Mr. Roller explained that they are dealing with the requirements of current commercial tenants, who want glass. He continued that one of the attractions of the property is that it is a rare 50-foot-wide retail space. Mr. Roller said that they looked at a variety of schemes early on, including more masonry, and really felt that it hurt the viability of the building. He said they believe they have incorporated elements that reflect the historic rhythm.
 - Mr. Detwiler asked if the building would be occupied by one or two retailers.
 - Mr. Roller responded that they believe that it will likely be two stores. He said there are no leases in place yet and, since it is retail, they require flexibility. Mr. Roller confirmed that the overall design of the façade would remain the same but the location of the central entrance doors for the retail may shift slightly depending on the occupants.
 - Ms. Stein said that she believed the proposed design was a highly appropriate insertion on this section of Walnut Street. She said she appreciated the attention to detail, the amount of masonry, the massing, and the scale. Ms. Stein commented that there was a sense of tripartite construction in the design, even though the center bay is wider. She observed that the proposed building fits into this historic district. Ms. Stein said her only request was to add a substantial cornice to the building and that this would help make the block more continuous. She concluded that she was pleased overall with the proposed design.

- Mr. Detwiler agreed with Ms. Stein's recommendation to add a cornice.
- Mr. Cluver addressed Mr. Detwiler's question about the single façade approach versus more closely recreating the historic appearance. He admitted that he also went back and forth on this question. Mr. Cluver said that, if an applicant had come forward with a scheme that was more historic in nature, he would have supported it. Mr. Cluver countered that, at the same point, the proposed design is not inappropriate for the historic district. He pointed to the existing rhythm of wider storefronts with two stories that are present in the district.
- Mr. McCoubrey said that the historic buildings were residential buildings that had been altered at the ground level to become commercial. He pointed out that, in the way the historic buildings evolved, the proposed new construction design is the next logical evolution to meet current commercial needs. Mr. McCoubrey stated he agreed that the front façade needed a stronger cornice.
- Ms. Gutterman expressed concern that, since there is no tenant has been confirmed yet, that the design could change.
 - Mr. Roller replied that they are not expecting the design to change. He said the only change may be the door locations within the central storefront windows and signage.
- Mr. Detwiler asked if the left and right ground floor entrances were similar widths.
 - Mr. Roller confirmed they were the same, noting they are symmetrical and that the only difference was that the one of the right was recessed.
- Mr. Weber stated that he had been working with Mr. Roller for approximately three years on the project. He explained that it was important to create a building that worked for the current retail market. He thanked the Committee for their feedback on the proposed design.
- Mr. Detwiler asked Mr. Farnham if the staff has the laser scan of the demolished buildings. He recommended that the scan should be incorporated into the Historical Commission's archive.
 - Mr. Farnham said he would track down the documentation of the lost buildings and make sure it was stored in an appropriate place.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, spoke in support of the application. He stated the proposed design was a restrained and well-mannered building and would fit well with the surrounding Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District. Mr. Steinke commended the use of quality materials such as limestone and bronze aluminum in the design. He agreed with the Architectural Committee's suggestion to add a cornice and observed that the proposed design would restore the height and scale of the lost buildings. Mr. Steinke complimented the current owner for going forward with the proposed design to infill this site and re-knit the fabric of Walnut Street that was destroyed by the fire. He noted that the design did a good job breaking down the facade into visually distinct parts that fit well with the surrounding streetscape. Mr. Steinke observed that the Historical Commission had required the laser scan and salvaging of historic materials for reconstruction. The requirements were documented in the minutes. He stated that the Historical Commission will need to address the requirements in some way.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites spoke in support of the application. He stated he was pleased that the building would be low scale and match the height of the adjacent buildings rather than a high-rise building. Mr. Traub agreed with the Architectural Committee that a more substantial cornice should be added to the design. He

- applauded the architect and the owner for doing the right thing on this site.
- Mr. Farnham noted that the staff approved the demolitions of the fire-damaged buildings and placed the documentation and salvage requirements on the demolition permits so that the Historical Commission would have the option of requiring a reconstruction. The Historical Commission had not reviewed the demolition permit applications and the documentation and salvage requirements were not documented in any meeting minutes.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The proposed design is compatible with the 1700 block of Walnut Street and the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District.
- A bronze or limestone cornice should be added to the front façade. The cornice should align and coordinate with the adjacent buildings.
- Documentation of the 1706-10 Walnut Street historic facades was created prior to demolition, and it should be added to the Historical Commission's archives.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application satisfies Standard 9 in terms of materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing and is compatible with the historic district.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided a bronze or limestone cornice is added to the front facade, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

