

**THE MINUTES OF THE 446th STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
13 October 1999**

**Commission Conference Room, One Parkway, 1515 Arch St., 18th Fl.
Wayne S. Spilove, Chair**

Present

Wayne S. Spilove, Chair
David Brownlee, Ph.D.
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Barbara Kaplan, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Carol Lawrence
David Perri, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspections
Michael Sklaroff, Esq.
Robert Thomas
Dennis Ward III
Scott Wilds, Assistant Director, Office of Housing and Community Development
Caroline Wischmann

Randal Baron, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer
Elizabeth Harvey, Historic Preservation Planner
R. Scott Jacob, Executive Secretary
Laura Spina, Historic Preservation Planner
Richard Tyler, Historic Preservation Officer

Mark Zecca, Esq., Senior Attorney, City of Philadelphia Law Department

Also

Edward Jareb, Pennsylvania Hospital
Susan Mackey Tunnicliffe
Margaret Farmar
Frank E. Farmar
Dona Krall
Aliko Strakes, Preservation Alliance
Paul Bottalla
Charles Datner
Madeline Shikomba
Pat Pomeroy
Linda Berman
Joseph Serratore
Brett Webber
George Thomas
Thomas Witt, Esq., Wolf, Block, Schorr and Solis-Cohen, LLP
Frances Bengermano
Albert Gambone
Jody Della Barba, Girard Estate Area Residents
Byron Whiting
Neil Sklaroff, Esq., Fineman and Bach
Vincent Costello, Department of Public Property

Christina Romano

Wayne Spilove, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 446th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 9:00 A.M.

MINUTES of the 445th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Wilds and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the 445th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission held on 8 September 1999, Wayne Spilove, Chair.

MINUTES of the Special Meeting of the Historical Commission regarding 1914-16 Rittenhouse Square Street / 1915-19 Manning Street, 27 September 1999, Wayne Spilove, Chair.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brownlee and duly seconded, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the special meeting of the Historical Commission regarding 1914-16 Rittenhouse Square Street / 1915-19 Manning Street.

Old Business

2304 Madison Square Street

Madeline Shikomba, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1865

PROPOSAL: Cover front and rear cornices in aluminum

Architectural Committee Recommendation: denial of covering the front cornice in aluminum, and to defer judgment on the rear until an Inspector from the Department of Licenses and Inspections has examined the situation to determine if the damage is caused by water runoff from the roof of the church next door.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal involves installing aluminum covers on the front and rear wood cornice of a row house. Both cornices have visibility from a public right-of-way. The soffit of the rear cornice has fallen off, and the subject property has sustained internal water damage. The owner wants to install the capping to protect the cornice from further water damage. Mr. Thomas noted that the committee explained to the owner that this procedure will not solve the problem, and recommended replacing the rotted pieces and repainting the cornice. The applicant expressed concern over any costly repairs that would also require continuing maintenance.

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Mr. Thomas explained that, upon examining photographs of the damage, the Committee agreed that the water runoff is probably coming from the church and, perhaps, through the chimneys located at each corner. He stated that the Committee and staff discussed the possibility of having an Inspector from the Department of Licenses and Inspections examine the situation, and that Ms. Batcheler also offered to visit the site. He reported that L&I will not send an Inspector.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to approve covering

the rear cornice, but to deny covering the front cornice. Ms. Lawrence seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

17 North 3rd Street

Byron Whiting, Tenant/Applicant

DATE: 1840

PROPOSAL: Legalize installation of aluminum and glass doorway

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial.

Mr. Thomas explained that the Commission voted to deny the proposal at its last meeting. Mr. Whiting returned to the Commission because he was not able to attend that meeting, but explained that he will come back with a new application.

REPORT of the Architectural Committee, 28 September 1999, Robert Thomas, Chair.

