

**THE MINUTES OF THE 727TH STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**FRIDAY, 10 MARCH 2023, 9:00 A.M.
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
ROBERT THOMAS, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:00:00

Mr. Thomas, the Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and announced the presence of a quorum. The following Commissioners joined him:

Commissioner	Present	Absent	Comment
Robert Thomas, AIA, Chair (Architectural Historian)	X		
Donna Carney (Philadelphia City Planning Commission)	X		.
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., Committee on Historic Designation Chair (Historian)	X		
Mark Dodds (Department of Planning and Development)	X		
Erin Kindt (Department of Public Property)	X		
Sara Lepori (Commerce Department)	X		
John P. Lech (Department of Licenses & Inspections)	X		
John Mattioni, Esq.	X		
Dan McCoubrey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Architectural Committee Chair (Architect)	X		
Stephanie Michel (Community Organization)	X		
Jessica Sánchez, Esq. (City Council President)		X	
Kimberly Washington, Esq. (Community Development Corporation)	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
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner III
Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner II
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner I
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner I
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner I
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner I
Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department
Maggie White, Esq., Law Department

The following persons attended the online meeting:

Calvin Williams
Elizabeth Milroy
Conor Corcoran, Esq., Overbrook Farms Club

Judith Robinson
Nathan Farris, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Leah Silverstein, Preservation Alliance
Sister Antoinette Marie Walker, Visitation Sisters
Sean Farrell
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society
Nancy Pontone
Brett Feldman, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Ian Toner
Carey Jackson Yonce, CANNO design
Nick Kraus, Heritage Consulting Group
Elena Laskin
Cynthia Dutwin
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Allison Weiss, SoLo Germantown RCO
Susan Wetherill
Matthew McClure, Esq., Ballard Spahr
J.M. Duffin
Frank Dalicandro
Kimberly Haas, Hidden City
Michael Boscaino
Sherman Aronson
Mary McGettigan, West Philadelphia Plan and Preserve
Livia Luan
Michael LaFlash
Thomas Larkin
Grace Lange
James Saile
Shekhem't Amenta Shepsut
Michael Martin
David Traub, Save Our Sites
Jay Farrell
Tracey Pachman
Lori Salganicoff, Chestnut Hill Conservancy
Lewis Fiorelli
Jordan Gravely
Lily Berry
Libbie Hawes
Nathan Farris, Esq., Ballard Spahr
Ian Kosten
Steven Peitzman
Chris Carickhoff
Rich Leimbach
Dennis Carlisle
Lynnae Schwartz
Juliet Whelan
Dave Aquadro
Wadell Ridley, St. Joseph's University
David Fecteau, Planning Commission
Beth Johnson
Suzanne Ponsen

ADOPTION OF MINUTES, 726TH STATED MEETING, 10 FEBRUARY 2023

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:05:20

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Thomas asked the Commissioners, staff, and members of the public if they had any suggested additions or corrections to the minutes of the preceding meeting of the Historical Commission, the 726th Stated Meeting, held 10 February 2023. No comments were offered.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to adopt the minutes of the 726th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held 10 February 2023. Ms. Washington seconded the motion, which was adopted by unanimous consent.

ITEM: Adoption of the Minutes of the 726th Stated Meeting of the PHC					
MOTION: Adoption of minutes					
MOVED BY: Thomas					
SECONDED BY: Washington					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

CONTINUANCE REQUESTS

ADDRESS: 8835 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: Julia Hebard Marsden House

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Chestnut Hill Hospital LLC

Nominator: Chestnut Hill Conservancy

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the former Julia Hebard Marsden residence and stable, two buildings on the Chestnut Hill Hospital campus, at 8835 Germantown Avenue and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the buildings satisfy Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J.

Under Criteria C and D, the nomination argues that the house and stable are representative examples of the Colonial Revival “country houses” that appeared in Chestnut Hill following the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. Under Criterion E, the nomination contends that the buildings were designed by the nationally significant and Philadelphia-born architect Charles Barton Keen. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the residence and stable contributed to the neighborhood’s status as an elite residential enclave at the turn of the twentieth century.

Temple University Health System, Redeemer Health, and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine have formed a consortium and are attempting to purchase Chestnut Hill Hospital from Tower Health, the current owner. Tower Health and the hospital have faced significant financial challenges in recent years and the sale may prevent the closure of the facility, which provides essential services to the community.

The nominator, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, and the property owner’s attorney have been discussing a possible compromise that would reduce the extent of the designation, allowing the non-profit hospital to expand in the future with fewer constraints. Correspondence between the nominator and the hospital is included.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the site at 8835 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J. The staff also recommends that the Historical Commission seek a compromise designation that would allow the not-for-profit health care provider, which provides essential services to the community, to reuse the site effectively while protecting and preserving the most important historic resources at the site.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the Julia Hebard Marsden House at 8835 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, with the boundary amended to exclude the large non-historic parking garage structure.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:06:10

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Historical Commission.
- No one represented the continuance request.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to continue the review of the nomination for 8835 Germantown Avenue to the April 2023 meeting of the Historical Commission. Ms. Washington seconded the motion, which was adopted by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 8835 Germantown Ave. Continuance Request MOTION: Continue to April 2023 meeting of the Historical Commission MOVED BY: Thomas SECONDED BY: Washington					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

ADDRESS: 775 S CHRIS COLUMBUS BLVD

Name of Resource: Piers 38 and 40 South

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Pier 38-40 LLC

Nominator: Keeping Society

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the Southwark Municipal Piers 38 and 40, located at 775 S. Christopher Columbus Boulevard, as historic and list the property on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the piers, constructed between 1914 and 1915, satisfy Criteria for Designation A, C, D, H, and J. Under Criteria A and J, the nomination argues that the piers represent the establishment and enlargement of the Port of Philadelphia as a municipal program to spur commercial activity through the creation of a system of municipal piers along the Delaware River waterfront. Under Criteria C and D, the nomination contends that the piers represent an era of civic architecture inspired by the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and possess distinguishing characteristics of the Beaux Arts style of architecture. Under Criterion H, the nomination states that the massive piers form an established and familiar visual feature of the Southwark neighborhood, the City of Philadelphia, and the Delaware River.

The staff notes that the nomination would benefit from some editing and fact checking. The staff corrected some obvious errors, for example revising the name of Mayor Blankenburg's director of the Department of Public Works, who was Morris Cooke, not Frederick Winslow Taylor, on page 34. Other errors remain; for example, the statement on page 26 that the Benjamin Franklin Parkway was planned as early as 1906 and the groundbreaking took place in 1917 is incorrect.

Planning, in fact, began in the nineteenth century and the official groundbreaking, the demolition of some houses in the boulevard's path, occurred in 1907.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 775 S. Christopher Columbus Boulevard satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, H, and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:06:30

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the continuance request to the Historical Commission.
- No one represented the continuance request.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to continue the review of the nomination for 775 S. Christopher Columbus Boulevard to the July 2023 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. Ms. Washington seconded the motion, which was adopted by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 775 S. Christopher Columbus Blvd. Continuance Request					
MOTION: Continue to July 2023 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation					
MOVED BY: Thomas					
SECONDED BY: Washington					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 21 FEBRUARY 2023

CONSENT AGENDA

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:07:30

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Thomas asked the Commissioners, staff, and public for comments on the Consent Agenda. No comments were offered by the Commissioners or staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Bonita Cummings requested that the Historical Commission remove 3135-49 W. Montgomery Avenue from the Consent Agenda.

ACTION: Mr. Thomas moved to adopt the recommendation of the Architectural Committee for the application for 7028 Ridge Avenue. Ms. Washington seconded the motion, which was adopted by unanimous consent.