ITEM: 1706-10 Walnut St					
MOTION: Approval pursuant to Standard 9					
MOVED BY: Detwiler					
SECONDED BY: Cluver					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner					X
Total	5				2

ADDRESS: 2201 PANAMA ST

Proposal: Construct fourth floor and roof deck

Review Requested: Review in Concept

Owner: Amy and Alexander Blumenthal

Applicant: Amy Blumenthal

History: 1963; Goldberg & Nauta, architects

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, Non-contributing, 2/8/1995

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a fourth-floor addition with a mansard roof and roof deck on a rowhouse at 2201 Panama Street, built in 1963 and classified as non-contributing in the Rittenhouse-Fidler Historic District. The Historical Commission approved fourth-floor additions and roof decks at 2211-13 Panama Street in 2025, 2225 Panama Street in 2019, and 2227 Panama Street in 2021. This application is for a corner property. The other houses were mid-block.

The Roofs Guideline is the standard typically invoked when reviewing rooftop additions and decks; it requires that the addition is inconspicuous from the public right-of-way to ensure that the addition does not adversely impact the public's perception of the historic building. However, in this case, the building is non-contributing, so the public's perception of it does not merit protection, so the inconspicuous standard does not apply. In this case, the preservation question is whether the proposed addition and deck have an adverse impact on the district more broadly. Additions and roof decks can be visible on non-historic buildings and new construction without adversely affecting the surrounds.

The question in this case is whether the addition and deck will adversely impact the historic district, not the building itself. The proposed addition and roof deck will visually impact the 2200 block of Panama Street and the 300 block of S. 22nd Street. Both blocks are composed of contributing buildings. The building at 2201 Panama Street is more squat than surrounding residential contributing properties. A rooftop addition at 2201 Panama Street will not add enough height to the building to impose upon the surrounding taller historic buildings. This project can be executed without negatively impacting the surrounding historic district buildings, provided the height and massing of the rooftop addition, and the placement of the roof deck is adjusted to limit the visual impact on adjacent and nearby contributing historic properties.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct a fourth-story addition
- Construct a roof deck

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The building is not historic, so no historic materials would be destroyed with the construction of the addition and deck. The height and massing of the roof addition, and the placement of the roof deck, should be adjusted to limit the visual impact on

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- adjacent and nearby contributing historic properties.
- *Roofs Guideline I Recommended: Designing rooftop additions, elevator or stair towers, decks or terraces, dormers, or skylights when required by a new or continuing use so that they are inconspicuous and minimally visible on the site and from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining historic features.*
 - The Roofs Guideline does not apply to this application because the building in question is non-contributing; there are no character-defining features at the building. The visual impact of the proposed addition and deck should be minimized to lessen the impact on contributing buildings in the vicinity.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the height and massing of the roof addition and the placement of the roof deck are adjusted to minimize to limit the visual impact on nearby contributing historic properties, with the staff to review details, pursuant to the Roofs Guideline and Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:06:33

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect David Sidoti and property owner Alexander Blumenthal represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Gutterman asked the applicant to respond to the staff's recommendation regarding the building's massing and roof deck.
 - Mr. Sidoti explained that the roof deck was designed to satisfy the zoning requirements. He expressed willingness to reduce the roof deck's size and visibility from the street.
- Ms. Gutterman continued that the proposed fourth floor is too tall and the deck is too large, overwhelming the existing structure.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked about the floor-to-ceiling height of the proposed fourth floor.
 - Mr. Sidoti said the exterior of the fourth story would be 10'-2" with a floor-to-ceiling height of 9'-6". He acknowledged that it is tall for a fourth story.
- Mr. Detwiler observed that the existing mansard roof extends below the floor line of the third story while the proposed fourth story mansard roof begins at the fourth floor level. He observed that these design decisions add unnecessary height of the proposed mansard roof.
- Ms. Stein expressed support for an addition but emphasized the importance of proper design details. She expressed support for the option that removes the existing mansard roof. She added that revising the color of the raised-seam mansard roof from black to grey would make the appearance less top heavy.
- Mr. Detwiler noted the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District is characterized by grey slate roofs, not black slate roofs.
- Ms. Gutterman urged that the architect reduce the length of the mansard roof to allow for construction of a rear third-story deck instead of one above the fourth story.
- Ms. Stein agreed that the roof deck should not be visible, which she noted is difficult to achieve on a corner property.
- Mr. McCoubrey also expressed support for the removal of the existing mansard roof, lightening the color of the new mansard roof, and reducing its height as much as possible.