3900 Woodland Avenue, The Woodlands Mansion

The Woodlands Cemetery Company, Owner

Dale Frens, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1742; expanded/embellished c. 1785 - 1810

PROPOSAL: Demolish and rebuild (non-historic) steps; safety railing on porch

Architectural Committee Recommendation: denial of the proposal as submitted, and Approval of:

- 1. a simple metal rail placed behind the column line painted to minimize its visibility,*
- 2. placing the steps at the center location, the same width as the existing steps, with a metal rail to match the new porch rail, with the end of the rail redesigned to appear more compatible with the historic building, and with staff to review and approve details of the railing design and color.*

By letter, the applicant requested a continuance of two months for this application.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to table the issue for a period not to exceed two months. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

609 Rear Lombard Street

PRMM, Inc., Owner

Susan Mackey Tunncliffe, Prospective Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1830

PROPOSAL: Remove cinder block wall and replace with brick and iron fence

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant seeks to demolish a cinder block wall in the courtyard surrounding her house. She would like to rebuild a fence with a brick base and open metal pickets with an ornamental finial. Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee did not object to the proposal.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

260-262 East Girard Avenue, The Greentree Tavern

Quarennta Terenos y un Boro/Benjamin Johnson, Owner/Applicant

DATE: c. 1844

PROPOSAL: New vinyl windows

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of the proposal, and, upon application, to refer the issue to the Committee on Financial Hardship.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for alterations to the former Greentree Tavern, considered one of the oldest hostleries in Philadelphia. The building is also individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The new owner seeks to remove the six-over-six wood windows, sash and frames and install vinyl windows with sandwiched grids. The owner stated to the Committee that this building has recently housed drug dealers and prostitutes, and has sustained much vandalism. He wants to fix up the building, but claims that the appropriate historic windows will cost too much.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee explained to the applicant that vinyl windows fail to meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* in terms of design and material, and would drastically mar the appearance of this building, and that the Committee informed Mr. Johnson of the tax credits he could apply for owing to the National Register status of this building. Mr. Johnson was not interested in tax incentive options. Mr. Thomas noted that the Committee also described the process and requirements for financial hardship consideration and explained that if he wishes to apply under that rubric he must supply the information required under the ordinance.

Mr. James made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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18 South 3rd Street

Michael Hurwitz, Owner

Massimo Spatola, Tenant/Applicant

DATE: c. 1780; altered 1825 and c. 1865

PROPOSAL: Illuminated signage

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that the tenant of this store seeks to install a metal sign in the transom containing individually cut out letters, with opaque plastic inserted in the openings. A light source behind the sign will illuminate the letters.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Pennsylvania Hospital - Hall Mercer Building, 241-59 South 8th Street;

Farm Journal Building, 230 West Washington Square Street

Pennsylvania Hospital, Owner

Francis Peltier, Architect/Applicant

DATE: Hall Mercer Building - c. 1970; Farm Journal Building - 1912

PROPOSAL: Illuminated signage

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval, with the projecting sign reduced to eight feet.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for the installation of internally illuminated signage, some of it projecting ten feet over the sidewalk. The signage will attach to very recent construction. He stated that at the Committee meeting Mr. Tyler suggested the applicant reduce the size of the projecting on South 8th Street sign from ten to eight feet, and perhaps shift it to a vertical orientation. Mr. Thomas explained that the Committee did not object to the discrete illumination of the signage, but did want the projecting sign reduced to eight feet.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

213 -217 North 4th Street

Philadelphia Veterans Multi Services and Education Center, Owner

Timothy Donahue, Contractor/Applicant

DATE: c. 1840; facade - c. 1920

PROPOSAL: New aluminum windows

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval, with staff to review and approve details of the brick mold.

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Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for installing new aluminum eight-over-eight and six-over-six muntin grid windows in place of the existing true muntin wood windows. He noted that the Committee viewed an aluminum clad window alternative but preferred the original submission.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

416 Spruce Street

E. Coyle, Owner

Brett Webber, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1825

PROPOSAL: Alterations to west and south facades

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for reestablishing a window on the west facade of the building and creating a new window and deck on the cinder block and stucco rear facade. The Committee did not object to the proposal.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1702 Walnut Street

1702 Walnut Street Associates, Owner

Linda Berman, Tenant/Applicant

DATE: c. 1928

PROPOSAL: Storefront alteration, awning and banner

Architectural Committee Recommendation:

Denial of:

- 1. the proposed storefront;*
- 2. mullions painted white; and*
- 3. banners.*

Approval of:

- 1. a simplified storefront, and possibly one similar to Ms. Berman's storefront at her former location;*
- 2. the awning;*
- 3. minimal mullions with silver colored metal on the storefront and second floor windows; and*
- 4. the three part window configurations on the upper floors, with the windows slightly set back from the building face.*

With staff to review and approve details.

