

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

**TUESDAY, 27 JANUARY 2026
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
DAN MCCOUBREY, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

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

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, Chair	X		
John Cluver, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Justin Detwiler	X		
Nan Gutterman, FAIA	X		
Allison Lukachik	X		Arrived 9:16
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP	X		

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

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner II
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner II
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner III
Joshua Schroeder, Historic Preservation Planner I
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons were present:

Ashley Rohrbach
Brandon McNeice, Cornerstone Christian Academy
Carey Jackson Yonce, CANNObesign
Carmen Bushong
Carlo DiSilvestro, Blackney Hayes
Christopher Stromberg, S2 Design
Craig Morton, Aegis
Eric Quick
Gabe Procaccino
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Jay Farrell
Kevin Blackney, Blackney Hayes
Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department
Nancy Pontone
Patricia Freeland, Spring Garden Civic Association

Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Rich Leimbach
Rustin Ohler, Harman Deutsch Ohler Architects
Wen Lin, Liu Consulting & Construction LLC
William Vessal

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 25 S VAN PELT ST

Proposal: Alter facades; construct four-story addition

Review Requested: Final Approval/In Concept Approval

Owner: 25 Van Pelt Real Estate Advisors, LLC

Applicant: Christopher Stromberg, S2 Design

History: 1894; Evening Home and Library Association; Westray Ladd, architect; Addition, 1939, Big Brothers Association, Magaziner & Eberhard, architects

Individual Designation: None

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

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

OVERVIEW: Located between Ludlow and Chestnut Streets in the Rittenhouse Fitter Historic District, the property at 25 S. Van Pelt Street features two notable buildings: a Renaissance Revival portion to the south, designed by Westray Ladd and constructed in 1894; and a modern section, designed by Magaziner & Eberhard and constructed in 1939. The 1939 project entailed the rehabilitation of the entire complex, including exterior modifications to and partial demolition of the 1894 building, which was originally twice as wide. The 1939 addition included a large gymnasium, lecture rooms, basement workshops, and a caged-in roof court.

In February 2020, the Historical Commission granted final approval to the conversion of the 1939 addition into three attached townhouses with a one-story addition on the gymnasium roof. The plans did not propose any changes to the 1894 building. That plan was not implemented.

The current proposal, which calls for a four-story addition on the gymnasium with eight apartments, was first submitted for review at the November 2025 Architectural Committee meeting. In response to the staff recommendation, that proposal was withdrawn and has been resubmitted for the January 2026 Architectural Committee meeting. The revised proposal still includes four stories above the former gymnasium. The overbuild is significantly differentiated from the gymnasium with a contemporary glass curtain wall. The revised submission leaves the cornice line of the gymnasium intact. The proposal amends the fenestration pattern on the east and west facades to accommodate the change in program while referencing the previous approval by the Historical Commission. The balconies no longer project, and two garage doors have been added to the west facade. The rooftop would include a common penthouse space and deck. The application proposes the rehabilitation of the 1894 building.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Cut down/enlarge window openings to create garages and a pedestrian entrance;
- Remove brick to create second-floor windows at the front and rear;
- Alter banded gymnasium windows; and,
- Construct four-story addition with roof deck.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

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

- *Standard 2: The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
 - The application, echoing the previous Historical Commission approval, proposes to remove substantial portions of existing brick, altering the materials and features that characterize the property, and therefore does not comply with Standard 2.
- *Windows Guideline | Not Recommended: Changing the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows on primary or highly-visible elevations which will alter the historic character of the building; Cutting new openings on character-defining elevations or cutting new openings that damage or destroy significant features; Adding balconies at existing window openings or new window openings on primary or other highly-visible elevations where balconies never existed and, therefore, would be incompatible with the historic character of the building.*
 - This application, like the plans previously approved by the Historical Commission, proposes to alter the number, location, and size of windows on the primary elevation of the former gymnasium.
 - The Historical Commission previously approved a garage opening and entry doors on the primary first-floor façade; however, the additional garage opening further obscures the original design of the gymnasium addition.
 - The application does not comply with the Windows Guideline.
- *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.*
 - Although the proposed addition is differentiated from the historic building it is incompatible in material and scale.
 - The application does not comply with Standard 9.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 2 and 9 and the Windows Guideline.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:03:01

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Christopher Stromberg represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cluver observed that the proposed alterations to the Magaziner & Eberhardt-designed gymnasium exceed the previous approval. The garage entries eliminate the relationship between existing lower windows and the street; the second story windows of the revised design have been expanded, accentuating the conversion of the building from two stories to three stories; and the balconies disrupt the visual impact of the large ribbon windows.
 - Mr. Stromberg indicated that he intended to work within the spirit of the Historical Commission's approval from February 2020.
- Mr. Detwiler concurred with the comments of Mr. Cluver. In addition, he noted that the banded third-story windows have five horizontal divisions while the proposal has