ITEM: Consent Agenda					
MOTION: Approve Consent Agenda with 7028 Ridge Ave.					
MOVED BY: Thomas					
SECONDED BY: Washington					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DHCD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 123 N VAN PELT ST

Proposal: Construct four-story addition and roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Gerald Gordon

Applicant: Ian Kosten, Kosten Expediting, LLC

History: 1880

Individual Designation: 4/28/1970

District Designation: None

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to demolish the full rear wall and first and partial second-story extensions of the three-story building and to construct a four-story addition with a large pilot house and roof deck. The building was constructed circa 1880 as part of a row of three-story, two-bay wide buildings with mansards. The proposed addition would extend in height and depth beyond the additions of the neighboring buildings to the north and south, both of which are visible from Race Street. Rather than aligning with the existing floor levels, the addition is offset, creating split levels and a large overbuild of the rear and roof. The addition would be clad in concrete board and feature large casement and fixed windows, as well as a recessed second-floor balcony with a glass railing. The two-tier roof deck would be surrounded by a concrete board parapet, and condensing units would be located near the front of the main roof. While other properties on the block have larger rear additions, none extend up and over the height of the main block.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Demolish rear wall and existing extensions.
- Construct four-story addition with pilot house and roof decks.

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 will be differentiated from the old but compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The proposed addition removes the whole rear wall of the existing historic building, failing to comply with Standard 9.
 - o The proposed scale, proportion, and massing alters the spatial relationships that characterize the building and its surroundings, failing to satisfy Standard 9.
 - o While other properties on the block have larger rear additions, none extend up and over the height of the main block. The staff suggests that a three-story rear addition that aligns with the height of the existing building would be more appropriate.
- *Roofs Guideline | 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.*
 - o The proposed decks and stair tower overwhelm the existing building and will be conspicuous from the public right-of-way. Although the application includes a line-of-

sight drawing that indicates the addition will not be visible from directly across the street, it does not take into consideration views from down the block or from Race Street. The application fails to comply with the Roofs Guideline.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial as proposed, but approval of a three-story addition that aligns with the height of the existing building and depth of neighboring buildings, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to deny the application as proposed, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:10:35

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the application to the Historical Commission.
- Architect Juliet Whelan, builder Michael Heinzer, and property owner Gerry Gordon represented the application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- Eliminating the roof deck, pilot house, and overbuild significantly addressed the concerns of the Architectural Committee.
- The proposed addition is not meaningfully visible from the public right-of-way.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- Moving the proposed condenser unit back would ensure that the appearance of the front façade was unchanged, satisfying Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to approve the revised application, provided the condenser unit is moved farther back on the roof, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guideline. Ms. Carney seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 123 N Van Pelt St MOTION: Approval of revised design MOVED BY: Mattioni SECONDED BY: Carney					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

ADDRESS: 1703 MOUNT VERNON ST

Proposal: Construct roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Thomas Larkin

Applicant: Elizabeth Johnson, Brighton Architecture + Design LLC

History: 1859

Individual Designation: None

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

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a roof deck and pilot house at 1703 Mt. Vernon Street, a rowhouse and contributing property in the Spring Garden Historic District. The proposed location of the roof deck is at the front of the property facing Mt. Vernon Street. Currently there are no roof decks located at the front of properties on this block or in the immediate vicinity. The roof deck would maintain the required five-foot setback from the street mandated by the zoning code, which would be in addition to the existing two-foot overhang of the property's cornice. The applicant contends that, if the deck appears visible at this seven-foot setback, the size of the deck will be reduced, and the setback increased at time of construction. The proposed pilot house would be a 6' x 6' x 10' structure built over an existing roof hatch where a spiral staircase would then be installed.

SCOPE OF WORK

- Construct 20' x 18'8" roof deck, including a 6' x 6' x 10' pilot house, and new interior spiral stair to access the 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 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.*
- *Section 6.10.c.6 of the Commission's Rules & Regulations: "The staff shall review and may approve without referral to the Architectural Committee and the Commission permit applications proposing:...the alteration of secondary elevations and site features that face service alleys and/or are not visible or have limited visibility from public rights-of-way."*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends denial as proposed but approval of a roof deck that is pulled back further from the front façade or located on the rear ell of the property, pursuant to Standard 9 and Section 6.10.c.6 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations.

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

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:33:30

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the application to the Historical Commission.
- Architect Elizabeth Johnson and owner Thomas Larkin represented the application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The roof deck proposal did not comply with the Roofs Guidelines.
- Other roof decks on this block are located on rear ells.
- A roof deck located on the rear ell of this property could be visible from 17th Street.
- Being inconspicuous from the public right-of-way should be the goal even if that means approving a deviation from the Roof Guidelines.
- The pilot house could be lowered, and the deck could be reconfigured.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The deck should be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way.
- The Historical Commission's staff can review a deck mockup onsite, to guarantee that there will be no visibility from the public right-of-way.

FAILED MOTION: Mr. McCoubrey moved to deny the revised application, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Roofs Guidelines. Ms. Michel seconded the motion, which failed by a vote of 3 to 8.

ITEM: 1703 Mount Vernon St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: McCoubrey SECONDED BY: Michel					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair		X			
Carney (PCPC)		X			
Cooperman		X			
Dodds (DPD)		X			
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)		X			
Lech (L&I)		X			
Mattioni		X			
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington		X			
Total	3	8			1

ACTION: Mr. Lech moved to approve the revised application, provided the overall height of the pilot house is reduced, with the staff to review details and a mockup, pursuant to Standard 9. Mr. Mattioni seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 10 to 1.

ITEM: 1703 Mount Vernon St MOTION: Approval, provided reduction of pilot house height and staff mockup MOVED BY: Lech SECONDED BY: Mattioni					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey		X			
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	10	1			1

ADDRESS: 7028 RIDGE AVE

Proposal: Subdivide parcel; construct three-story four-unit building

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 7028 Ridge Avenue LLC

Applicant: Christopher Carickhoff, Studio C Architecture LLC

History: 1850; rear addition replaced 2000

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Ridge Ave Roxborough Historic District, Contributing, 10/12/2018

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to subdivide the parcel at 7028 Ridge Avenue and construct a three-story, four-unit building on the subdivided vacant lot. No work is proposed for the historically designated building on the property. The rear addition of the historic building dates to 2000 according to zoning permit documents. The new building would not connect to nor touch the historic building, nor does it block character-defining features of the historic building. The design of the new construction is industrial in style, and the new building would be located along a section of Ridge Avenue that features numerous architectural styles.

The Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic Historic District was designated in 2018 with the goal of protecting the oldest buildings on a five-mile stretch of Ridge Avenue, which resulted in the designation of 188 individual properties. The purpose of the thematic historic district was not to strictly regulate new construction. Because this new building neither alters or removes historic fabric of the designated parcel nor block views of character-defining features of the building, the staff recommends approval.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct three-story four-unit building on subdivided parcel.

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 shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The proposed work is completely detached from the historic resource and therefore does not destroy historic materials which characterize the property. The new building is differentiated from the old and is compatible with the overall variety of architectural styles on Ridge Avenue, satisfying Standard 9.

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

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standard 9, provided:

- A west elevation drawing that includes red brick on this elevation is submitted for the Historical Commission's review;
- A base or water table is incorporated into the façade which extends under the front entranceway;
- The material on the side elevations is changed from vinyl to a fiber cement panel system
- Window frame details are reconsidered to be consistent; and,

- Paneling in lieu of glazing is used on the bottom of the second and third-floor front façade windows.

ACTION: See Consent Agenda.

ADDRESS: 3135-49 W MONTGOMERY AVE

Proposal: Construct 14 townhouses

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 3135-49 Montgomery Ave LLC

Applicant: Carey Jackson Yonce, CANNO Design

History: 1907; Temple Beth Israel; Sauer & Hahn; Demolished after roof collapse in 2020

Individual Designation: None

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

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct 14 townhouses on a vacant site. The Historical Commission designated the property in July 1993 for the synagogue building that stood on the site. The synagogue, Temple Beth Israel, was designed by the architectural firm of Sauer & Hahn and completed in 1907. The large domed roof of the building collapsed in 2020. The Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) declared the building Imminently Dangerous on 1 August 2020 and then demolished the building to abate the public safety hazard in late 2020. At the time, L&I reported to the Historical Commission that the framing of the collapsed roof was pushing outward on the exterior walls of the synagogue along Morris Street and Montgomery Avenue and the remaining building needed to be demolished immediately in the interest of public safety. Since the demolition, the staff suggested that the property owner apply to have the designation of the site rescinded because the resource has been lost but the owner has not submitted such an application to date. The application must be reviewed because the site remains designated, but there are no historic resources at the site for the Commission to protect.