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Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for building a new aluminum and glass storefront for this Art Deco style commercial building. The building will also receive an awning and new second floor windows with white frames. He stated that the tenant of this store wishes to echo the design of her former storefront to retain the identity of her business. Mr. Thomas explained that the Committee objected to the Georgian appearance of the proposed storefront, and asked for a revised design more compatible with this Art Deco building. The Committee agreed that the design of the former location suits the new location much better than the proposed storefront.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee also agreed that the storefront and second floor windows should use minimal stainless steel mullions to complement the Art Deco character of the building, instead of the thicker mullions painted white. He explained that the Committee reviewed an alternate scheme showing a three-part window configuration on the upper floors, and slightly set back, and that the Committee preferred this configuration.

The proposed awning has signage on the front and sides. The two proposed banners will match the awning in color and lettering. Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee recommends approval of the awning but not the banners.

Mr. Thomas showed the Commission a revised drawing submitted after the Committee meeting. Mr. Thomas noted that the new scheme follows some of the Committee recommendations, but suggested sending the new design back to the Architectural Committee. Other Commission members disagreed, and thought the new design responded considerably to the recommendation, as it nearly replicates the former location's storefront. Mr. Wilds noted that the door of the revised proposal would suit the facade better with fewer lights. Commission members decided that six lights would be more appropriate.

Mr. Sklaroff made a motion to approve the revised proposal, with six lights in the door instead of twelve, with staff to review and approve details, and the installation of flags on the existing

flagpoles. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

1906-1908 Spruce Street

1906 Spruce Street Associates, Owner

Albert Taus, Architect/Applicant

DATE: c. 1870; altered c. 1960

PROPOSAL: Fence and roll-down grate on Delancey Street parking area

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Approval, with heavier metal piers to support the grate housing, and the top of the fence curved out toward the street for added security.

Mr. Spilove recused himself from the discussion and the vote owing to his connection with the property. He passed the Chair to Mr. Ward. Mr. Sklaroff also recused himself.

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Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal involves building a fence with electric roll down grate on the Delancey Street parking area of this apartment building. He noted that Committee members expressed concern about the structural feasibility of the proposed grate, and recommended using heavier metal piers to support the grate housing. The applicant also would like to curve the tops of the fence out toward the street for security reasons.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Ms. Wischmann seconded the motion which carried with nine votes. Mr. Spilove and Mr. Sklaroff recused themselves.

Mr. Spilove resumed the Chair.

City Hall Tower

City of Philadelphia, Owner

Vincent Costello, Department of Public Property, Applicant

DATE: 1893-94 - Tower construction

PROPOSAL: Install antennas at portal windows on tower

Architectural Committee Recommendation: Denial of the proposal as submitted and approval of a new mounting scheme that involves hanging the antennae below the portals on an upturned crescent or half-circle shaped bracket, with staff to review and approve details.

Mr. James recused himself.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal calls for installing antennas within the portal windows on four sides of City Hall tower to provide radio communication service for the Police Department. The applicant has installed a mockup of the proposed antennas. Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee examined photographs showing the mockup and decided not to recommend approval of the proposal as submitted. He explained that the Committee objected to the square mounting apparatus, discussed alternatives, and resolved to recommend approval of a new mounting scheme that involves hanging the antennas below the portals on an upturned crescent or half-circle shaped bracket, with staff to review and approve details.

The applicant submitted a revised proposal that did not reflect the Committee's recommendation. The Commission discussed denying the proposal and sending it back to the Architectural Committee. Mr. James, speaking on behalf of the Department of Public Property, withdrew the application. The Commission took no action.