- only four divisions.
 - Mr. Stromberg replied that appearance of five vertical lights could be restored.
- Mr. Detwiler suggested adding window details to the application.
- Ms. Stein observed that the third-story balcony disrupts the visual continuity of the ribbon windows.
- Ms. Gutterman objected to the four-story addition without setbacks because S. Van Pelt Street is so narrow. She noted there is no relationship between the addition's glass curtain wall and the masonry of the former gymnasium. She suggested including banded windows that echo the design of the third-story windows on the gymnasium.
 - Mr. Stromberg responded that application seeks to accentuate the design of the gymnasium facade by differentiating it from the addition.
- Mr. McCoubrey disagreed with Ms. Gutterman, expressing support for the differentiated addition. He argued that the differentiation could be enhanced by increasing the dimension between the gymnasium parapet and the addition.
- Mr. Detwiler urged increasing the dimension between the roof of the gymnasium and the bottom of the overbuild. He also suggested setting back the first story of the addition, if not the entire addition, from the planes of the gymnasium facades.
- Mr. McCoubrey encouraged the applicant to minimize the size of the garage door openings, reduce the size of the second-story windows, and make the recessed entry flush with the gymnasium facade.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The property at 25 S. Van Pelt Street features two notable buildings: a Renaissance Revival portion to the south, designed by Westray Ladd and constructed in 1894; and a modern section, designed by Magaziner & Eberhard and constructed in 1939.
- The proposal calls for a four-story addition on the gymnasium with eight apartments.
- In February 2020, the Historical Commission granted final approval to the conversion of the 1939 addition into three attached townhouses with a one-story addition on the gymnasium roof.
- The proposal amends the fenestration pattern on the east and west facades of the gymnasium to accommodate the change in program.
- The overbuild is significantly differentiated from the gymnasium with a contemporary glass curtain wall.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The proposal would remove substantial portions of existing brick, altering the materials and features that characterize the property, failing to satisfy Standard 2.
- The planar break between the gymnasium and the addition is insufficient, failing to satisfy Standard 9.

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

ITEM: 25 S Van Pelt St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Gutterman SECONDED BY: Cluver					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik	X				
Amy Stein	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 124 S 16TH ST

Proposal: Legalize signage

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Leelo Inc.

Applicant: Hamza Ayaydah, HMA Consulting & Contracting Company

History: 1882, Henry C. Gibson Development House, G.W. & H.D. Hewitt, architects; 1921, storefront

Individual Designation: 4/13/1994

District Designation: None

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes legalizing signage installed without a permit at 124 S. 16th Street. At the request of the Historical Commission's staff, the Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation for the signage installed without a building permit, prompting this request for legalization. The new signage includes a small projecting sign by the doorway and a large acrylic channel letter wall sign at the storefront transom. The storefront was installed in 1921, when the building transitioned from residential to mixed use. The Historical Commission previously approved an awning open at the sides and bottom as signage over the transom at this storefront.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Legalize signage.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
- *Storefronts Guideline I Not Recommended: Replacing or covering a glass transom with solid material or inappropriate signage, or installing an incompatible awning over it.*
 - The large wall sign is incompatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions of the historic building, and covers over the glass transom. This application fails to satisfy Standard 9 and the Storefronts Guideline.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Storefronts Guideline.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:33:25

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- No one represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Gutterman agreed with the staff recommendation of denial.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked if the wall sign is internally illuminated.
 - Ms. Chantry responded that the channel letters are internally illuminated.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that it is unfortunate that the wall sign covers the storefront transom.
- Ms. Gutterman asked about the large projecting Joe's Pizza sign on the adjacent building, and questioned if that sign was permitted.
 - Ms. Chantry clarified that the Joe's Pizza building at 118-22 S. 16th Street is not listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, so the Historical Commission has no jurisdiction over the review of signage for that building.
- Mr. Detwiler asked if the small projecting sign was part of the unpermitted signage installation.
 - Ms. Chantry confirmed that the unpermitted signage includes the small projecting sign.
- Ms. Stein brought attention to what appears to be window decal signage on the basement windows.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that many stores choose to put an accessory sign such as this behind the glass, within the building, which is not ideal but at least does not alter the facade.
- Ms. Gutterman asked if the previous awning was over the storefront or the entrance door transom.
 - Ms. Chantry responded that the awning was only over the storefront transom.
- Ms. Gutterman suggested replacing the current signage with an awning with business name, which would allow for visibility on the underside of the storefront transom.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The new signage installed without permits includes a small projecting sign by the doorway and a large acrylic channel letter wall sign at the storefront transom.
- The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation for the installation of signage without a building permit.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The large wall sign is incompatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions of the historic building, and covers over the glass transom. This application fails to satisfy Standard 9 and the Storefronts Guideline.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to

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recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Storefronts Guideline.

