

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

**TUESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 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 9:01 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
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner II
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner III
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons were present:

Alex Blumenthal
Amy Blumenthal
Eileen Molloy
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Jay Farrell
Lauren Thomsen, Lauren Thomsen Design
Phil Katz
Sherman Aronson
Stephanie M. Pennypacker
Tom Familetti
Trevor Cordivari, Lauren Thomsen Design
Zach Winters

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 2102 GREEN ST

Proposal: Demolish rear ell; construct rear addition with roof deck and pilot house

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: John C. and Margaret T. Caramanico

Applicant: Lauren Thomsen, Lauren Thomsen Design

History: 1854

Individual Designation: 5/1/1975

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, 10/11/2000, Contributing

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This in-concept application proposes alterations to the 1854 Italianate rowhouse at 2102 Green Street. An insurance survey from the time of construction describes a three-story brick dwelling house with three-story brick back building and two-story frame kitchen. Historic maps confirm the three-story rear ell. Presently, the rear ell is two stories in height, and it is unclear whether a story was removed or if the ell was rebuilt at the reduced height in the past.

The rear of the property is on Wilcox Street, a service alley lined with garages, decks, and rear additions of various sizes.

In 1980, the Historical Commission approved the replacement of the front façade owing to its structural condition. At that time, the owner was asked to restore the façade using scored stucco to simulate brownstone, utilizing 2104 or 2106 Green Street as an example for projecting sills and lintels. In 1984, the Historical Commission approved the scored stucco sample. In 1993, the Historical Commission approved a deck over the rear parking area. That deck is now in disrepair and is proposed to be reconstructed as part of this application.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Demolish rear ell.
- Construct full-width three-story rear addition.
- Construct roof deck with pilot house.
- Reconstruct deck over rear parking area.
- Construct egress window well at front façade.
- Restore front façade features

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

- *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 will 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 will be in keeping with the varied massing, scale and materials on Wilcox Street, and the front façade alterations are in keeping with the design of the adjacent property at 2104 Green Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval in concept, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:03:45

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Lauren Thomsen represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Thomsen explained that this project will return the building to single-family use, and utilizing the full width of the narrow property will allow for a more efficient layout. She clarified that the design does not use the entirety of the space allowed by the zoning. Ms. Thomsen stated that the elevator will be deleted from the design, allowing the pilot house to be reduced in size. She explained that the scope of work for the front facade is to repair the cornice and add lintel and sill detailing to make it look less like a repaired CMU wall with stucco over it. She clarified that the rear parking area is not enclosed but rather is open to the rear yard and is accessed from the first floor of the house.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the extent of the overhang on the third-floor rear addition.
 - Ms. Thomsen responded that it is a minimal overhang of 30 inches.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the extent of demolition of the rear wall of the main block. He recommended keeping as much of it as possible and encapsulating it into the new addition.
 - Ms. Thomsen agreed with this approach but cautioned that she needs to verify the condition of the wall on site.
- Ms. Gutterman expressed concern about the location of the stairs. She asked if they could be more in the addition rather than in the main block so that there is less potential for them to impact the rear wall.
 - Ms. Thomsen responded that they are trying to maintain the location of the existing stairs to reduce the amount of framing that is being impacted. She explained that the existing stairs are very steep, which will be corrected. The goal is to keep the stairs in the same location.
- Mr. Detwiler suggested that a section drawing showing how the old roof and new roof meet would be helpful for the review by the Historical Commission.
- Ms. Gutterman cautioned against the proposed front facade alterations, which may damage the existing stucco, depending on how it was installed in the 1980s.
 - Ms. Thomsen agreed that this could be a technical challenge.
- Ms. Gutterman asked about the material for the new or repaired cornice.
 - Ms. Thomsen responded that the existing cornice is wood, and new materials would be wood or a combination of wood and Boral.
- Ms. Stein said that the rear ell should be maintained because the property is individually designated. She noted that narrower rear ells allowed light and air into buildings. She commented that an additional story on the rear ell would be appropriate, as would the parking area. She opined that the amount of demolition is too much for an individually designated property. She suggested that a portion of the first floor of the existing ell could be extended out.
 - Ms. Thomsen explained that, if the rear ell is maintained, the interior space will only be 11'-6" wide, making it hard to have a corridor and any usable bedroom living space on the upper level.
- Mr. Cluver asked for more information about the relationship of the adjacent buildings relative to the addition.
- Mr. Weiner noted that the adjacent property at 2104 Green Street was recently