The application proposes to construct 14 townhouses on the empty lot. The Historical Commission and advisory Architectural Committee are charged with applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties to building permit applications. The Standards assert that new construction should be compatible with the site and its environment. Given that no historic resources exist at the site and that the site is not in a historic district listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, there is no basis for the Historical Commission and Architectural Committee to assess the compatibility of the proposed new townhouses with the site and its environment. The Historical Commission should decline to review the application on its merits and simply approve it as submitted.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct 14 townhouses.

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 shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

- o The Historical Commission and Architectural Committee have no basis for judging the differentiation and compatibility of the townhouses with their site and environment because no historic resources have been identified at the site or in its environment.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends approval.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:04:00

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Historical Commission.
- Architect Carey Jackson Yonce represented the application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Bonita Cummings of Strawberry Mansion Community Concern, a Registered Community Organization, objected to the demolition of the historic building and stated that the proposed buildings do not replicate the lost structure. She stated that the historic building should have been repaired rather than demolished. It was rare and cannot be replaced. It should have been used for housing.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society stated that property owners should be required to provide mitigation when the allow designated buildings to deteriorate to the point that they need to be demolished.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites stated that the proposed development is well designed. The houses are clad in brick, not metal panels. The windows are well proportioned.
- Calvin Williams stated that someone must be held accountable for the loss of the historic building. He stated that the proposed buildings are not compatible with the neighborhood. The historic buildings are set back from the street and have porches. He stated that the Historical Commission would not allow this to happen in Chestnut Hill or Society Hill. He stated that he loves Strawberry Mansion and all of Philadelphia. He asked for help protecting his neighborhood.
 - o Mr. Thomas and Ms. Washington offered the Historical Commission's services to the community.
 - o Mr. Farnham invited Mr. Williams and anyone else from the community to contact him to discuss opportunities to collaborate to preserve historic resources in Strawberry Mansion.
- Allison Weiss of SOLO/Germantown stated that she supports the community members.
- Michael Bosciano stated that the proposed buildings will improve the neighborhood and its real estate values.
- Judith Robinson of the 32nd Democratic Ward stated that the neighborhood is historic and needs to be protected in the way that the Diamond Street Historic District and the Henry O. Tanner House is protected.
- Suzanne Ponsen, the president of West Central Germantown Neighbors Association, stated that she is in support of maintaining the area as a historic district.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The Department of Licenses and Inspections declared the historic building at 3135-49 W. Montgomery Avenue Imminently Dangerous on 1 August 2020 and then demolished the building to abate the public safety hazard in late 2020. Stuff
- No historic resources exist at the site.
- There is no legal basis for the Historical Commission to request amendments to or to deny this application.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- It was obligated to approve the application, as there are no historic resources at the site to protect.

ACTION: Mr. Mattioni moved to approve the application. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 7 to 2 with 2 abstentions.

ITEM: 3135-49 W Montgomery Ave					
MOTION: Approval					
MOVED BY: Mattioni					
SECONDED BY: McCoubrey					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman			X		
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)		X			
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel		X			
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington			X		
Total	7	2	2		1

ADDRESS: 4241 MAIN ST

Proposal: Legalize alterations to front façade

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Michael P. Boscaino

Applicant: Michael P. Boscaino

History: 1850

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Main Street Manayunk Historic District, Contributing, 12/14/1983

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to legalize recent façade alterations to 4241 Main Street. These alterations include the replacement of older aluminum siding with vinyl siding, capping of building and storefront cornices and window frames, window replacement, and the installation of exterior lighting and cameras. This work was conducted without building permits or the

Historical Commission's approval, and the Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation in early November 2022 at the Historical Commission's request. Photographs from the time of designation show that aluminum siding was present on the building prior to its designation in 1983. Photographs from the applicants and taken by staff in late 2022 show that the siding was briefly removed, exposing brick and stone details underneath, as well as Italianate building and storefront cornices, which were then covered in siding and additional capping. Pairs of double doors were installed in the storefront window openings, and the second-floor bay and third-floor windows were also capped. It is unclear whether the upper floor windows themselves were replaced as well.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Legalize exterior façade alterations including siding replacement, capping of cornices and window frames, window replacement, and installation of lighting and cameras.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Main Street Manayunk review criteria restated in the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations include:

- *Section 6.9.b.2: Facings: Refacing of facades, bays, cornices with inappropriate materials such as aluminum siding, or brick veneer shall be prohibited. Existing inappropriate facade facings shall be removed at the termination of the useful life of the facing. Any inappropriate facing material lawfully in existence shall not be repaired or altered in any substantial manner.*
 - o The existing inappropriate façade facing was removed at the termination of its useful life and refaced using an inappropriate material in vinyl siding.
- *Section 6.9.b.3: Elements: Original window and door openings, sills, lintels, and sashes shall be retained and repaired whenever possible. Replacement elements shall match the original appearance in proportion, form, and materials as closely as possible.*
 - o Replacement windows do not match the sash form of the original windows.
 - o Capping covers original window frames.
- *Section 6.9.b.4: Storefronts: Original existing storefronts contributing to the character of the district shall be retained and repaired. New storefronts shall be compatible with the proportion, form and materials of the original building.*
 - o The storefront alterations are not compatible with the materials of the original building.

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.*
 - o The siding and cornice capping covers and obscures the historic character of the property.
 - o The new windows and window capping alter original features and historic character.
- *Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
 - o The new windows and frame capping do not match the old in appearance or materials.

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The siding, windows, and capping are incompatible with the architectural features of the property.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the legalization of recent exterior work including siding replacement, capping of cornices and window frames, window replacement, and installation of lighting and cameras pursuant to the Main Street Manayunk review criteria and Standards 2, 6, and 9.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to the Main Street Manayunk review criteria and Standards 2, 6, and 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:43:25

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Till presented the application to the Historical Commission.
- Property owner Michael Boscaino represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Boscaino explained the alterations made to the property and emphasized that no structure was altered during the project. He stated that damage due to a car accident necessitated the siding on the building be replaced. He pointed out the current poor condition of the covered cornices. He offered to change out the current first-floor windows to a more appropriate option as a compromise.
 - o Mr. Thomas responded that he is empathetic to the applicant's current situation but emphasized that a business and property owner is responsible for knowing about permitting requirements and the obligations for a building in a historic district. He clarified that the applicant does not have drawings submitted as part of his proposal.
- Mr. Boscaino explained that he submitted images of the types of windows he is considering for replacements for the first floor. He compared the windows to those on a neighboring property. He also pointed out that he is aware of the issue of the alternations being performed without permits and was mistaken in not realizing they were needed at the start of the project.
 - o Mr. Thomas responded that the permit issue is the focus of the Department of Licenses and Inspections. The Historical Commission is focused on the building itself and the changes made to it. He emphasized that the Historical Commission's responsibility is to ensure that the building fits well within its district and that it holds all property owners to the same standards.
- Mr. Mattioni asked for clarification if the owner would be able to meet with Historical Commission's staff to determine how to bring the property into compliance.
 - o Mr. Thomas agreed that the applicant could meet with the staff to go over the specific changes made and have them give him design advice. He added that the Historical Commission usually sees more polished designs submitted with applications and they may have a hard time parsing the applicant's proposal and understanding what has happened.