ITEM: 124 S 16th St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Gutterman SECONDED BY: Detwiler					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik	X				
Amy Stein	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 203 CARPENTER ST

Proposal: Construct three-story addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Gabriel Procaccino and Rachele Kurlander

Applicant: Rustin Ohler, Harman Deutsch Ohler Architecture

History: 1837

Individual Designation: 5/31/1966

District Designation: None

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes a three-story rear addition to the building at 203 Carpenter Street, with a small deck at the second-floor level. The proposal includes demolition of the existing two-story rear ell and the rear wall of the historic main block of the building, which survives at the second- and third-floor levels.

As proposed, the roof system of the addition would intersect the roof of the main block near the rear eave, but no details are provided showing that junction. A skylight is also proposed for the rear slope of the gable roof.

The proposed addition would be visible from various points along Hall Street, though a one-story garage at 206 Hall Street mitigates the view somewhat.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Demolish two-story ell and rear wall of main block.
- Construct three-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 will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to*

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protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

- *Recommended: Constructing a new addition that results in the least possible loss of historic materials so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.*
 - The application proposes demolishing the rear wall of the main block, the rear eave, and a chimney, which appear to be historic features of the building.
- *Recommended: Ensuring that the addition is subordinate and secondary to the historic building and is compatible in massing, scale, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.*
 - The proposed addition would be out of scale with the main block and break the established pattern of two-story rear ell buildings.
- An addition that retained the surviving portions of the rear wall and met the building below the rear cornice would satisfy Standard 9.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:43:30

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Rustin Ohler represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Stein asked if demolition plans had been provided.
 - Mr. Maust responded that the applicant had submitted a demolition plan late the previous week. He presented it to the Architectural Committee.
 - Mr. Ohler noted that all existing joists were to remain except for a couple small alterations to the existing stair, which is currently a winder stair at the upper floors.
- Ms. Gutterman inquired whether the addition involves an overbuild of the main block.
 - Mr. Ohler answered that the addition would slightly extend over the rear of the roof, but that all rafters would remain.
- Mr. Detwiler asked if this application requested final approval or and in-concept review. He suggested that the application lacked detail and specifically cited the lack of dimensions.
 - Ms. Gutterman agreed that greater detail was required for construction plans.
 - Mr. Ohler responded that a zoning permit had been obtained and that construction plans would be created and submitted to the Historical Commission's staff.
- Ms. Stein asked if the proposed addition would extend to the same depth as the neighboring building at 205 Carpenter Street.
 - Mr. Ohler said that the proposed addition would be shorter, apart from the second-floor deck, than its neighbor, in order to maintain the open space requirement while widening to occupy the full width of the lot.
 - Ms. Stein identified imagery in the submission that suggested that the addition would match the depth of the neighboring building. She also asked about the wing walls shown at the rear.
 - Mr. Ohler reaffirmed that the neighboring house would extend two and a half feet beyond the proposed addition. He described the wing walls as existing and said they would only be present at the first floor as they support the second-floor

deck.

- Mr. McCoubrey inquired whether any study had been made of how to retain some of the historic rear wall.
 - Mr. Ohler said the team had studied it, but that the existing openings did not offer sufficient access to the rear space.
 - Mr. McCoubrey suggested that it could possibly be modified rather than entirely demolished.
- Mr. Cluver commented that the public view from the rear street shows a rhythm of three-story buildings with two-story rear ells and suggested that some deference to the rear form seemed important.
 - Mr. Ohler described the proposed addition as in scale with the rear of the neighboring properties at 940 and 942 Moyamensing Avenue.
 - Ms. Gutterman observed that those neighboring buildings may not match the height of the main block of the subject property.
 - Mr. Ohler replied that he had not surveyed the neighboring buildings and could not speak to that.
- Ms. Gutterman returned to the subject of the proposed addition's overbuild of the rear slope. She contended that the rear roof would be lost as a visible feature. She asked for details regarding how the overbuild would be tied into the existing building. She worried that the removal of the rear wall might compromise the structure of the roof, and that, while a solution may be found for that, it is not described in the submission.
 - Mr. Ohler described the roof rafters as extending between the side walls and suggested that the roof structure does not rely on the rear wall of the main block.
 - Mr. Cluver expressed surprise about that structural scheme.
 - Mr. Ohler said that is what the survey found and that he would confirm that before the Historical Commission's meeting.
- Mr. McCoubrey voiced the opinion that the proposed rear ell is too tall and that it should be deferential to the main block and meet the building below the rear eave of the gable roof. He also reiterated his feeling that an effort should be made to reserve portions of the historic rear wall where possible.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The rear masonry wall, which survives at the second- and third-floor levels, should be modified where necessary rather than entirely demolished.
- Neighboring properties along Carpenter Street exhibit an established rhythm with two-story rear ells behind three-story structures, which speaks to the history of the buildings.
- A rear addition that is more deferential to the main block would better meet the Standards.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application fails to satisfy Standard 9.