- renovated. He asked if the side wall of that rear ell has windows.
- Ms. Gutterman responded that Google Street View shows windows on that wall.
 - Ms. Thomsen noted that the Google Street View image is outdated, and most windows on the wall were removed as shown in her photographs included in the application.
 - Ms. Stein expressed concern about cutting off light and air to the adjacent property by expanding the rear to the full width of the property.
 - Mr. Weiner confirmed that the new rear ell side wall of the adjacent property has one visible window, and all others were removed with the renovation.
 - Mr. Weiner suggested a solution where the primary bedroom shifts to the second-floor rear, and then the third-floor steps in to emulate the rear ell width.
 - Ms. Thomsen responded that she would need to revisit the layout entirely if that were a requirement.
 - Ms. Gutterman asked for clarification on the garage.
 - Ms. Thomsen responded that it would not be an enclosed space, but rather would be three-sided, and what would be seen from Wilcox Street would still be a garage door.
 - Ms. Stein reiterated that the property is individually designated and that the Architectural Committee is reviewing the work from the outside in, rather than the inside out.
 - Mr. Detwiler opined that the Historical Commission will debate this project, and that Ms. Thomsen might want to have an alternate scheme where the rear ell is preserved. He thanked Ms. Thomsen for submitting this application as an in-concept application before requesting final approval. He suggested that the first floor could be extended out and have a roof deck on it.
 - Mr. McCoubrey observed that the rear of the property is visible from N. 21st Street, and the design of the proposed third floor may be a bit too modern.
 - Mr. Farnham cautioned the Architectural Committee against interpreting the individual designation date as a sign of great significance. He explained that, in the mid-1970s, the Historical Commission did not yet have the authority to create historic districts. To get around that limitation, it created de facto historic districts in several sections of the city including Spring Garden. He clarified that this property was not singled out and individually nominated for its great individual significance but rather was designated individually with large numbers of nearby properties, blocks at a time, to create a de facto historic district.
 - Ms. Gutterman proposed a motion of denial of the application as presented, given the number of revisions that the applicant is proposing to the pilot house and the demolition of the rear wall.
 - Ms. Stein seconded the motion but stated that she generally does not like considering motions on in-concept reviews. She stated that she prefers offering advice on in-concept applications rather than approving or denying them.
 - Mr. Detwiler suggested that the Architectural Committee provide direction on the retention or replacement of the rear ell, given the varying viewpoints expressed thus far.
 - Ms. Gutterman withdrew her motion.
 - Mr. McCoubrey commented that it matters if the side wall of the adjacent building at 2104 Green Street has windows or not.
 - Mr. Weiner responded that the fact that there appears to be just one window on that side wall now, after the renovation, supports the application as presented. He noted the one window is very close to the rear of the building, so it would still

receive light and air even if a rear addition at 2102 Green Street were constructed to the full width of the property.

- The Architectural Committee members discussed various building code requirements regarding the distance a wall may be from a window at an adjacent property.
- Ms. Lukachik recommended that the Architectural Committee take a vote on the demolition of the rear ell, given the mixed feedback the applicant has received. She stated that she would accept the demolition of the rear ell.
 - Mr. Detwiler opined that the rear ell should remain in its current form.
 - Mr. McCoubrey reiterated that rear ells are often expanded out at the first floor or even the second floor as well, where there is limited public visibility.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- Historically, the rear ell was three stories in height. Currently, the rear ell is two stories in height. Adjacent rear ells stepped in to allow light and air into the rears of buildings.
- The rear of the property is on Wilcox Street, a service alley lined with garages, decks, and rear additions of various sizes. The rear is also visible from N. 21st Street.
- The front facade of the building was reconstructed using scored stucco in 1984.
- The elevator will be removed from the scope, allowing the pilot house to be reduced in size.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The proposed alterations at the rear could be in keeping with the varied massing, scale and materials on Wilcox Street, provided an upper floor or floors of the rear ell width is maintained to satisfy Standard 9.
- The proposed front facade alterations are in keeping with the design of the adjacent property at 2104 Green Street, satisfying Standard 9.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval in concept, provided the current width of the rear ell is maintained at an upper floor or floors, and as much of the existing main block rear wall is retained as possible, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9.