- o Mr. Boscaino added that he had spoken with the staff and his objective here is to have the siding changes legalized while offering to change out the existing windows to try to achieve a better storefront look. He added that if he needs to go back to the staff and discuss ideas to remove everything, he will want to appeal that decision.
- Mr. Thomas asked if the siding was added to the building before it was designated as historic.
 - o Mr. Boscaino replied that he does not know when the siding was first installed. He purchased the property with siding on it.
- Mr. Till clarified that the Historical Commission's staff has met with the applicant several times and had trouble finding a compromise for the siding because the Main Street Manayunk review criteria in the Commission's rules and regulations specifically limits siding replacement. Based on the regulations, the only solutions that the staff could approve were more extensive than the applicant was willing to pursue. He added that details for the changes were discussed and further clarified that the existing siding was present on the building at the time of designation in 1983, but the staff could not determine the exact date that it was first installed.
- Mr. Farnham added that the staff and the applicant have had several meetings together and the reason why this project is being presented to the Historical Commission is that they could not find a compromise that the staff could approve.
- Mr. Thomas clarified that the current application is for legalization of the current state of the building.
- Ms. Carney asked for the staff's recommendation to bring the property into compliance.
 - o Mr. Till replied that the staff did not have a recommendation to bring the property into compliance since they were limited by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Main Street Manayunk review criteria. Based on them, the only way to bring the property into compliance would be for the siding to be removed and the façade restored. The Main Street Manayunk Review criteria specifically state that preexisting siding is to be removed at the end of its useful life.
 - o Mr. Thomas added that siding removal is an opportunity for a masonry facade to be restored.
- Mr. Boscaino emphasized that the first floor of the building does not have brick beneath the siding like the upper floors do. He explained that the first floor would have to be designed anew and that he does not have the funding to perform such restorations. He emphasized that his current application is for legalization of the current siding and to replace the current first-floor windows.
 - o Mr. Thomas highlighted the building to the right of the applicant's building. He explained it is very common for these first-floor storefronts to be of wood construction with the floors above being brick.
- Ms. Kindt explained that she understands the financial issues related to the project and added that the windows on the first floor stand out to her as the most obvious aspect that needs to be changed. She suggested the Historical Commission put an extended timeframe on any potential restoration project instead of requiring immediate changes to help mitigate the applicant's financial concerns.
 - o Mr. Boscaino responded that his proposal as presented is to replace the first-floor windows and he is prepared to proceed with that immediately.
- Mr. McCoubrey reminded everyone that many Main Street buildings had been neglected and covered with siding when it was designated. There has been a

gradual process of restoring the original facades in the district. He pointed out that in the designation photograph, some neighboring properties had covered cornices, which have since been uncovered and restored. Mr. McCoubrey stated that it is clear that the cornices on the applicant's property are intact, though damaged, and would be capable of being restored. In his opinion, a compromise of only switching out the first-floor windows would not be appropriate and that he would like to see an understanding from the applicant for the gradual restoring of the cornices, even if that is a longer-term project. He added that he and the Architectural Committee found it impossible to recommend the legalization of the vinyl sidings and coverings.

- Mr. Thomas added that a replacement in kind would normally mean using an original material. An alteration involving the removal of siding offers a chance to bring the original appearance back, even if it is done incrementally.
- Mr. Boscaino commented that he intends to file an appeal, owing to his financial state. He added that he understands the Historical Commission's comments, but he has worked so far within his means and is looking for a compromise. He stated that he simply will not remove the siding, although he is willing to look into replacing inappropriate doors and windows. He added that the inspector who examined the work indicated that he was willing to clear the violation, as long as the Historical Commission approved it first. He stated that, if the decision is to remove the siding, he plans on appealing.
 - o Mr. Thomas responded that that course of action is an option for the applicant, but he also pointed out that there are funding sources that focus on historic façade restorations. If the issue is financial, resources are available to assist. Organizations in Manayunk have worked for some time to assist small business owners in getting financial assistance for such work.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Steven Pietzman commented that he lives nearby in East Falls and therefore has a thorough understanding of Main Street Manayunk. He supported the idea of a gradual restoration of the original appearance. He pointed out that the cornices are still extant. He stated that he would be uncomfortable if the Historical Commission allowed the siding to remain.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The applicant performed alterations on the property without the Historical Commission's approval or a building permit and is seeking to legalize these changes.
- There is no way to legalize the alterations based on the relevant standards and review criteria.
- The facades on Main Street in Manayunk have been gradually restored over time since the historic district was designated.
- The original cornices and other building features are intact beneath the siding but need restoration.
- The compromise presented by the applicant to change the first-floor windows is not an acceptable solution on its own and that a gradual restoration of the façade would be a potentially acceptable solution.
- The applicant claimed that he has a hardship and intends to appeal any decision to deny the legalization of the work as presented.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The revised application does not satisfy Standards 2, 6, and 9.
- The revised application does not satisfy the Main Street Manayunk Review Criteria as stated in Sections 6.9.b.2, 6.9.b.3, and 6.9.b.4 of the Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations.

ACTION: Mr. McCoubrey moved to deny the application, pursuant to the Main Street Manayunk review criteria and Standards 2, 6, and 9. Mr. Lech seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 11 to 0.

ITEM: 4241 Main St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: McCoubrey SECONDED BY: Lech					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

ADDRESS: 2118 PINE ST

Proposal: Construct roof deck

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Lynnae Schwartz and Leslie Serchuck

Applicant: Sean Farrell, Bellweather Design Build

History: 1865

Individual Designation: None

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

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application seeks approval to remove the existing deck at 2118 Pine Street and construct a new roof deck of similar plan and dimensions. The building stands at the corner of Pine Street and S. Van Pelt Street and has a mansard roof.

The existing deck was constructed in 2004 with a building permit that was issued by the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I), but without referral to or review by the Historical Commission. Once L&I's error was discovered, the permit was revoked, and the application was referred to the Historical Commission for review. Owing to L&I's mistake and the fact that the deck was already under construction, the Historical Commission approved the deck with the

conditions that it be set back five feet from Pine Street and have an open metal picket rail fence.

The deck constructed under the unusual circumstances in 2004 now needs to be replaced. The question for the Historical Commission is whether the property owner has a vested right in a deck that may not meet preservation standards. The Architectural Committee recommended denial of the deck, and suggested that the Historical Commission review the current proposal as though it is a new deck, applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. The Committee suggested improvements to the design, including limiting the deck to the rear ell, thus eliminating the mechanical room and six-foot wall that surrounds it, eliminating the thick wood posts with a more delicate metal picket system, and eliminating the plantings at the front of the main block roof.

Following the Architectural Committee meeting, the applicants made minor changes to the proposed design, including changing the material of the mechanical room surround, which had not been discussed at the Committee meeting; changing the thick wood posts of the railing, and eliminating the plantings at the front of the main block roof. No changes, however, have been made to the footprint of the proposed deck or the height of the mechanical room.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Remove existing deck and construct new deck.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

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

- *Roofs Guideline | 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.*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the proposed deck fails to satisfy the Roofs Guideline because the deck will not be inconspicuous and minimally visible from the public right-of-way. The staff suggests that the Architectural Committee also apply the standard review criteria when formulating its recommendation and leave the broader question regarding vested rights to the Historical Commission.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial as proposed, pursuant to the Roofs Guideline.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:08:00

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the application to the Historical Commission.
- Architect Sean Farrell and owner Lynnae Schwartz represented the application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Neighbor David Traub opposed the elevated portion of the deck on the rear extension.
- Oscar Beisert suggested that the railing reflect the roof cresting.
- Neighbor Elena Laskin supported the project.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The revised application responds to some of the Architectural Committee's comments, including with the elimination of the plantings.
- Although it would be preferable if the deck over the rear ell was located at roof level rather than elevated, the elimination of the screened mechanical room under the deck would result in visible mechanical equipment.
- As exists currently and is designed, the lower deck and mechanical screen extend out over the cornice of the ell and are proud of the deck on the main block roof. The deck, railing, and screen should be pulled back so that they align with the railing over the main block roof.
- Solid portions of the railing should be eliminated, and the railing should be a continuous metal picket railing.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- Provided the railing is one continuous metal picket system and there is no jog in the deck at the rear, the revised design does not negatively impact the historic property or the historic district.