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

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ITEM: 203 Carpenter St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Gutterman SECONDED BY: Cluver					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik	X				
Amy Stein	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 2115-19 SPRING GARDEN ST

Proposal: Construct four residential townhomes

Review Requested: Review and Comment

Owner: Eclipse Development LLC

Applicant: Carey Jackson Yonce, Canno Design

History: parking lot

Individual Designation: none

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, Non-contributing, 10/11/2000

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct four townhouses on an existing vacant parcel in the Spring Garden Historic District. This parcel was vacant at the time of district designation and is classified as “non-contributing” to the district; it is considered “undeveloped.” Therefore, the Historical Commission’s jurisdiction is limited to “review-and-comment” for this project.

The proposed new construction would be faced with flat and textured red brick and cast stone. The four townhouse units would be perpendicular to Spring Garden and parking spaces would be located below the units at ground level.

SCOPE OF WORK: Construct four townhouses with 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 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.*

STAFF COMMENT: The staff comments that the proposed townhouses are not compatible in materials, features, and design with the buildings of the historic district, which generally include verticality, strong cornice lines, and slight setbacks.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:03:59

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PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Carey Jackson Yonce represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Stein stated that she had a strong negative reaction to the proposal. She expressed that the orientation of the townhouses is detrimental to the block and does not follow the established rowhouse pattern of the neighborhood. She commented that the design lacks engagement with the street. Ms. Stein objected to the inclusion of garage doors on the primary facade and described the overall building as fortress-like. She emphasized that her concerns were not about contemporary versus historic architecture, but about urban form and streetscape compatibility. She encouraged the design team to reconsider the orientation of the street-facing unit and explore a fundamentally different approach that would better address Spring Garden Street.
- Mr. Cluver agreed that placing the side of the building on the street is a fundamental obstacle that limits compatibility with the historic district. He stated that the houndstooth brick pattern further emphasizes the building's disconnection from the surrounding context, noting that such a pattern is not present on the block. He observed that the unit dimensions appear close enough in proportion to allow for potential rotation of one or more units and suggested that parking access could be shifted to an alley rather than interrupting the street facade with garage doors.
- Mr. Detwiler questioned the lack of windows on the Spring Garden Street facade, particularly on the upper floors. He asserted that the orientation of the townhouses was not successful and resulted in a building that fails to contribute positively to the streetscape. He also suggested that one or more of the townhouses could be rotated to face the street directly.
 - Mr. Yonce responded that window placement and solid wall areas were driven by interior programming, including bathrooms, closets, and bedroom layouts. He reiterated that the townhouses were designed to function like traditional townhouses with primary facades on the east and the west. He stated that the brick pattern was intended as a creative response to the limited fenestration.
- Ms. Stein responded that the architect has control over the organization of the building and could choose to design the street-facing unit differently from the others. She reiterated that the building does not need to replicate adjacent rowhouses but must still address the street in a meaningful way.
- Mr. Detwiler reiterated his suggestion that one or more units could be turned to face Spring Garden Street, noting that the proportions of the units could allow for such a reconfiguration.
- Mr. McCoubrey observed that the design appeared to be driven in part by the parking layout beneath the buildings. He agreed that the front unit or units could be designed differently.
 - Mr. Yonce stated that the parking requirements were a significant factor in the project but acknowledged the Architectural Committee's concerns.
- Mr. Cluver further elaborated that the project effectively places four units on three lots and suggested that minor adjustments to unit widths could allow for improved alley access. He proposed that vehicular access could be relocated to an alley, eliminating the need for garage doors on the street facade.
 - Mr. Yonce responded that he would investigate whether this approach could be made feasible.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked whether the proposed facades align with adjacent buildings on

Spring Garden Street.