- Mr. Cluver agreed that the third-story mansard should be removed.
 - Mr. Sidoti said the applicant's preference is for removal of the third-story mansard roof.
- Mr. Detwiler recommended lowering the location of the sills of the dormer windows. He pointed to a building at 24th and Delancey streets that provides a good example of a window set within a mansard roof.
- Mr. Cluver suggested brick banding between the top of the existing roof and the bottom of the proposed mansard roof.
- Mr. Cluver wondered if extending the plane of the existing buff brick facade to the fourth story would be preferable than the proposed mansard roof.
- Mr. McCoubrey opined that the proposed mansard addition creates a design relationship with the mansard roofed contributing building immediately to the south on 22nd Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites opposed the application.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- 2201 Panama Street was built in 1963 and is classified as non-contributing in the Rittenhouse-Fitler Historic District.
- This application proposes to construct a fourth-floor addition with a black standing-seam metal mansard roof and roof deck.
- Two options were presented, one retaining the existing third-story mansard roof and the other removing it.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- Owing to the height, massing, and color of the mansard roof addition, the application fails to satisfy Standard 9.
- Because the roof deck is highly visible, the application fails to satisfy the Roofs Guidelines.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

ITEM: 2201 Panama St MOTION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9 MOVED BY: Gutterman SECONDED BY: Cluver					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner					X
Total	5				2

ADDRESS: 13 LONGFORD ST

Proposal: Demolish first floor area; construct new first and second floor

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: April Easley

Applicant: Luciana Mejias, Creative Innovations Group LLC

History: 1955; Montgomery & Bishop, architects

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Greenbelt Knoll Historic District, Contributing, 6/9/2006

Staff Contact: Alex Till, alexander.till@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes demolishing approximately half of the first floor of the one-story house located at 13 Longford Street and reconstructing that portion as a larger two-story section with a rear basement level addition. The reconstructed portion will contain new roof profiles, casement windows, and doors. The entire building will be clad in new composite board-and-batten siding. The building was constructed in 1955 as part of a planned suburban development and is listed as a contributing resource to the Greenbelt Knoll Historic District. Almost all of the properties in this historic district are one-story, single-family homes that embody features of midcentury modern architecture. The building has a flat roof with large overhanging eaves and is sited on a hill with a single-story main facade facing Longford Street and an additional basement level revealed at the sides and rear as the landscape slopes downward. The front and side facades are visible from the public right-of-way on Longford Street from a high angle that also exposes much of the current roof.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Demolish approximately half the area of the existing building including the front, side, and rear walls and roof.
- Construct a larger, two-story area in place of the demolished portion with an addition at the basement level at the rear.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alterations of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*
 - The application proposes a significant amount of demolition to the building; therefore, the application does not meet Standard 2.
- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The proposed alterations to the building do not meet Standard 9. The new two-story construction destroys materials, features and spatial relationships of the building.
 - The proposed increase in size and massing overwhelms the original form and environment of the historic building and does not meet Standard 9.
- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.*
 - The proposed demolition and new construction will permanently alter the historic building's form and integrity in an irreversible manner; therefore, the application does

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not meet Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 2, 9, and 10.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:27:28