ACTION: Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the revised application, provided that the deck over the rear aligns with the deck on the main block and that an open metal railing is substituted for the solid railing, with the staff to review details. Ms. Carney seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 2118 Pine St					
MOTION: Approval with revisions					
MOVED BY: McCoubrey					
SECONDED BY: Carney					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

ADDRESS: 2519 S GARNET ST

Proposal: Demolish rear porch; construct two-story addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Ronald B. Galati Jr.

Applicant: Ian Toner, Toner Architects

History: 1910; James H. and John T. Windrim, architects

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Girard Estate Historic District, Contributing, 11/10/1999

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

OVERVIEW: This application seeks final approval to demolish a rear porch and construct an addition. The building is a two-story, semi-detached residential building designed in the Prairie/Arts & Crafts style constructed in 1910. The applicant is proposing to remove the original rear porch and construct a two-story rear addition.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Remove rear porch.
- Construct two-story addition.

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 shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - o The proposed addition is generally compatible with the historic house. The one aspect that does not comply with Standard 9 is the width of the addition. The addition would be approximately two feet wider than the historic main block and project beyond its south elevation. The width also requires the south elevation's historic roof profile to be altered. As proposed, the new addition does not meet Standard 9. The application would meet Standard 9 if the south wall of the addition was set back behind the façade of the main block and its roof connected with the rear roof of the main block.
- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.*
 - o The proposed addition permanently removes the small original rear porch. This area of the property is private and not visible from the public right-of-way. If the applicant documents the porch in photographs and dimensions, a future owner could restore the appearance of this porch; therefore, this application could meet Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends denial, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10.

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

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:31:20

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the application to the Historical Commission.
- Jordan Gravely of Toner Architects represented the application.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The design has been revised to create a clear separation between the historic building and the new addition. A small, set-back connector between old and new preserves the original roof line and historic roof overhang, as well as architectural details at the rear corner of the building. The addition's proposed form has been simplified with a flat roof to further distinguish it from the historic portion of the building.
- The proposed addition is no longer wider than the historic building and is less visible from the public right-of-way.
- The amount of demolition at the first-floor rear wall has been reduced.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The revised addition is differentiated from the historic portion of the building and is compatible with its massing, size, scale, and architectural features; therefore, the application meets Standard 9.
- The proposed addition permanently removes the small original rear porch but limits the demolition on the first-floor rear wall. Since the amount of demolition is limited and key details on the main block rear wall are preserved, the application meets Standard 10. To fully meet Standard 10, the architect should document the rear porch area, in the event that a future owner wishes to reconstruct it.

ACTION: Mr. McCoubrey moved to approve the revised application, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10. Ms. Carney seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 2519 S Garnet St MOTION: Approval of revised application MOVED BY: McCoubrey SECONDED BY: Carney					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)	X				
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	11				1

OLD BUSINESS

ADDRESS: 5848 CITY AVE

Name of Resource: The Chestnuts

Proposed Action: Amend Designation

Property Owner: Sisters of the Visitation of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to amend the designation of the property at 5848 City Avenue. The property was developed as a country estate in the nineteenth century and converted for use as a convent in the twentieth century. The 11.6-acre property includes a mansion or main house and several other buildings and a large amount of open space.

The Historical Commission designated the property on 13 November 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The owner of the property, a cloistered group of nuns who have little contact with the outside world, did not participate in the review of the nomination except to note a general objection to the designation by email. The Historical Commission found that the property satisfied Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and J. While the property was nominated for its significance as a nineteenth-century country estate, the Historical Commission extended the period of significance to 1965 to include the property's history as a convent within its significance. The history of the convent and order was not documented in the nomination. With the expansion of the significance, the Historical Commission added the chapel, dormitory, and an ancillary building to the list of historically significant buildings that already included the mansion house, gardener's cottage, carriage house, and other outbuildings. The nomination adopted by the Historical Commission also called out numerous landscape features as historically significant.

The current application requests that the Historical Commission amend the designation to include the main house, gardener's cottage, carriage house and stable, and the land around the

buildings and between the house and City Avenue. A letter with the application included a marked-up aerial photograph that proposes a new boundary for the designation. The aerial photograph with proposed boundary for the designation was revised as a site plan with proposed boundary. The application also calls for amending the Period of Significance to 1865 to 1940, the period originally proposed in the nomination. The application points out numerous flaws in the nomination and offers numerous reasons for limiting the area of designation.

Following the Committee on Historic Designation's review in January 2023, the staff visited the site and evaluated the buildings and landscape. Following the site visit, the staff conducted additional research and authored a report. That report documents significant mistakes in the nomination related to the histories of the so-called Cherry Cottage, Cottage 1921, and Garden Building B. It reports that no features survive from the so-called rear garden, contradicting the nomination. It calls into question claims about several landscape features made in the nomination. It points out that a wall with fence cited as a resource in the nomination is actually located at a neighboring property.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission amend the designation, redrawing the boundary as proposed to include the main house, gardener's cottage, carriage house and stable, and a portion of the best-preserved landscape between City Avenue and the main house, and redefine the Period of Significance to 1865-1940, as originally proposed in the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission reject the application to amend the designation of 5848 City Avenue.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:43:20

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the amendment request to the Historical Commission. He reminded the Historical Commission that it began reviewing this matter at last month's meeting and decided to table the review to this meeting to review the staff's report and other materials.
- Sister Antoinette Marie Walker, attorneys Matt McClure and Nathan Farris, and preservation consultant Nick Kraus represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. McClure stated that he represents the property owner, the Sisters of Visitation, and Saint Joseph's University, the equitable owner of the property. He asserted that the original nomination was not correct and complete and therefore the Historical Commission has no jurisdiction over the property. He stated that, despite the lack of jurisdiction, the owner and equitable owner would like to seek a compromise rather than have the entire designation thrown out. He stated that they are willing to accept the designation of the main house, gardener's cottage, and stable as well as the land in front of the main house to City Avenue. He stated that the nomination was flawed in many ways. He observed that no gardens survive. He stated that there is no evidence that the so-called Cherry Cottage was designed by architect William Price. He stated that features related to Overbrook Avenue and 59th Street were not original, as claimed in the nomination, because those streets did not exist when the estate was created. He concluded that the nomination is "fatally flawed." He asked the Historical Commission to accept his compromise. He noted that, if the University

purchases the property, its zoning classification will become a Special Purpose Institutional districts, or a SP-INS district, which will require a master plan with public input. The public will have a voice in the redevelopment of this property.

- Mr. Thomas reminded everyone that the staff had prepared a report on the property and the nomination.
- Mr. Mattioni asked why the proposed boundary of the designation had changed since the last meeting on this matter.
 - o Mr. McClure stated that the earlier proposal did not accurately follow the east property line. The proposal was updated to follow the property line precisely. He added that they also added more room within the boundary around the main house, to give it some breathing room.
 - o Ms. Cooperman stated that she consulted the City's Atlas website and the original boundary seemed to follow the property line. Now it does not.
 - o Mr. McClure stated that his surveyor created the survey of the property and correctly drew the east property line.
 - o Mr. Farnham explained that the east property line as now shown in the latest version submitted by the applicant is accurate. He stated that he verified the location of the property line, which is shown correctly under the "Deeds" tab of the Atlas website. The earlier version of the boundary submitted by the applicant was inaccurate and included some of the neighboring property.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that she had done some research into the changes at the property over time as they relate to the Bauman Plan. She stated that landscape plans are different from architectural plans. She stated that landscapes change over time and landscapes often differ from landscape plans. She stated that the "western drive" shown on the Baumann Plan was never executed but a path can be seen on older maps and in older aerial photographs. She concluded that the path is a character-defining feature that should be included in the designated area. One of the most important factors the experience of this property would have been the oblique, picturesque view that is represented by this path coming from the public right-of-way, from City Avenue.
 - o Mr. McClure responded that Ms. Cooperman was bringing evidence in or information in that is not part of the nomination, that we have not seen, and that we cannot respond to. He claimed that doing so was incredibly problematic from a due process perspective. He continued, stating that, for the University to make use of this property and to work to develop the property in the future, in harmony with the neighboring property owners, the University will want to locate a building near to City Avenue. Preserving this path would prevent that. The University will want to keep the new construction away from neighbors on 59th Street and Overbrook Avenue. Mr. McClure also claimed that the land around the path had been altered; the topography has changed.
- Mr. McClure asserted that the nomination was incorrect and incomplete. He advised the Historical Commission to accept the owners' compromise plan. He contended that a different owner would have the nomination thrown out in court and the Historical Commission would be left with nothing. The compromise plan is fair.
- Mr. Mattioni suggested to his fellow Commissioners that they should reach some sort of compromise, given the deficiencies of the nomination.
- Mr. Lech stated that he agrees with Ms. Cooperman that the viewshed to the main house should be preserved. He agreed with the proposal to shift the boundary to include more of the viewshed.