- Mr. Yonce confirmed that they did.
- Mr. McCoubrey suggested recessing the projecting portals between buildings to emphasize the separation between units and recommended replacing masonry elements with ornamental metal gates, consistent with typical alley treatments.
 - Mr. Yonce responded that the design team could explore recessed portals and ornamental metal gates and agreed that such an approach may align with conditions found in adjacent alleyways.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance spoke in opposition to the application, commenting that the flatness of the facade could be reduced and the relationship to the historic rhythm of Spring Garden Street could be strengthened.
- Patricia Freeland of the Spring Garden Community Development Corporation and Spring Garden Civic Association spoke in opposition to the application, echoing the opinion that the proposed building was not compatible with the streetscape.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The building's orientation and relationship to the street result in facades that are incompatible with the Spring Garden Historic District.
- Parking and garage access are driving the design at the expense of the streetscape.
- The Historical Commission has "review and comment" jurisdiction only over this application.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application fails to satisfy Standard 9, as the proposed townhouses are not compatible in materials, features, and design with the buildings of the historic district, which generally include verticality, strong cornice lines, and slight setbacks.

ADDRESS: 229 N CAMAC ST

Proposal: Demolish rear wall; construct three-story addition with roof deck and pilot house

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Fon Law Kit and Mai Yim

Applicant: Wen Lin, Liu Consulting & Construction LLC

History: 1840

Individual Designation: 5/4/1972

District Designation: None

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct a rear addition with roof deck and pilot house on a rowhouse at the individually designated property 229 N. Camac Street. The rowhouse was constructed c. 1840 and is three-and-a-half stories tall with a gabled roof, front and rear dormers, and a red brick facade. The historic rear ell is connected to the main block of the house by a narrower, slightly taller piazza. To construct the addition, the historic rear ell would be demolished and the pitched roof of the piazza would be removed. The addition would be clad in cement board siding and would be three stories tall, but its walls would extend up above the roof line to form a deck that would occupy all of the addition's roof area as well as that of the historic piazza. The deck would be accessed by a pilot house. The rear of the building is visible

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from surrounding Summer and N. 12th Streets, though from long viewpoints and across a parking lot and other undeveloped parcels.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Demolish existing historic rear ell
- Construct a three-story rear addition with roof deck and pilot house

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.*
 - The proposed addition would be visible from the public right-of-way. The height of the addition and its cladding materials would be incompatible with the historic rowhouse. The application does not satisfy Standard 9, but could if the overall size, scale, and materials were revised.
 - The application proposes to demolish an existing historic rear ell. However, the ell is only partially visible from surrounding public rights-of-way and is not itself a significant feature that characterizes the property.
 - The proposed roof deck would be located on a rear ell and only be partially visible from surrounding public rights-of-way.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial as proposed, but approval of a revised addition that is smaller and clad with materials that more closely align with the historic character of the building, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:23:53

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Till presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Wen Lin represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Lin briefly described the project, highlighting that they are seeking to construct an addition to the rear of this building but not make any alterations to the front façade.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked the applicant to respond to the staff's recommendation concerning the size and scale of the addition.
 - Mr. Till added that the staff's recommendation also expressed concern about the proposed cladding material.
 - Mr. Lin explained that the added height of the addition will not be visible from the front. The rear is surrounded by parking spaces and other lots, and the height will be similar to that of the neighbor. In addition, they are proposing to use cement board siding for cladding, which they saw as a better option than vinyl or similar materials.
- Ms. Gutterman pointed out that the proposed addition will require demolishing the rear wall of the original house and will modify some original roof structure. Moreover, the addition will be visible from the rear from a public space and the fact that the neighboring building has a relatively new addition is not relevant here because it is not listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