3142 Market Street, Centennial National Bank (Peck Alumni Hall - Drexel University)

Drexel University, Owner

John Cluver, Architect/Applicant

DATE: 1876

PROPOSAL: Roof hatch and ladder; materials change; restoration of finial/weathervane

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Architectural Committee Recommendation: approval of all aspects of the proposal, with staff to review and approve details of the new material for the new section's base.

Mr. Thomas explained that this proposal involves placing a roof hatch and access ladder on the rear portion of the roof. The recent interior demolition uncovered an elaborately painted original ceiling designed by Frank Furness, which the applicant plans to restore. The roof hatch will provide access to the attic without going through the restored ceiling. The applicant also provided details of an already approved finial/weathervane made to match the original.

Mr. Thomas stated that the proposal also calls for a change in the material of the base of the previously approved new section of the building. The approved material was grayish brick to match the stone base of the historic portion, but the applicant could not locate an appropriate brick match. The applicant seeks approval to use cast stone or alternate material, dyed the correct color. Mr. Thomas explained that the Committee did not object to any aspect of this proposal.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Brownlee seconded the motion which carried unanimously

8001-8101 Verree Road, Knowlton

John Conroy, Owner/Applicant

DATE: 1880

PROPOSAL: Visible mechanicals

Architectural Committee Recommendation: approval of the design of the new addition's east facade, the mechanical equipment, and landscaping to conceal the equipment, provided that the applicant has the changes redrawn in elevation.

Mr. Thomas explained that the applicant installed mechanical systems along the eastern facade of the new addition, and two HVAC units in front of two porch piers on the western facade of the historic building without the Commission's approval. The east facade of the addition does not follow the plans approved by the Commission. Mr. Thomas stated that the Committee did not object to the east facade of the addition as built. The applicant prefers to leave the HVAC units close to the building, but offered to screen them with landscaping. Mr. Thomas noted that the Committee thought the applicant could camouflage all the mechanicals with landscaping.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the recommendation of its Committee and to approve

the proposal for the east wall of the addition as built and the mechanicals, with the stipulation that the landscaping around the HVAC units be a bank of shrubbery, and to request that the applicant submit detailed drawings of the proposed landscaping. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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220 West Washington Square Street, W. B. Saunders Publishing Company

John Noonan (and partners), Owner

DATE: 1911

PROPOSAL: Three-story rooftop addition - for comment only

The Historical Commission declined to comment on the information regarding the subject property provided in the report of its Architectural Committee. The Commission wanted to strike the comments of its Committee from the record because the submission does not meet the requirements for a proposal in concept.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to strike the comments of its Committee from the record. Mr. James seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

THE REPORT of the Committee on Historic Designation, 1 October 1999, David Brownlee, Chair

200-212 and 214-220 Walnut Street, a.k.a. 201-205 and 200-206 Dock Street

Owner: 200 Walnut Street Associates and 220 Walnut Street Associates

Date: early 1970s

Committee Recommendation: reclassifying all of the commercial buildings constructed by the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) as non-contributing within the Society Hill (and Pennsylvania Hospital of Washington Square West) Historic District

Mr. Brownlee explained that the owner of 220-212 and 214-220 Walnut Street, a.k.a. 201-205 and 200-206 Dock Street seeks the re-categorization of these two buildings from “Contributing” to the Society Hill (and Pennsylvania Hospital of Washington Square West) Historic District to “non-contributing.” He stated that the Committee discussed the possibility of reclassifying all of the commercial buildings constructed with direct RDA involvement as non-contributing. The following ten properties that fall into that category include:

200-212 Walnut Street, a.k.a. 201-205 Dock Street - Lamberti's
214-220 Walnut Street, a.k.a. 200-206 Dock Street - Ritz Theater
406-426 South Front Street - New Market
129-135 Lombard Street - Part of New Market
130-134 Lombard Street
422-428 South 2nd Street - New Market Square
275 South 5th Street - National Park Service Maintenance Building
307-331 South 5th Street - SuperFresh Market
314-320 South 5th Street - Society Hill Shopping Center
220-230 Chancellor Street

Mr. Wilds suggested striking the words “commercial,” and “RDA constructed” from the Committee recommendation. Other Commission members voiced their apprehension over the broad sweep of the recommendation, and agreed with Mr. Wild’s suggestion to reclassify the ten listed properties as non-contributing, but not as a general category.