- Mr. Kraus, the applicant's preservation consultant, stated that the proposed boundary would retain a viewshed from City Avenue to the house.
- Mr. McClure stated that the staff has shown that the land to the west of the line was not part of the original property but was added later. He added that, when the Historical Commission designates buildings on college campuses, it does not designate huge swaths of open land around them.
 - o Mr. Farnham corrected Mr. McClure, stating that the staff did not contend that the land to the west was added later to the estate. It was part always part of the estate. Instead, the staff contended that the original landscape plan did not include features related to 59th Street and Overbrook Avenue, as the nomination claimed, because those streets were not opened until the 1890s, more than 20 years after the original landscape plan was implemented.
- Mr. Mattioni stated that he accepts the applicant's proposal.
- Mr. McCoubrey stated that he agreed with Ms. Cooperman and Mr. Lech that the west boundary of the designation should include more of the landscape up to the diagonal path. He added that a new building in that area would constitute a significant visual intrusion on the historic house.
 - o Mr. McClure stated that, if the University acquires the land, it will become a SP-INS zoning district and will require a master plan that will be generated with public input. He also noted that heritage trees on the site are protected through the zoning code.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society stated that he stands by the nomination that he wrote for the site for the Overbrook Farms Club. He objected to the manner in which the nomination was scrutinized, to the fact that the staff report had not been reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation, and to the accusations like trespassing made against the nominator as well as the author of the nomination. The nomination was submitted in good faith to recognize and protect a nineteenth-century country place, including its buildings and landscape. Even without the Bauman plan, the property satisfies several Criteria for Designation. The building identified as Cherry Cottage does possess architectural significance and was attributed to William Price based on a credible source. The purpose of designating this property or any historic property is not to halt future change, but rather to protect the resource and ensure that any future development is sensitive to the special qualities of a resource.
- Conor Corcoran, the president of the Overbrook Farms Club, stated that he was elected as president of the RCO after the property had been designated. Mr. Corcoran stated that the nomination and designation belong to the Overbrook Farms Club and substantive and procedural due process would have suggested that the Club should have been included in this process. He stated that he has twice asked the University to provide their development plans for this property to the Club. He stated that a "shell game" is being perpetuated in front of the Historical Commission. He stated that neither the applicant nor the Historical Commission has afforded him any ability to participate in this review. The Club was not invited to walk the property with the Historical Commission's staff. He claimed that no professional evaluation of historic landscape specifications has been presented. He claimed that that nomination is substantively correct and complete. He stated that no one has told the Club what is wrong with the nomination in any detail. Instead, this entire process is based upon some kind of attempt to libel Oscar Beisert by calling him a criminal

- trespasser. He asserted that the Club has essentially a property right in this designation and has not been included in this process. He claimed that the University can put a stadium or a parking lot or “whatever kind of nonsense a university wants to build” at 59th Street and Overbrook Avenue if this application is successful. He stated that this is a property that was utilized for the purposes of providing political and religious refuge to Mexican nuns who were seeking asylum and should therefore be protected.
- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance admitted that he does not know the property well enough to comment on the worthiness of the nomination. He instead commented on the process. He stated that this is a process that was initiated by the nominator. He asked if it would have been fairer if the nominator, who, after all, initiated this process, had been invited to join the staff and the property owner’s representatives on the tour they took of the property and then been given an opportunity to amend the nomination based on what they observed. He also asked if it would have been fairer if the staff report had been sent first to the Committee on Historic Designation for their review before being reviewed by the Historical Commission. He asserted that the nominator has been kept in the dark, and, after all, they initiated this process. He suggested that, given all the questions that are being raised today by the Commissioners about what should be designated and what should not, it is probably too soon to simply accept the proposed compromise. He respectfully suggested that the Historical Commission send the matter back to the Committee on Historic Designation with the additional information that has been assembled.
 - Jim Duffin of the Keeping Society thanked the Sisters of the Visitation for looking for ways to preserve the site. Mr. Duffin then spoke about the building called Cherry Cottage in the nomination. He asserted that the only piece of evidence presented to indicate that the country estate of David Scull in Devon was known as Cherry Cottage is an illustration on page 17 of the staff report, a plate from a 1908 atlas of properties on the Main Line. A 10-acre property with a house are labeled in the atlas as Cherry Cottage, owned by Henry Justice. The property today is known as 305 Beaumont Road, and the Cherry Cottage house was demolished around 2006. The photograph in the report a building was not on the Justice Cherry Cottage property. The Cherry Cottage house was built between 1897, and 1900. The 10-acre property was sold by David Scull to Florence S. W. Marie in 1899. Scull acquired a larger property of which this was a part in 1894 and 1895. Mueller's 1900 Atlas first shows the house during the ownership of the Maries and it has a name Cherry Cottage. The Marias sold the property to Josephine Barnard Justice in 1904, who owned the property in until her death, and retained the name Cherry Cottage. While it is clear that the Marie and Justice House was known as Cherry Cottage, there is, however, no documentation that Scull named his larger 59-acre property in Devon Cherry Cottage. Mueller's 1897 atlas, which includes numerous properties in Devon with house and estate names and includes Scull's properties on two plates, does not have any name associated with Scull's Devon property. If it had had a name, it would have been in the staff report. There are no newspaper references between 1890 and 1900 to David Scull vacationing in Devon. The newspapers in both Philadelphia and Belfast, Maine note in that Scull summers annually in Islesboro, Maine as early as 1894 and consistently state that he is from Overbrook or Philadelphia. The nomination includes a photograph of his Maine house. The 1890s newspapers also refer to Scull as a frequent visitor to Lakewood, New Jersey. But again, there are no references to him staying or summering in Devon. If there was, I'm sure it would also be in the staff report. While the record is not clear as to who built the Devon Cherry

Cottage, we know that it was built sometime after 1897. If it was built by David Skull, it was not for his personal use, but rather some type of investment property. It is highly unlikely that he would have named the house that he intended to sell only one or two years after construction on a property which he had own for only three or four years. The fact that there was a building named Cherry Cottage on a property he once owned, and perhaps a house he very briefly owned, does not prove that he names his property in Devon Cherry Cottage. The connection and evidence that is presented to you in the staff report is at best purely circumstantial, if not inaccurate. I shall also add that I think that focusing purely on what exactly Skull was paying for in the entry of Willian Price's cash book obscures a more significant point. Scull and Price had a professional relationship dating back to 1898 as the nomination clearly documents. Scull hired Price to make alterations to the main house in 1900. The building labeled in the nomination as Cherry Cottage does bear resemblance to Price's other works and is in the style of an 1890s building. If one feels that the Price cash book entry does not relate to this building, one can still reasonably say that the building can be attributed to or was most likely designed by Price. Mr. Duffin concluded that many buildings, even those nominated by the staff have such types of attributions based on similar style and professional relationships.