- Mr. Lin explained that the existing rear ell is only two stories tall and the new one will be three and extend to the property lines.
- Ms. Gutterman clarified that the issue is both with the overall massing of the proposed addition as well as its height. It is out of scale with the historic resource and appears to alter too much of the original rear walls and roof.
- Mr. Lin asked if an addition that was about the same depth as the neighboring one but with a lower height would be more acceptable.
 - Ms. Gutterman responded that it would be difficult to say that for sure without seeing a proposal.
- Ms. Lukachik asked about the demolition plan. She stated that it is unclear how much of the roof is being proposed for demolition. The proposed drawings look to require demolition of the rear portion of the roof on the main block of the house, but the demolition plans seem to indicate that it will remain as is.
 - Mr. McCoubrey agreed and explained that the section drawings look to have a portion of the rear gable missing on them.
 - Both Architectural Committee members asked to clarify whether or not the application proposes to alter the rear gable roof and where exactly the new construction will intersect with it and the rear dormer.
 - Mr. Lin responded that they are not touching the rear dormer or gable roof at all, only demolishing the setback rear ell.
 - Architectural Committee members McCoubrey, Lukachik, and Gutterman all pointed out that the plans seem to show them demolishing the rear wall of the main block of the building and part of the main roof as well.
 - Mr. Lin explained that the section drawings are a little misleading but that they do not propose to alter the rear gable roof at all. He offered to provide additional photographs of the current conditions to help demonstrate.
 - Mr. McCoubrey encouraged the applicant to add more information on the roof details to clarify exactly what will be demolished. In addition, he asked for more clarification as to whether the rear wall of the building is also being removed. Generally, he explained, the Architectural Committee looks for rear walls and roof slopes on the main block of house to remain and that the addition sits under the rear cornice line.
- Mr. Cluver asked if the addition is being proposed to extend to the property line on the side.
 - Mr. Lin responded that it will.
 - Mr. Cluver asked if the outdoor space that exists between the existing building and the addition will only be accessible from the inside of the building.
 - Mr. Lin responded that the outdoor space would be accessed from the building.
 - Mr. Cluver pointed out that it is not necessarily part of the Architectural Committee's review, but that the neighboring property appears to have windows along that same property line that would be blocked by the addition.
 - Mr. Lin answered that he would double-check the situation with that outdoor space and neighboring building.
- Mr. McCoubrey commented that the layout of the building has a "hyphen" that connects the addition to the original building and that because of this, the applicant has a lot of control regarding how the new portion will connect to the main block. He went on to say that the neighboring building with the new rear wing is quite tall and, in looking at it, it is built over the rear gable of the main block's roof and goes up to the edge of the rear dormer. He stated that that design choice would not be appropriate for a historically designated building. However, the current design looks

like it is aiming to match that the design of the adjacent, inappropriate ell. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards would indicate that the slope of the main roof should be preserved.

- Mr. Detwiler pointed out that the neighboring dormer appears to have been extended as well. Therefore, if the proposed addition aligns with the neighbor, it will also need to extend over the eave line.
- Ms. Lukachik added that one of the struggles she is having with the application is that it lacks any drawings that show it in context with its neighbors, neither in elevation nor in plan. The lack of context makes it difficult to judge how much space the addition will actually occupy. She suggested adding more information on the context into the application.
- Mr. Lin suggested he could add the two neighboring buildings to his rendering.
- Ms. Lukachik suggested that an elevation, plan, and/or section drawing would be useful as well because renderings can often be misleading.
- Mr. McCoubrey commented that it looks like the roof on the neighbor may have been lifted at some point as well, so the applicant should focus on the cornice line of their own building with their design.
 - Mr. Lin responded that when they surveyed the building, there was a lot of cracking and damage, so they are trying to make it as square as possible and more livable without touching the front-facing portion of the historic building.
 - Mr. Detwiler suggested that, if they better align their addition with the existing piazza, they should still be able to repair the walls and more of the existing structure could be maintained.
 - Mr. McCoubrey suggested that their intent might have been to use the existing piazza as a connector, but it seems that its roof has been rebuilt to overlap with the main block at some point.
- Mr. Lin commented that he will submit a revised plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- It would be acceptable to demolish the existing rear ell of the property at 229 N. Camac Street and replace it with a new structure.
- The proposed addition is overly large and tall and out of keeping with the historic character of the building.
- The addition should not require the demolition of the rear wall of the main block of the house or any of the roof elements on the main block.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application fails to satisfy Standard 9. The proposed addition would be visible from the public right-of-way. The height of the addition and its cladding materials would be incompatible with the historic rowhouse.

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

ITEM: 229 N Camac St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Cluver SECONDED BY: Stein					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik	X				
Amy Stein	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 425 S 42ND ST

Proposal: Construct accessible ramp, entrance vestibule, and gate with signage

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Cornerstone Christian Academy

Applicant: Carlo DiSilvestro, Blackney Hayes

History: 1879; Trinity Episcopal Church of Marylandville; Charles Burns, architect

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Southeast Spruce Hill Historic District, Contributing, 7/12/2024

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

BACKGROUND:

This application seeks final approval for alterations to the church building at 425 S. 42nd Steet. The church was designed by architect Charles Burns and constructed in 1879. Originally known as the Trinity Episcopal Church of Marylandville, the church building will be rehabilitated for Cornerstone Christian Academy. The most visible alterations will be the construction of an accessibility ramp, entrance courtyard, and addition for a vestibule on the south elevation. Exterior changes planned for the north elevation include the removal of two original dormers and the reconfiguration of a wall and roof area to accommodate an elevator. The alterations will be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way. The application's scope of work include window replacement and tower masonry restoration. The Historical Commission's staff can typically review and approve this type of work administratively.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Demolish existing entrance stairs, alter entrance, and construct accessible ramp on the south elevation.
- Remove two dormers and extend a north elevation wall to accommodate an elevator.
- Reconstruct the top of the church tower.
- Construct an entrance vestibule addition.
- Remove a historic gate in the courtyard.
- Rehabilitate the entrance courtyard with gate, signage, pavers, and side door.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