Mr. Wilds made a motion to accept the Committee recommendation, but to strike the words “commercial,” and “RDA constructed” from the recommendation. Mr. James seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

7913 Oxford Avenue

Owner: Wawa Inc.

Date: c. 1850

Mr. Tyler explained that the owner had no knowledge of the historically designated status of the property and that nothing in the its zoning file suggests the designation. In addition, nothing during the early stages of the permitting process for this development revealed the designation. Site preparation properly began on the basis of the zoning permit and the Department of Licenses and Inspections accepted the permit application and began the plan review for the new commercial building without identifying the property as historic. Not until the submission of a demolition permit application for the house at 7913 Oxford Avenue did the developer learn of the Commission’s involvement. To meet its schedules of construction and opening the new store, Wawa amended its application for the actual site improvements to leave the historic structure on an island until it could comply with the requirements of the historic preservation ordinance. Wawa now wishes to have the listing on the Philadelphia Register rescinded to facilitate the demolition of the historic and the creation of additional green space. Mr. Tyler noted that staff research into the permit history of the property revealed that permits had issued in the past, including one for aluminum siding, without referral to the Historical Commission, and one had affirmatively indicated that the property is not historic.

Mr. Tyler stated that Committee members suggested that application for a demolition permit offered the better course than a petition for rescission, and that the applicant agreed to withdraw with request and to apply for a demolition permit.

The Commission took no action, as the proposal was withdrawn.

THE REPORT of the Committee on Historic Designation, 17 September 1999,
David Brownlee, Chair

Mr. Brownlee explained that the Committee on Historic Designation acts as an advisory committee to the Commission, the body that actually votes on nominations. The Committee reviewed the nomination for the proposed Girard Estate Historic District for accuracy and completeness and to determine if the nomination meets one or more of the criteria for designation as set forth in the Historic Preservation Ordinance at § 14-2007(5) of the Philadelphia Code.

Mr. Brownlee introduced Elizabeth Harvey and Laura Spina of the Historical Commission staff. He stated that Ms. Harvey and Ms. Spina worked on the nomination and updated the inventory for the district together. Ms. Spina and Ms. Harvey presented slides of Girard Estate and read from the nomination regarding the historical and architectural significance of the development:

The Board of Directors of City Trusts, the trustees for the Estate of Stephen Girard, developed the farmland surrounding Girard's former country estate in Philadelphia to earn revenue for Girard College. The resulting district of 456 semi-detached houses, 25 rowhouses and one apartment house deviated greatly from the ubiquitous brick rowhouse development of South Philadelphia. The District meets eight criteria outlined in the Philadelphia Code, Section 14-2007(5)(a, c, d, e, f, g, h, i). Girard Estate has significant character, interest and value as a part of the development and heritage of the City and is associated with the life of Stephen Girard, a significant person in the past. The District reflects the environment in an era characterized by distinctive architectural styles and embodies distinguishing characteristics of those styles. The houses are the work of two architects, James and John Windrim, whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural and cultural development of the City, Commonwealth and Nation. The District contains elements of design, materials and craftsmanship that represent a significant innovation. It relates to a square or park, Girard Park, which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural and architectural motif. Girard Estate, owing to its unique location and singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community and City. And finally, the area around *Gentilhommiere* may likely yield information important to pre-history or history.

Stephen Girard came to Philadelphia from his native France soon after the British left Philadelphia in 1778. A merchant by trade, Girard established himself in banking and insurance ventures and made himself the wealthiest man in America by the time of his death. Although he had property scattered around Pennsylvania and other states, Girard's residence was the farm and house in Passyunk Township, now South Philadelphia, known as *Gentilhommiere*. Upon his death in 1831, Girard left his estate, valued at approximately \$6 million to various philanthropic institutions; however, the bulk of it went to the City of Philadelphia. The bequest included several conditions. The City was obligated to establish a college for poor, orphaned, white boys, and the proceeds and profits of any business and investment ventures had to support the College. The City complied by establishing Girard College. Another stipulation in the will stated "that no part [of the Estate] shall ever be sold or alienated." Therefore, the City could not sell any property, including Girard's house and farm in South Philadelphia. This restriction led to the Board of Directors of City Trusts to establish Girard Estate as a community of rental properties.

