

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**20 APRIL 2022, 9:30 A.M.
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		Arrived at 11:15 a.m.
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.	X		
Bruce Lavery		X	
Debbie Miller	X		
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.	X		

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

The following staff members were present:

- Jon Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons attended the online meeting:

- Olga McGarity
- Sharla Russell
- Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance
- Lisa Smith
- Oscar Beisert
- David Traub, Save Our Sites
- Nick Kraus, Heritage Consulting Group
- Allison Weiss, SoLo Germantown Civic Association
- Lacy Rhoades
- Marjorie L. Spaeth
- Mary McNatt
- Patrick Nellis
- Kate Riestenberg
- Arthur Verbrugghe
- Sharla Russell

Alice George
Nancy Pontone
Karl Recktenwald
Jorge I. Alvarez
Susan Wetherill
Gavin G. Kopa
David Mercuris, The Goldenberg Group
Langdon Palmer
Margaret Ann Morris
KC Roney, Habitat for Humanity
Laura DiPasquale Zupan
Angel Rodriguez, Philadelphia Land Bank
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
George McClennen
David Smith, Esq.
Howard B Haas
Alex Balloon
Mike Kutra
Andrew Dillon
Hal Schirmer
Chris Taylor
Benjamin Cooper
Emily DiCello
Dennis Carlisle
Bob Turner
Celeste Hardester
Don Simon
Cart Reed
John Carpenter
David Fecteau, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Venise Whitaker
Kevin McMahon
Tom Grahsler
Ed McColly
Gary Owens
Ann Levering
Jay Farrell
Robert Freedman
Dan Herrman
Judith Robinson
Steven Peitzman
Deborah Gary, SPPAAA
Layal Issa
Kay Sykora
Marty Gregorski
Cheryl Feldman
Jeff Craighead
Alexander Fidrych
Kevin Trapper
Jessie Lawrence
Polly Cochran

ADDRESS: 5626 MORTON ST

Name of Resource: Sun Ra House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Le Sony'R Ra

Nominator: Historical Commission staff

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5626 Morton Street, known as the Arkestral Institute of Sun Ra, in Germantown. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation A as delineated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code; it "is associated with the life of a person significant in the past," Sun Ra, who was a poet, author, composer, actor, philosopher, mystic, founder of the Afrofuturism movement, and one of the most influential jazz musicians of the twentieth century. He and some of his band members lived and rehearsed in the house from 1968 to his death in 1993 and some band members continue to live and play at the rowhouse in 2022.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 5626 Morton Street satisfies Criterion for Designation A as delineated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code; it "is associated with the life of a person significant in the past," Sun Ra, and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:08:35

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. He showed a short video clip from a documentary on Sun Ra titled *A Joyful Noise*, produced in 1980.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Milroy stated that she agreed with the nomination's assertion that the property satisfies Criterion for Designation A.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society supported the nomination.
- Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia supported the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman supported the nomination
- Olga McGarity supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Sun Ra was a poet, author, composer, actor, philosopher, mystic, founder of the Afrofuturism movement, and one of the most influential jazz musicians of the twentieth century.
- Sun Ra and some of his band members lived and rehearsed in the house at 5626 Morton Street from 1968 to his death in 1993 and some band members continue to live and play at the rowhouse in 2022.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The property at 5626 Morton Street, known as the Arkestral Institute of Sun Ra, satisfies Criterion for Designation A as delineated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code; it “is associated with the life of a person significant in the past,” Sun Ra.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5626 Morton Street satisfies Criterion for Designation A because it is associated with the life of a person significant in the past, Sun Ra.

ITEM: 5626 Morton St					
MOTION: Designate, Criterion for Designation A					
MOVED BY: Miller					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 1613 TO 1627 W NORRIS ST AND 1610 TO 1616 PAGE ST

Name of Resource: Parking lot

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Philadelphia Land Bank

Nominator: Mary McNatt

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate a parking lot at 1613 to 1627 W. Norris Street and 1610 to 1616 Page Street in North Philadelphia. The parking lot is paved with asphalt and has low concrete walls along W. Norris Street. The nomination contends that the parking lot satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, G, and H, which are enumerated as follows in Section 14-1004 of the historic preservation ordinance.

(A) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;

(B) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;

(G) Is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif;

(H) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City;

The nomination provides some background on the parking lot and explains why current access to parking is important for neighborhood residents. The nomination does not provide specific arguments regarding the historical significance of the parking lot or the satisfaction of the Criteria for Designation, except to check the boxes on the nomination form.

According to a document in the Department of Licenses and Inspections Zoning Archive, the parking lot was constructed in 1964 or 1965. The City of Philadelphia was issued a zoning permit to demolish the rowhouses at 1613 to 1627 W. Norris Street and 1610 to 1616 Page Street and construct a “City-owned public parking lot” on October 6, 1964. The rowhouses that were demolished dated to 1873. They were constructed by Thomas S. Shoemaker, the “largest homebuilder at the time of the Centennial.” Shoemaker built hundreds of similar rowhouses in North Philadelphia in the second half of the nineteenth century. The parking lot was constructed for the public school to the south, across Norris Street, now called the Carver Science and Engineering. Originally called the George Washington Carver School, the school building was a replacement for the nearby, outdated James L. Claghorn School, was designed by architects Baader, Young and Schlutze, who specialized in school buildings, and opened in September 1949. The school was erected on the site of the former Baptist Home for Aged and Poor.