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

- *Standard 5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or*

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 27 JANUARY 2026

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

- The stained-glass windows will be retained and repaired; therefore, this part of the application meets Standard 2.
- The restoration of the entryway and stairs on the west elevation satisfies Standard 5.
- The original gate in the courtyard will be removed. To meet Standard 5, the gate should be retained or possibly secured in place.
- The entrance doors on the south elevation will be replaced in-kind to allow for full accessibility. The historic door hardware will be restored and reinstalled on the new door; therefore, this part of the application meets Standard 5.
- *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.*
 - The construction of an accessibility ramp on the south elevation could meet Standard 9 with modifications to the proposed design. While the general design and materials of the ramp are compatible with the historic building, specific details increase the visual mass and scale of the new ramp. The staff recommends eliminating the cast stone balustrade at the top of the ramp and replacing it with a metal picket railing. Reducing the width of the ramp's pillars and modifying the color or material would reduce their prominence in the design and increase compatibility with the historic building.
- *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.*
 - The proposed demolition permanently removes the south elevation entrance steps and north elevation dormers and roofline. The applicant should document both areas of the project in detail to allow for possible future restoration. If the documentation is completed and provided to the Historical Commission, this application will satisfy Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends approval, provided the proposed revisions are implemented, with staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 5, 9, and 10.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:44:24

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architects Carmen Bushong and Carlo DiSilvestro and owner representative Brandon McNeice represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. McCoubrey asked the applicant to respond to the staff's comments.
- Ms. Bushong inquired about the staff's recommendation to retain the historic gate in the courtyard. She asked if the gate could be relocated or if it must remain in its current location.
 - Ms. Mehley replied that the staff's focus was on retaining the historic gate at the building site. She said that ideally the gate would remain in its current location and permanently secured against the stone wall, allowing uninterrupted access through the entrance courtyard. Ms. Mehley added that other options may be to relocate the gate to a different part of the building or permanently store it on site.
- Ms. Bushong inquired about hardware requirements for the entrance area at the southwest corner of the building. She explained they must upgrade the doors to

make them accessible. Ms. Bushong said that specific aspects of the door and entrance would be replaced, and she wished to make that clear. She said the door hinges would be replaced in kind, and the pole would be replaced to make it ADA compliant.

- Ms. Mehley said that the application drawings showed the original strap hinges to be restored and reinstalled. She stated the other details of the door and entryway could be worked out.
- Mr. DiSilvestro said their intent was to salvage the existing hinges and refurbish them. He explained that they need to raise the bottom hinge ten inches to meet the ADA flush clearance on the inside of the door. He said the historic brackets have integrated hinges and they will need to cut the bracket off at the hinge to make it work. Mr. DiSilvestro explained that the new doors will have a continuous hinge, but once the historic brackets are restored, they will be installed on the new doors.
- Mr. Detwiler agreed with the applicant's plan and encouraged them to retain as much historic hardware as possible.
- Mr. Cluver asked if the door would be automated with a core operator or if it would be a manual door. He inquired where the push button would be for an automated door.
 - Ms. Bushong confirmed that it would be an automated door. She said the application showed a post-mounted button for the door.
 - Mr. Cluver said he was fine with it being mounted on a post. He added that they could also explore a wall mounted hardwired or wireless unit as well.
- Mr. Cluver said the staff recommended removing the proposed cast-stone balustrade on the accessibility ramp and replacing it with a metal railing. He commented that he could go either way on this element. He recommended that, if they move forward with the balustrade on the south elevation, they should also do it on the west side to further define the landing.
- Mr. Cluver inquired about the ramp's cast-stone pillars. He asked if they intended to match the other stone on the building. Mr. Cluver remarked that the rendering made the pillars look different from the historic character of the building.
 - Mr. DiSilvestro said the pillars were lighter in color and were intended to match a color on the upper tower. He explained that the intent was to differentiate the pillars and break up the mass of the ramp.
 - Mr. Cluver said that he was not convinced that the color was going to do what the applicant intended. He expressed concern that the contrast between the light-colored cast stone pillars and the historic stone of the church was too great and that it would not blend well. Mr. Cluver pointed to the color of the surround at the arched door and the window trim. He noted that both were a light color and could potentially better connect the ramp trim to the trim of the building.
 - Mr. Detwiler suggested removing the pillars completely. He said the ramp being visually lighter was better. Mr. Detwiler said the ramp's pillars block the lightness and cleanness of the church façade and recommended not trying to compete with it and keeping it simple. He recommended using stone masonry on the lower section and installing a high-quality bronze or black railing on the ramp. Mr. Detwiler said this would minimize the appearance of the ramp.
 - Mr. McCoubrey agreed with Mr. Detwiler's recommendations and noted that removing the pillars would reduce the visual impact of the ramp. He suggested that a stone plinth with a beautiful metal railing may also be appropriate.
 - Mr. Cluver asked the Architectural Committee members to clarify if their recommendation was to eliminate the cast stone pillars altogether.