Design elements such as low-density, cottage-like houses and landscaped parks became synonymous with Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement at the turn of the twentieth century and many of these features are found in Girard Estate. The Architect for the Board, James H. Windrim, along with his son John, designed a community of semi-detached twins in various architectural styles rather than a more dense rowhouse development typically found in Philadelphia neighborhoods. Almost all of the streets within the District have trees lined at the curb, many houses still have a patch of grass at the front and almost all of the buildings have side as well as rear yards creating a park-like setting for the District. The architecture of the houses has a wide variety of styles, including Bungalow, Prairie, Mission, Craftsman, Jacobean Revival, Tudor and Colonial Revival. The Board wished to avoid the

monotony of other developments citing that in its development "the exterior appearance is varied and ornamented, affording a pleasing view of the block." The Board aimed to provide a suburban-like atmosphere for those who needed to live within close proximity to the City.

The Board of Directors of City Trusts carved Girard Estate out of the farm of Stephen Girard, but the City of Philadelphia initiated and managed the road improvements of the area. Grading, paving, installing water and sewer lines and curbing became the responsibility of the City, not the Board. It was during these improvements that the Board realized the market potential of rental housing in this area. The Board owned, developed and maintained the Girard Estate development as rental housing. This relationship of publicly owned properties leased to private tenants formed the backbone of Howard's ideal city. He believed that this economically structured community, in a park-like setting that promoted good health, would alleviate the problems that plagued existing cities, including overcrowding, disease, unemployment and class division.

The design of the houses in Girard Estate resulted from a father-son architectural team. After graduating from Girard College, James H. Windrim apprenticed with John Notman and his firm in Philadelphia. In 1867, he opened his own firm and won the competition for the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia, establishing his career. Windrim became a Director for the City Trusts in 1871 for a term that lasted four years. The Board then appointed him as the official Architect for Girard Estate, which encompassed all of its properties in the region, in 1885. Windrim's son, John Torrey Windrim began working for his father in 1882 and soon established himself as an accomplished architect. By 1892, few of the firm's projects could be attributed solely to either father or son. The work in the Girard Estate Historic District probably results from a collaboration between both architects, but the development of the area may reflect the individual styles of James and John. The houses built in 1906 and 1907, along the north side of Porter Street, reflect a late nineteenth century view of architecture. The stepped parapets and the attachment of the bays show an attempt to create something new, but demonstrate the lack of a modern vocabulary. Later styles within the District represent a twentieth century approach to house design. The influence of the Arts and Crafts and Prairie styles are evident in later houses. This division of architectural styles may illustrate the difference between the work of the father and that of the son.

The era at the turn of the century fostered an atmosphere of reform, and the housing industry did not escape from reforming changes. Advocates of the new Garden City planning philosophy also stressed the importance of clean, open-planned houses with a full array of amenities. The Board agreed, saying in the brochure for the new houses that, "the almost alarmed awakening of public opinion upon the subject of sanitation has led to widespread distrust of the old-fashioned ideas concerning the disposal of waste and the toleration of dust and ashes within the home." As an answer to reformers' demands, the houses in Girard Estate had fully appointed kitchens and baths. A central heating plant provided heat to all of the buildings within the development, eliminating the need for individual furnaces. Reformers emphasized the need for a healthy environment and the elimination of the ashes from individual furnaces helped keep each house clean. Numerous windows for light and air, yards on two or more sides and front porches were included in the design of each house for the comfort and health of the tenants. The Board took pride in the workmanship and use of innovative mechanical systems in the houses. In the belief that well-constructed houses would fare better and create fewer expensive repairs, the Board chose the best materials possible and employed its own builders.