ITEM: 2102 Green St MOTION: Approval in concept with conditions MOVED BY: Detwiler SECONDED BY: Gutterman					
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	7				

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-Fitler residential 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-Fitler Residential 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 Historical Commission is charged with protecting the historic district but not the building itself. 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 their surrounds.

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 are adjusted to limit the visual impact on adjacent and nearby contributing historic properties.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 22 SEPTEMBER 2026

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the addition and roof deck proposal for 2201 Panama Street at the August 2026 meeting. The proposal was withdrawn prior to the August 2026 meeting of the Historical Commission. The Architectural Committee supported removal of the existing second-story mansard roof but recommended denial of the application owing to the dark color and height of the fourth-story, standing-seam metal Mansard roof, the placement of the fourth-story windowsills, and the visibility of the roof deck.

The application has been revised with the following changes:

- The third-story Mansard roof has been eliminated.
- The façade will be painted a red brick color.
- The faux slate Mansard roof color will be grey.
- The height of the fourth story has been increased from 10'-2" to 10'-6".
- The fourth-story sills have been relocated just above the cornice.
- The three adjoining windows on the front façade of the third story have been replaced with two separate windows.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct a fourth-story addition 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 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. Changes in the proposal have increased the compatibility with the historic context. The proposal calls for painting the façade red to blend with the nearby contributing red brick buildings. The low height of the existing house and choice of a faux slate grey shingles allows for the addition of the fourth-story Mansard roof without adversely impacting the visual continuity of this area of the Rittenhouse-Fitler Residential Historic District.
- *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 roof deck railing is set back from the S. 22nd Street facade.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval in concept, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 46:10

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architects Phil Katz, Zach Winters and Eileen Molloy, and property owners Alex Blumenthal and Amy Blumenthal represented the application.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 22 SEPTEMBER 2026

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Winters reported that the 22nd Street section of the roof deck railing was relocated two feet further away from the 22nd Street facade in the newly submitted plans.
 - Mr. Katz stated that the five-foot setback from the front and rear facades was unchanged.
 - Mr. McCoubrey suggested relocating the railing along Panama Street so that it had the same setback as the railing along 22nd Street.
 - Ms. Stein agreed that moving the railings on the front and rear in an additional two feet would be wise.
 - Ms. Gutterman opined that the revised setback was insufficient.
- Ms. Stein expressed support for the massing, revised Mansard roof design, and replacement of the existing second-story Mansard roof with brick.
- Ms. Stein also suggested the proportions could be improved by lowering the cornice approximately to a point one foot above the third-story windows, reducing the height of the new Mansard roof by one foot, and incorporating shed dormers on the fourth story instead of gabled dormers.
 - Mr. Detwiler echoed support for shed dormers instead of gabled dormers. He worried that lowering the cornice might make the building appear top heavy.
 - Mr. Katz proposed enlarging the size of the third-story windows to improve the house's proportions.
- Mr. Detwiler inquired about the third-floor ceiling height.
 - Mr. Katz noted the ceiling height is 8'-6".
 - Mr. Blumenthal said the ceiling heights are already quite low.
 - Mr. Detwiler agreed.
- Ms. Blumenthal expressed support for enlarging the windows at all floors on the Panama Street and 22nd Street facades.
 - Mr. Weiner, Mr. Detwiler, Ms. Stein and Ms. Gutterman all agreed that enlarging the windows would assist in rationalizing the proportions with the proposed Mansard roof by reducing the large expanses of brick on the first to third floors.
 - Mr. Cluver suggested that the benefit of expanding the window sizes would be worth the cost.
- Mr. Cluver requested clarification regarding the location of the new cornice.
 - Ms. Stein wondered if the proposed cornice would be brick.
 - Mr. Katz replied that the proposed cornice would be brick, in response to a suggestion from the Architectural Committee at the August meeting.
 - Mr. Weiner expressed concern that no gutters appear on the plans.
 - Mr. McCoubrey suggested a wood cornice could help lessen the amount of brick in the design. Such a cornice could include an entablature board and relate more to the roof than to the brick facades.
 - Mr. Detwiler asserted that the cornice was the aspect of the design requiring the most attention. He suggested that the cornice should look like wood but could be constructed from Boral to reduce maintenance.
 - Ms. Lukachik noted that the color rendering suggested the cornice might be wood, not brick.
 - Mr. Katz agreed to amend the plans with a wood cornice and gutters.
- Mr. McCoubrey requested that the next iteration of the plans show the exposed party wall above the roofline of the rowhouse to the south of 2201 Panama Street.
 - Mr. Detwiler observed that greater attention should be paid to the construction