- Mary McGettigan of West Philly plan and Preserve encouraged the Commissioners to reject this application to amend the designation of 5848 City Avenue and remand it back to the Committee on Historic Designation for that panel of experts, including those with expertise in the history of landscape architecture, to review it and offer a recommendation. She stated that the application consists mostly of misstatements of the law, interpretations presented as facts, defamatory accusations, red herrings, and lawyerly bluster. She claimed that the actual errors that the applicants identified are few in number, and in no way undermine the original nominations substantial, well-documented argument in favor of designating the property as a rare surviving example of a Philadelphia country estate. She contended that the applicant's hope is that you will miss the forest for the trees. She alleged that there was an attempt to circumvent the Committee on Historic Designation and to deny the public its right to comment. She asserted that the applicant and a Commissioner defamed the nominator. She concluded that all of this set a troubling precedent. She claimed that the stifling of public comment and permitting assaults on the character of a nominator together can have a chilling effect on the public's willingness to participate in the process of preservation in our city.
- Lori Salganicoff of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy asked if the Rules and Regulations provide a process for correcting the nomination when a nomination is accepted by the staff as correct and complete but then later discovered not to be correct and complete. She asked if the nomination is returned to the nominator.
 - o Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Farnham to address the question.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that he was not willing to answer a hypothetical legal question during a public meeting.
 - o Mr. Thomas agreed and stated that the Historical Commission should not stray from the business at hand. He stated that such questions could be addressed outside a public meeting.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Farnham asked the chair to allow him to respond to some of the claims made during the public comment section of the review. First, to the claim that there was an attempt to circumvent the Committee on Historic Designation, he stated that the reason that his report was prepared after the Committee meeting and not before

- simply had to do with scheduling. He explained that he was unable to get out to the site. It is a site where cloistered nuns live and that he had to be accompanied on the grounds. Scheduling a visit was difficult. He stated that there was no attempt to keep the report from the Committee on Historic Designation. Any such claim is unfounded. He stated that he visited the site after the Committee's meeting owing solely to scheduling. Second, the claim that there was no opportunity for public comment is incorrect. This is a continuation of the review that started at the last meeting and the public has had an opportunity for comment today. The matter was continued at the last meeting, and the Historical Commission is not obligated to take public comment on motions to continue. Everyone has had an opportunity to comment today. No one has been excluded. Any claim that anyone was denied an opportunity to comment on this application is unfounded. Mr. Farnham then stated that, if you read the staff report carefully, as Mr. Duffin did, you will see that the staff was not making any specific claims about the completeness of its research with regard to Cherry Cottage, but was instead pointing out that it is more likely that the entry in William Price's cash book referred to the Cherry Cottage in Devon, and not to the City Avenue property. There is no credible evidence that anyone has presented documenting that William Price was the architect of the building on the City Avenue property. Mr. Farnham stated that, as an aside, he lives in a William Price house, of which he is very proud. He stated that he has researched it and spent 21 years carefully restoring it. He stated that he would not slight Mr. Price or his accomplishments and that he was hoping to find some evidence to connect that the City Avenue building to Price, but he did not. Finally, he noted that the staff's report was in no way intended to malign the nominator. It was an attempt to point out some typographical errors and factual errors in the nomination without any value judgments.
- Mr. McClure responded to Mr. Beisert's testimony, stating that the nomination does not simply include a few minor errors and typographical errors. The two reports, by Nick Kraus and the staff, indicate that the nomination includes material misstatements of fact. Moving on to the next topic, Mr. McClure asserted that no one owns a nomination. The Overbrook Farms Club, a third party, submitted the nomination for this property, but it does not own this nomination. Once the Historical Commission's staff makes a finding of completeness and correctness, the nomination is the Historical Commission's. There is no property right that is given to given to the nominator because they filed a nomination on someone else's property. The matter is between the Historical Commission and the property owner. There is no due process for the nominator. The nomination is information that is given to the Historical Commission. The nomination does not give the nominator any authority or control over the nominated property. The nomination belongs to the Historical Commission, not the Overbrook Farms Club, as Mr. Corcoran asserted. Mr. McClure contended that the statement that there has been no outreach to Overbrook Farms Club is untrue. He stated that he had provided copies of emails to Mr. Farnham documenting the outreach to the Overbrook Farms Club. He stated that the responses from the Club include profanity and threats of lawsuits. The University and the Sisters do not respond to such accusations. Mr. McClure observed that he has stated correctly that the University has no plans to build anything at this time, and anything that would be built in the future has to get approved by ordinance. He stated that Mr. Corcoran's emails are inappropriate. The emails are in the Historical Commission's records. He concluded that the University looks forward to working with the members of the Overbrook Farms Club, but not the one particular individual who has acted inappropriately. Mr. McClure responded to Mr. Steinke's complaint that the nominator never had access to the property. He stated that it is a cloister

property for solemn prayer and the activities of the Sisters. The public is not allowed on the property. The Mother Superior did not give permission for Mr. Beisert to visit the property, even if a former employee at the property may have provided him with access. Regarding Mr. Duffin's comments, Mr. McClure acknowledged that he provided substantive testimony which he clearly read. The Historical Commission's Rules and Regulations require that such testimony is submitted seven days in advance. He asserted that there is no way for anyone to respond to such detailed testimony in the moment. He asked the Historical Commission to strike it from the record. Regarding Mary McGettigan's statements, he noted that she is from the Spruce Hill community, nowhere near this property. She stated that the reports on the nomination were not written by landscape architects. Mr. McClure pointed out that the nomination itself was not prepared by a landscape architect. Mr. McClure concluded that the Sisters and the University are seeking a solution. They are not asking the Historical Commission to throw out the entire nomination. The property owner is asking the Historical Commission to protect the important aspects of the property, the main house gardener's cottage, and stable, all by Addison Hutton, and the associated landscape. The current nomination is premised on a fiction. He stated that his clients are trying to meet everyone halfway. With regard to any later development, his clients will work with the Historical Commission to ensure that it is appropriate.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Thomas stated that he would give two members of the public, Ms. McGettigan and Mr. Corcoran, additional opportunities to speak, but expected them to present new and relevant information.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that Mr. McClure's comment that she lives in Spruce Hill, not Overbrook Farms, is a typical distraction and red herring.
 - o Mr. Thomas asked her to provide new, relevant information and not merely be argumentative. He stated that he offered her a second opportunity to speak so that she could provide pertinent information.
 - o Ms. McGettigan then stated that she did not accept Mr. Farnham's excuse of scheduling for not sending his report to the Committee on Historic Designation. She stated that he could have continued the matter for up to one year to allow time for the review by the Committee. She also objected to not being allowed to speak at the last meeting, when the matter was continued.
 - o Mr. McClure objected to Ms. McGettigan's statements. He noted that the Committee on Historic Designation did review his amendment application at a public meeting. He also noted that the Historical Commission considered and rejected a suggestion to send the staff's report to the Committee for review.
- Mr. Farnham noted that Mr. Corcoran had lowered his hand and was no longer requesting to speak.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman suggested that the Historical Commission should account for the possibility that St. Joseph's University's plans might fall through and someone else might acquire and redevelop the property. She stated that she agreed with Mr. McCoubrey, who had suggested a reasonable compromise that would include a buffer along City Avenue. She suggested including the land from the driveway up to the diagonal path that runs from City Avenue toward the main house. She suggested