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Till presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Michael Smart and property owner April Easley represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Smart gave a brief overview of the project and its goals. He explained the intent to demolish a portion of the first floor and then to add a second story on the building.
- Mr. Cluver asked Mr. Till to briefly explain the significance of the historic district.
 - Mr. Till responded that the district was established in 2006 and was designated under Criteria that indicate that it has architectural significance for the mid-century modern style of the houses, which were designed by an important architectural firm, Montgomery and Bishop with consultation from Louis Kahn, as well as for the significance of its developer and several of its early residents. The neighborhood is a very early example of an intentionally integrated suburban development.
- Mr. Cluver commented that the application proposes some significant architectural changes to the building that would result in the loss of the original design.
- Ms. Gutterman asked if any design alternatives were considered aside from demolishing half the first floor and adding a second story.
 - Mr. Smart responded that no other design alternatives were considered. The purpose of adding the second floor is to expand bedroom space. They are also aiming to reconfigure the first-floor space to have a better kitchen and living room. He pointed out they are also adding space to the rear of the building.
- Mr. McCoubrey commented that the house is not an easy one to add on to. The proposal essentially seeks to eliminate the existing front façade. He suggested there may be a way to design additions at the rear of the property that preserve more of the original structure.
 - Mr. Smart responded that the lot is interesting and the building is positioned oddly on it. It is set lower than the street level, so from the street, a person is essentially looking down on the roof. Adding a second floor offers better sightlines and more visible front façade.
 - Ms. Gutterman responded that adding the second story is not in keeping with the designs of the houses in the district.
 - Mr. Smart added that a second story also aligns with the design of the neighboring house.
 - Ms. Gutterman commented that the neighboring two-story house is a new building.
- Mr. McCoubrey pointed out that it is difficult to tell what portions of the building are being proposed for demolition in the application drawings. He added that it would be helpful to have a full set of existing condition drawings and drawings that clearly show what is being proposed for demolition. He went on to say that the proposed application compromises the qualities of the original building.
 - Ms. Gutterman agreed that the proposed demolition will take away from the significance of the building. She added that the significance comes from the

building's size, spatial relationships, massing, and other features and this application is too drastic.

- Mr. Detwiler agreed and commented that he is not opposed to some kind of addition to the building, but the extent of demolition is too significant in this application. He stated that the Architectural Committee takes proposed demolition of any extent very seriously. He added that an addition would need to sit further back with its own footprint and allow the front with its long, low roofline to continue uninterrupted. He suggested that possibly a second-story addition that sits approximately halfway back on the existing roof could be acceptable to everyone and still allow the character of this short 1950s house to be preserved.
- Mr. Smart disagreed, explaining that the proposed changes are not really that drastic. Overall, they are proposing to demolish a small part of the house that does not constitute half of the overall building because the basement floor is being left intact. The additional story is needed for more living space for the owners. He was open to the possibility of pushing the second story back from the front of the building. He noted that the rear addition is being added for a new, more usable kitchen.
- Ms. Gutterman disagreed and responded that the proposal would drastically change the character-defining features of the building and would be an unfortunate modification to a historic resource.
- Mr. Smart asked what suggestions the Architectural Committee might have to be able to make the house a functional space for the family.
 - Ms. Gutterman questioned the definition of functional space and how much square footage was being added to the house. She commented that some house designs may not necessarily inherently fit all intended lifestyles.
 - Mr. Detwiler suggested there is a tipping point for how much additional space would be too much for a given historic resource. The scope of demolition proposed in this application is significant and the Architectural Committee would like to see less demolition. If the addition was scaled down or relocated to the rear of the house, the project would require less demolition.
 - Ms. Gutterman agreed and reiterated the early point that the drawings do not clearly indicate which portions of the existing building will be demolished or modified. Based on the proposed front elevation drawing, most of the building will be replaced.
 - Mr. Smart replied that they are only proposing to demolish the left half of the first floor and the right half and porch will remain.
 - Mr. Detwiler commented that the proposed overbuild is also taller than the first floor and the new second level should have the same or lesser ceiling height than the first.
 - Mr. Smart replied that the internal ceiling heights will be the same, but the roof adds height to the second story.
- Ms. Stein asked about the square footage of the house and the proposed additions.
 - Mr. Smart responded that they are almost exactly doubling the square footage.
 - Ms. Stein commented that she is having a hard time understanding the plans without demolition drawings. The overbuild looks to be only a portion of the new area and she asked if space will also be added on the basement level.
 - Mr. Smart explained that, along with the proposed second-story addition, they are also proposing an addition at the rear that would expand both the basement and first-floor levels in place of the existing rear deck.
 - Mr. McCoubrey suggested that, if they are adding onto the rear, then they could

also place the second story on that addition and try to avoid altering the main block of the house.