- Mr. Detwiler stated that he would eliminate them from the ramp but was flexible on the landing and stoop area. Mr. McCoubrey recommended a smaller expression of pillars but would use stone masonry and not the contrasting masonry for the pillars. He said it would be best if the ramp's base reads as a single material.
- Ms. Stein said she agreed with the Architectural Committee's comments on the ramp. She pointed out that the church and tower have a lot of horizontal elements in its design. Ms. Stein observed that the vertical pillars compete with this and draw attention to the ramp. She contended that the focus should be on the historic building and its façade rather than the ramp.
- Mr. Detwiler said the architect Charles Burns was a master and loved textures of material. He observed there is such cleanness to the church's historic design and depth of detail. Mr. Detwiler suggested that the ramp's design should not compete with this aspect of the church's design.
- Mr. Detwiler complimented the applicant on their submission and approach to the project. He said he appreciated the applicant's willingness to discuss the application details. Mr. McCoubrey thanked the applicant for the submission's high quality and expressed appreciation that the building will be occupied and brought back to life.
- Mr. McCoubrey inquired about the removal of original dormers.
 - Mr. DiSilvestro responded that the dormers to be removed were located on the north elevation. He pointed to the application's roof plan, where the demolition location was shown. Mr. DiSilvestro explained that the dormers were being removed to accommodate an elevator.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the proposed height of the reconfigured roof area.
 - Mr. DiSilvestro explained they need to maintain the height for the elevator cab itself, and the clearance around it, which is why they could not maintain the two dormers. He explained that the intent was to keep the existing ridge line and have it sloped in such a way that they can still maintain the clearance above the elevator cab for the beam and the safety tie-offs.
- Mr. Detwiler and Mr. McCoubrey asked if the front eave line shown in the elevation drawing is as low as it can go.
 - Mr. DiSilvestro confirmed that it is.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that the shed dormer looked top heavy but recognized that it was accommodating the elevator overrun. He recommended that the applicant work on the design to make it feel lighter than currently shown.
- Mr. Cluver asked about the location of the elevator machine closet.
 - Mr. DiSilvestro explained that it does not have one and that the mechanical equipment would be in the jamb on the first-floor landing and the gear mast within the shaft. He added that it would be a small, limited use lift like a residential elevator.
- Mr. McCoubrey inquired about proposed design for the entrance vestibule. He observed that it would be set back and tucked away at the rear of the courtyard. He asked about the depth of the new vestibule's fascia and if it could be thinned up. Mr. McCoubrey recommended that the single-light transom be subdivided up to give more scale to those elements.
 - Mr. Detwiler said it appeared clunky and top heavy. He recommended that it be thinned up.
 - Mr. Cluver observed that the section drawing showed a two-part fascia. He said if the upper plane was revised to project out a little more, it may create more of a shadow line and that could make a big difference to break up the mass.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The design of the accessibility ramp should be revised to minimize its appearance and avoid competing with the church facade. The cast-stone pillars should be removed or reduced in size with their material changed to stone masonry. The cast-stone balustrade should be removed and replaced with a high-quality bronze or black metal railing.
- The south elevation's historic door hardware should be salvaged and reused as much as possible on the new doors.
- The historic gate in the entrance courtyard should be maintained and secured back against the stone wall. This should be done in a manner that does not interfere with circulation in and out of the school building.
- The entrance vestibule's overall design and details should be refined. The fascia and other elements appeared oversized.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application would satisfy Standard 5 if the historic gate in the courtyard is retained and secured in place.
- The application would satisfy Standard 9 with modifications to the proposed accessibility ramp to minimize its appearance.
- The application would satisfy Standard 10 if the applicant documents the south elevation entrance steps and north elevation dormers and roofline prior to demolition to allow for possible future restoration. The documentation should be submitted to the Historical Commission as part of the final permit review.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend approval, provided the proposed revisions are implemented, with staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 5, 9, and 10.

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:16:22

ACTION: The Architectural Committee adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

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