where the party wall of the addition meets the adjacent structure to the south as well.

- Mr. Detwiler expressed support to expose the smooth side of the Hardie plank and not the rough side.
- Mr. Detwiler suggested that there was no need for a motion, given that this is an in-concept application.
 - Mr. Blumenthal asked the Architectural Committee to clarify which of its suggestions were intended to protect the character of the historic district and which were intended to improve the design of the non-contributing house itself.
 - Mr. Detwiler responded that most of the suggested changes are intended to improve the compatibility of the design with the historic district. He continued that the eccentric design aspects of the existing house make maximizing compatibility with the historic district difficult.
 - Ms. Gutterman declared that the changes that the Architectural Committee are requiring to protect the historic district are the modification to the railing on Panama Street and the revision of the design of the cornice while the proposed changes to the sizes of the windows are optional.
 - Mr. Blumenthal noted a desire to enlarge the windows in order to provide more natural light inside the house. He remarked that visible roof deck railings would not diminish his appreciation of the neighborhood's historic character.
 - Ms. Gutterman objected to adding elements such as the railing above the Mansard roof, which is intended to "crown" the top of the building.
 - Mr. McCoubrey observed that the proposed changes to 2201 Panama Street would increase its compatibility with the district, but that the visible roof deck railing would detract from that compatibility.
 - Mr. Krasnoff replied that there is no concern for the impact of the roof deck upon 2201 Panama Street, because it is non-contributing. The roof deck's public visibility should be minimized to limit its effect on the surrounding historic district.
- Ms. Stein reiterated her desire for a change from the proposed gabled dormers to shed dormers because shed dormers are more in keeping with the historic context.
- Mr. Detwiler noted that it is likely that many roof decks on contributing buildings in the historic district were constructed prior to the creation of the historic district.
- Ms. Stein thanked the applicants for their diligence in working with the Architectural Committee.
- Mr. McCoubrey stated that the Architectural Committee would not consider a motion. The Architectural Committee's advisory comments are sufficient for an in-concept application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The building at 2201 Panama Street, built in 1963, is classified as non-contributing in the Rittenhouse-Fitler Residential Historic District.
- 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.
- At its August 2026 meeting, the Architectural Committee supported removal of the existing second-story mansard roof but recommended denial of the application,

owing to the dark color and height of the fourth-story, standing-seam metal Mansard roof, the placement of the fourth-story windowsills, and the public visibility of the roof deck.

- The applicant submitted plans that had been revised to increase compatibility with the historic district. The changes included relocating some of the roof deck railing, changing the material and color of the Mansard roof, adding a brick cornice, changing the design and location of the windows on the Mansard roof, changing the fenestration of the third story, and painting the building red.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- For the design to be compatible with the historic district, the applicant should consider relocating the railing facing Panama Street and perhaps on the rear an additional two feet back from the facade, changing the design of the cornice from brick to wood or a wood substitute, clarifying the design of the exposed fourth-story party wall, amending the design of the gabled dormers to shed dormers, and using flat clapboards instead of textured clapboards on the dormers.
- To improve the building's proportions, the applicant should consider lowering the Mansard roof approximately one foot to reduce the amount of exposed brick and/or enlarging the existing windows.

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:18:51

ACTION: The Architectural Committee adjourned at 10:20 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.