- o Mr. Smart offered to create a rendering for a future application to clarify.
- o Ms. Stein commented that the floor plan for the basement only shows the small addition on it but does not show the rest of the basement level.
- o Mr. Cluver commented that what they need to see is a full set of demolition plans and plans and elevations showing the entirety of each floor. As is, it is an incomplete submission.
- o Mr. McCoubrey agreed and stressed the need for elevation drawings along with plans.
- o Mr. Smart offered to create existing elevation drawings, demolition elevations and plans, and a three-dimensional rendering.
- o Ms. Stein suggested keeping more of the existing architectural features on the front façade. She asked if the existing first floor can be preserved and the second-floor addition pushed back.
- o Mr. Smart explained their goal with the current proposal was to enhance the view of the front of the house from the street since the current design sits so low and the neighboring house overshadows it.
- o Mr. Detwiler and Ms. Gutterman commented that the idea stands in contrast to preservation principles that aim to maintain the current character of the building.
- o Mr. McCoubrey agreed and explained that what is interesting about the design here is that the building sits so low and is screened from the street by the hedge, making it disappear until it is approached.
- o Mr. Smart agreed to take another look at the design and then submit a new application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites commented in opposition to the proposed application.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The proposed demolition of approximately half of the existing first floor of the house is too extensive and would remove character-defining features of the building.
- The proposed second story would be too visible and overwhelm the existing spatial relationships of the historic house. A smaller addition or one that is set further back from the front might be more acceptable.
- The proposed rear addition may be acceptable if the rest of the design is revised to preserve other character-defining features.
- The application lacks full demolition and current condition drawings, making it difficult to fully understand the proposed alterations.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application fails to satisfy Standard 2. It proposes a significant amount of demolition to the building.
- The application fails to satisfy Standard 9. The addition would destroy materials, features and spatial relationships of the building and the proposed increase in size and massing would overwhelm the original form and environment of the historic building.
- The application fails to satisfy Standard 10. The proposed demolition and new construction will permanently alter the historic building's form and integrity in an

irreversible manner.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 2, 9, and 10.

ITEM: 13 Longford St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Gutterman SECONDED BY: Cluver					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner					X
Total	5				2

ADDRESS: 2129 CHESTNUT ST AND 15-19 S 22ND ST

Proposal: Create new doorways; regrade paths; install cooling tower

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: College of Physicians

Applicant: Catherine Broh, MGA Partners

History: 2129 Chestnut St: 1883; Church of New Jerusalem; Theophilus P. Chandler Jr., architect. 15-19 S 22nd St: 1907; College of Physicians; Cope & Stewardson, architects

Individual Designation: 2129 Chestnut St: 9/1/1983; 15-19 S 22nd St: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fitter Historic District, Significant, 2/8/1995

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes alterations to two adjacent historic buildings, both owned by the College of Physicians, to create an accessible path between the buildings. It proposes creating a new pedestrian doorway at each building and a path through the garden connecting the new doors. The new doorway in the College of Physicians building would replace a bay window. The new doorway at the former church building would be cut in the side facade. Contemporary glass canopies would be added above both doors.

The application also proposes adding a cooling tower along the rear or S. Van Pelt Street elevation of the College of Physicians building at 15-19 S. 22nd Street. The cooling tower would be screened within a louvered aluminum enclosure with room for an additional cooling tower to be installed in the future. The cooling tower would replace the many condensers that sit along the Ludlow Street elevation of the College of Physicians building.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Create new doorways
- Regrade paths
- Install cooling tower

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 25 AUGUST 2026

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*
 - Recommended: Finding solutions to meet accessibility requirements that minimize the impact of any necessary alteration on the historic building, its site, and setting, such as compatible ramps, paths, and lifts.
 - Recommended: Designing and constructing additional entrances or porches on secondary elevations when required for the new use in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building (i.e., ensuring that the new entrance or porch is clearly subordinate to historic primary entrances or porches)
- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - Recommended: Installing a new mechanical system, if required, so that it results in the least alteration possible to the historic building and its character-defining features.
 - Recommended: Placing air conditioning compressors in a location on a secondary elevation of the historic building that is not highly visible.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:53:37

RECUSAL:

- Ms. Stein recused from the review owing to her firm's involvement in the application.