As a part of the self-contained community, the development's design also included a school and library within its boundaries. In 1913, the Board of Education built the Jacobean Revival school on the southeast corner of 22nd and Ritner Streets. The school, designed by Henry deCoursey Richards, is identical to five other schools in the City. Also in 1913, construction finished on a library on the northeast corner of 20th and Shunk Streets. The Passyunk Branch of the Philadelphia Free Library was one of twenty-five libraries built by the City of Philadelphia using a grant from Andrew Carnegie. Along with his generous gift for funding these libraries, Carnegie suggested their design. He advocated a design that included a large well-lit reading space, open book stacks, public meeting spaces, and a central librarian's desk all within a classically designed rectangular building.

The Board also added a series of garages at the south side of the development to accommodate the automobile. Rather than disturb the design of the area, the Board built four long rows of single-car garages. The single-story, brick garages reflect the design of the support buildings found at *Gentilhommiere*. Area residents can rent these garages still owned by the Board, continuing the tradition of the City's role as landlord.

By 1916, Girard Estate reached its full development and the Board did not add to the site. Despite the development's grand success, the ideal public landlord-private tenant relationship espoused by Howard suffered its own problems. Rent increases caused friction between tenants and the Board throughout the subsequent decades and Girard Estate did not escape the financial troubles of the Depression. By July 1950, the Board sought court permission to sell the first of the 481 houses and the apartment house within the development. Like their rentals, these houses sold in record numbers, with the entire development sold in just over two years.

Boundaries

The boundaries for the district match the borders of the original development. Any property built after 1916, even if on the same block, has been cut out. The district resembles an "L" with one shaft northward between 21st and 22nd Streets from Passyunk to Shunk and a lateral piece running from 22nd Street to 17th Street between Porter and Shunk Streets.

Classifications

While the Description and the Statement of Significance recognize the district as a whole, the inventory addresses each property within the district individually. Besides brief architectural and historical descriptions, each property has a classification of "significant," "contributing" or "non-contributing." A building, structure or site can be listed as "significant" if it would qualify for the Philadelphia Register in its own right. Only Stephen Girard's *Gentilhommiere* qualifies as a "significant" property within the Girard Estate District. Buildings listed as "contributing" conform to the overall significance of the district, and contribute to the character of the district in at least two of three criteria. The criteria are scale and rhythm, materials and massing. The three-dimensional, sculptural aspect of these houses proves extremely important. Many of the changes in the district include new windows, aluminum siding, and new porch railings; however, these changes do not negate the overall sculptural effect. All, but six houses fall into the "contributing" category. "Non-contributing" buildings, structures or

sites do not satisfy at least two of the three criteria. The six “non-contributing” houses have changes that radically alter the scale, rhythm or massing of the houses.

Conclusion

Girard Estate possesses significance as a clear departure from the two-story, brick rowhouse development typically found in South Philadelphia. The garden-like setting and architecturally mixed, semi-detached houses create a neighborhood unique in character and development. The influence of the Garden City movement and the vision of James Windrim, and his son John, provided a rare opportunity for the creation of a suburban-type of development in an urban area. It also allowed the City of Philadelphia, through the Board of City Trusts, to enter the real estate market as developer and landlord. For these reasons, the staff recommends the designation of the Girard Estate Historic District.

Jody Della Barba, of the Girard Estate Area Residence, thanked Ms. Spina and Ms. Harvey for their hard work. Aliko Strakes of the Preservation Alliance read a statement in support of the proposed district.

Mr. Ward made a motion to accept the nomination. Ms. Lawrence seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

HARRY A. BATTEN FUND

Mr. Tyler asked the Commission to approve an expenditure of \$400.00 to send staff to the Annual National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference, and a separate amount for the Committee on Financial Hardship lunches.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion to approve the expenditures. Mr. Ward seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

THE REPORT on the Activities of the Historical Commission Staff, September 1999

Mr. Tyler asked if there were any questions regarding the staff report. There were none.

Mr. Thomas made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Lawrence seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted, 1414

R. Scott Jacob
Executive Secretary