- a cone-shaped area. She stated that she agreed with excluding the former gardens at the rear and the frontage along Overbrook Avenue.
- o Mr. Farnham used the annotation tool on Zoom to draw a line along the boundary that Ms. Cooperman was suggesting.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed with the boundary line drawn on the proposed plan and noted that it would leave quite a bit of property along 59th Street free for redevelopment.
 - o Mr. Mattioni agreed with the proposal.
 - Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. McClure to comment on the proposed line.
 - o Mr. McClure responded that he is concerned that pushing the redevelopment west toward 59th Street may concern some of the residents of 59th Street.
 - Mr. Thomas objected to any new construction between the main house and City Avenue. He stated that the main house should have an open buffer around it.
 - Mr. McClure stated that he would be happy to work with the staff on any new construction with the boundary as drawn on the presentation.
 - o Mr. Thomas stated that the Historical Commission itself and its advisory Architectural Committee should review any new construction proposed for within the boundary.
 - Mr. McClure stated that the proposal would be acceptable, if it was not treated as an open space easement, but that any new construction within the boundary would need to be appropriate for the historic site. He stated that he is not concerned with the Historical Commission's jurisdiction, but with the potential for an appeal from someone who claims that the designation is an open space easement. He stated that this nomination is different than any nomination that he has seen in his 25 years of practicing before the Historical Commission. The nomination essentially asserts that the open land cannot be built upon but must be restored to its original landscape and garden features. The nomination was designed to be a tool to prevent future development of the site. The nomination declares that the site is a "no-build zone."
 - o Mr. Thomas responded that the amended designation would not preclude building within the boundary but would only require that the Historical Commission review applications to build within the boundary to ensure that the new construction is appropriate. He stated that the Historical Commission cannot declare that land can never be built upon.
 - o Mr. McClure stated that that was all he was requesting, an assurance that the Historical Commission was not declaring that the land within the boundary would perpetually be open space.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed that the Historical Commission did not have the authority to declare that land would be left perpetually open.
 - o Mr. Thomas noted that the Historical Commission had recently designated properties in Roxborough and had noted at the time of designation that the designation was not intended to preclude future development at the rears of the properties, provided the development was appropriate for the historic buildings. He stated that, if adopted, this amended designation would not preclude redevelopment within the boundary but would require that the Historical Commission review the redevelopment proposal to ensure that it satisfied preservation standards.
 - o Mr. Reuter, the Historical Commission's attorney, agreed with Ms. Cooperman and Mr. Thomas that new construction within the boundary would be subject to the Historical Commission's review for appropriateness. He stated that the

Historical Commission could delegate the determination of the final location of the boundary line to the staff.

- o Mr. Farnham pointed out on the aerial photograph where the parking lot was located and stated that the topography of the land around the parking lot had been changed to create a level area. He suggested that the boundary line should run along the low point between the parking lot and the path.
- o Mr. Thomas suggested that the Historical Commission delegate the task of finalizing the boundary line to the staff.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The Historical Commission designated the property at 5848 City Avenue on 13 November 2020.
- The property owner applied to amend the designation.
- The Historical Commission's staff visited the site on 1 February 2023 and authored a report on the site and nomination, dated 7 February 2023. The report documented numerous factual errors in the nomination.
- The property owner's consultant visited the site and authored a report, which documented numerous factual errors in the nomination.
- The parts of the property along 59th Street and Overbrook Avenue were not included in the Baumann Plan. Those streets were not extant when the plan was published.
- The rear gardens shown on the Baumann Plan are not extant.
- The significant historic structures on the site are the main house, gardener's cottage, and stable. The nomination fails to demonstrate that the other structures on the site are historically or architecturally significant.
- Excepting some regrading for a parking lot, the front lawn between the main house, east property line, City Avenue, and diagonal path from City Avenue to the main house maintains its original topography and appearance and provides a viewshed to the main house.
- Section 14-1004(1) of the historic preservation ordinance stipulates that the Historical Commission may designate if a resource satisfies one or more of the Criteria for Designation. Designation is a discretionary act. The Historical Commission may designate at its discretion, but it is never obligated to designate. Section 14-1004(5) of the ordinance stipulates that the Historical Commission may amend or rescind a designation in the same manner as is specified for designation. Like designating, amending a designation is discretionary. The Historical Commission may amend a designation at its discretion, but it is never obligated to accept or reject an amendment or rescission request.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- In light of new information not available at the time of the designation of the property at 5848 City Avenue on 13 November 2020, it would amend the designation and redraw the boundary to limit its jurisdiction to a section of the property including the main house, gardener's cottage, stable, and a portion of the landscape between the main house and City Avenue.

ACTION: Ms. Cooperman moved to amend the designation of 5848 City Avenue to limit the designated area to the area proposed by the applicant as well as a triangular area to the west of the proposed area that is roughly bounded by City Avenue and a diagonal line that is adjacent to the path running from City Avenue to the main house and that was memorialized at the

meeting, with the staff to finalize the location of the diagonal boundary based on direction provided by the Historical Commission during the review. Mr. McCoubrey seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 5848 City Ave MOTION: Amend boundary of designation MOVED BY: Cooperman SECONDED BY: McCoubrey					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)					X
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)	X				
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	10				2

ADDRESS: 7200-04 CRESHEIM RD

Name of Resource: Cresheim Valley Apartments

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Cresheim Valley Realty Co.

Nominator: West Mount Airy Neighbors

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 7200-04 Cresheim Road as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the apartment building satisfies Criteria for Designation C, G, and J. Under Criterion C, the nomination argues that the 1914 Cresheim Valley Apartments reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Tudor Revival style as applied to low-rise apartment buildings. Under Criterion G, the nomination claims that the building's location next to the Richard Allen train station provides open park space on the train station parcel which should be preserved. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the building exemplifies the railroad-led economic and historic transformation of Northwest Philadelphia in the early decades of the twentieth century as the area became a bustling residential suburb within the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 7200-04 Cresheim Road satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J, but not Criterion G. The argument for the satisfaction of Criterion G proffered in the nomination is based on open space at 200 W. Allens Lane, an adjacent parcel owned by SEPTA, not the subject property.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 7200-04

Cresheim Road satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 04:30:40

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Historical Commission.
- Cynthia Dutwin of West Mount Airy Neighbors represented the nomination.
- Attorney Samantha Pulley and Philip Pulley represented the property owner and opposed the designation, arguing that the designation would constitute an encumbrance and violate their mortgage agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman supported the nomination.
- Neighbor Adrienne Carpenter supported the nomination.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Commission found that:

- The Historical Commission's attorney reviewed the mortgage documents submitted by the owners and found that the language about encumbrances is fairly standard boiler-plate language present in most mortgages.
- Local designation does not constitute an encumbrance. Encumbrances are interests in the property, such as easements, leases, or ground rents, which local designation does not create. Local designation is akin to a zoning change, which would not constitute an encumbrance.
- The property owner's assertion that their mortgage company requires the owners to hire various consultants to respond to the nomination seems like a misunderstanding and is likely conflating local designation with National Register designation or a façade easement, both of which are separate and different processes. National Register designation is often a prerequisite for historic preservation tax credits and requires owner consent as well as extensive documentation by a preservation consultant.
- The owner can speak directly with the Historical Commission's staff to understand the implications of designation without hiring a consultant.
- The property's mortgage language does not impact or bind the Historical Commission's decision making.

The Historical Commission concluded that:

- The property reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Tudor Revival style as applied to low-rise apartment buildings, satisfying Criterion C.
- The property exemplifies the railroad-led economic and historic transformation of Northwest Philadelphia in the early decades of the twentieth century, satisfying Criterion J.
- The property does not contain open park space, and therefore does not satisfy Criterion G.

ACTION: Ms. Cooperman moved to find that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 7200-04 Cresheim Road address satisfies Criteria for Designation C and J and to designate it

as historic, listing it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. So and so seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous consent.

ITEM: 7200-04 Cresheim Rd MOTION: Designate; Criteria C and J MOVED BY: Cooperman SECONDED BY: McCoubrey					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)					X
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)					X
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	9				3

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 04:59:50

ACTION: At 2:13 p.m., Mr. Mattioni moved to adjourn. Ms. Cooperman seconded the motion, which was adopted by unanimous consent.

ITEM: Adjournment MOTION: Adjourn MOVED BY: Mattioni SECONDED BY: Cooperman					
VOTE					
Commissioner	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Thomas, Chair	X				
Carney (PCPC)					X
Cooperman	X				
Dodds (DPD)					X
Kindt (DPP)	X				
Lepori (Commerce)	X				
Lech (L&I)	X				
Mattioni	X				
McCoubrey	X				
Michel	X				
Sánchez (Council)					X
Washington	X				
Total	9				3

PLEASE NOTE:

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

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

§14-1004. Designation.

(1) Criteria for Designation.

A building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object, or district may be designated for preservation if it:

- (a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or professional engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or nation;
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation;
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif;
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;

- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.