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Katie Broh and Morgan Baird of the College of Physicians represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Baird thanked the Committee and noted the College of Physicians' long history; it was founded 1787 and the current building is about 116 years old. He emphasized the importance of preserving the church building at 19 S. 22nd Street, which the College owns. The incorporation of the new building into the College's work is essential. He highlighted the need for accessibility improvements, dignified entrances, a connection between the buildings, the preservation of the historic character of both buildings, and the need for replacing aging materials.
- Ms. Broh introduced the project and highlighted the four main parts: creating accessible entrances on the south side of the College building and the north side of the church building, establishing an accessible connection between the two buildings, upgrading the fire suppression system and accessible restrooms, and adding a cooling tower on S. Van Pelt Street that will accommodate both buildings.

She noted that the code upgrades were mainly interior and therefore not subject to Historical Commission's review.

- Ms. Gutterman commented that she accepted the need for accessible entrances but was concerned about the glass canopies, owing to the amount of steel that would be needed and how they could impact the stone surrounds of both buildings. She requested assurance that the canopy load would not excessively alter the historic fabric.
 - Ms. Broh explained that steel would be required regardless to support the windows and limestone tracery above the new doors. She further noted that MGA was attempting minimal structural intervention and that brackets could possibly be slimmed further during design refinement.
 - Mr. Detwiler voiced his agreement with Ms. Gutterman, noting that the canopy detail would be critical. He opined that, visually, the masonry thickness would be reduced too much and suggested maintaining a masonry strip, using stone facing rather than metal to preserve the visual weight, and to minimize the brackets so that the historic fabric could remain more visible.
 - Ms. Broh acknowledged Mr. Detwiler's comments and agreed to develop the details further.
 - Mr. Detwiler reiterated his preference for a masonry expression to avoid the appearance that the large windows rest on a thin sliver.
 - Ms. Broh noted multiple existing openings in the church base and explained that the new opening on the church would align with an existing utility door on that facade. She agreed to refine the thickness concerns.
- Mr. Cluver asked how the canopies would drain and noted the need for a snowmelt system or equivalent to prevent dangerous freezing.
 - Ms. Broh responded that the canopies would slope away from the buildings with stainless-steel edge gutters. She noted they will coordinate the landscape and site planning to mitigate potential drainage issues.
- Mr. Detwiler commended the College for its stewardship of the church and the thoughtful campus connection proposal. He opined that the project was contextually sensitive.
- Mr. Cluver shifted the discussion to the cooling tower proposal and noted that he considered the chosen location on S. Van Pelt Street to be appropriate. He asked the applicant whether the enclosure was for aesthetics, acoustics, or both.
 - Ms. Broh responded that the enclosure would serve multiple purposes. It would be an aesthetic screen, meet airflow needs, provide moisture control, and mitigate the noise. She added that the tower was raised to avoid moisture on the historic brick and that the enclosure would use inverted aluminum louvers to obscure views and direct sound upward. She confirmed that an acoustician was consulted for detailed sound mitigation.
- Mr. Detwiler offered his support for the enclosure and acknowledged location challenges, agreeing that its proposed location would be the least impactful. He noted the nearby Frank Furness landmark and the contextual boldness of the surrounding architecture, which makes the boldness of the enclosure almost a receding quality.
 - Ms. Broh confirmed that all alternative locations were studied extensively, that rooftop placement was rejected, owing to visibility and structural impacts.
- Mr. McCoubrey thanked the applicants for such a comprehensive presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The canopy details should be refined to ensure the preservation of the historic masonry and provide an appropriate balance of structure and aesthetics.
- The drainage and safety considerations for the canopies should be addressed, including potential snowmelt solutions and detailed planning to prevent hazardous water accumulation.
- The noise generated by the cooling tower should be mitigated as much as possible.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The historic character of the property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize the property will be avoided. The application satisfies Standard 2.
- The proposed alterations will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property and will be compatible yet differentiated from the historic features. The application satisfies Standard 9.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the canopies are detailed to expose more masonry and properly drain; and that the noise generated by the cooling tower is mitigated; with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9.

ITEM: 2129 Chestnut St and 15-19 S 22nd St					
MOTION: Approval with conditions					
MOVED BY: Cluver					
SECONDED BY: Detwiler					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein				X	
Sam Weiner					X
Total	4			1	2

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:17:10

ACTION: The Architectural Committee adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and its advisory Committees are presented in action format. Additional information is available in the video recording for this meeting. The start time for each agenda item in the recording is noted.
- Application materials and staff overviews are available on the Historical Commission's website, www.phila.gov/historical.

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