The nomination contends that the parking lot is located on land that was once part of Monument Cemetery. That is untrue. Monument Cemetery was located to the southeast of the parking lot. The shortest distance from the parking lot to the former cemetery boundary is approximately 135 feet. The land where the parking lot is located was historically separated from the cemetery by Turner’s Lane, which no longer exists, and by Norris Street, originally called Franklin Avenue.

The parking lot is currently held by the Philadelphia Land Bank, part of the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, a quasi-City agency. The Land Bank holds vacant land and ensures that the land is repurposed in ways that benefit the public. The Page Street section of the parking lot has been slated for redevelopment as low and moderate-income housing by Habitat for Humanity. Zoning permits ZP-2021-009229, 009245, 009247, and 009249 and building permits RP-2021-014883, 015076, and 015075 have been issued for the project and are not subject to the Historical Commission’s review. The remainder of the land will be redeveloped to benefit the public at a future date.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the parking lot at 1613 to 1627 W. Norris Street and 1610 to 1616 Page Street satisfies any Criteria for Designation and that the parking lot should not be designated as historic. The staff notes that a large section of the parking lot is already committed for redevelopment as low-income housing and the permits for that redevelopment are not reviewable by the Historical Commission. While parking may be at a premium in this neighborhood, the Historical Commission must limit the use of its regulatory authority to preserving truly historic resources.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:22:10

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Owing to technological issues, Mary McNatt was unable to participate as the nominator. She attended the meeting and was unmuted to speak numerous times but was never audible.
- Angel Rodriguez, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Land Bank and Deputy Executive Director of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, and KC Roney,

Senior Director of Programs for Habitat for Humanity, represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Rodriguez stated that he represents the Philadelphia Land Bank and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and that he supports the staff recommendation that the parking lot should not be designated as historic. He then commented that development of the site is anticipated to address the crisis of affordable housing throughout the city. He clarified that the property is not currently an active and zoned parking lot, noting that it is not licensed for parking and is a liability for both organizations for it to operate as a parking lot. He again concurred with the staff's recommendation not to designate the property as a historic site.
- Ms. Roney stated that Habitat for Humanity has obtained building permits for the parcels at 1610 to 1614 Page Street and plans to build energy-efficient, affordable single-family rowhouses that will be purchased by income-qualified persons who have successfully completed Habitat's homeownership program. She noted that Habitat submitted comments ahead of the meeting, adding that the organization supports the staff recommendation. She asked that the Committee decline the designation of the properties.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that while parking is understandably important to near neighbors, a property must be historically significant to be designated. The information presented in the nomination, she continued, is relevant to buildings that no longer exist. She added that there is no information presented that would lead the Committee to make a recommendation to the Historical Commission that these properties satisfy any of the Criteria in the City's preservation ordinance.
 - o Mr. Cohen agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society commended the staff for processing the nomination but stated that the properties do not seem to be a historic resource.
- Gavin Kopa, a neighbor, stated that the residents use the parking lot and that removing the lot would present a major change for the elderly women who park there.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The nomination contends that the parking lot satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, G, and H, but provides no argument for those Criteria.
- Building permits have been issued for the properties at 1610, 1612, and 1614 Page Street, and Habitat for Humanity plans to construct three townhouses for income-qualifying individuals. The Historical Commission has no review authority over the permits.
- The remaining properties will be redeveloped in the future.
- The properties are not currently zoned or licensed as a parking lot.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination fails to demonstrate that the properties have significant character, interest of value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or that they are associated with the life of a person significant in the past. The nomination does not satisfy Criterion A.

- The nomination fails to demonstrate that the properties are associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation. The nomination does not satisfy Criterion B.
- The nomination fails to demonstrate that the properties are part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif. The nomination does not satisfy Criterion G.
- The nomination fails to demonstrate that the properties represent an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City, owing to a unique location or singular physical characteristic. The nomination does not satisfy Criterion H.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination fails to demonstrate that the properties at 1613 to 1627 W. Norris Street and 1610 to 1616 Page Street satisfy any Criteria for Designation.

ITEM: 1613 to 1627 W Norris St and 1610 to 1616 Page St					
MOTION: Does not satisfy any Criteria					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Miller					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 1400 BLOCK OF RODMAN ST

Name of Resource: Historic Street Paving Thematic District

Proposed Action: Amendment

Property Owner: Schuylkill Park, owner; Naudain South Associates, LLC, equitable owner

Applicant: David Smith, Esq., Schnader, Attorneys at Law

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to remove a dead-end alley from the Historic Street Paving Thematic District. The alley is referred to as the 1400 block of Rodman Street in the district inventory, but that name is misleading because it has never been a public street. It is a private alley. The application argues that the alley should not have been included in the district because it is not a public right-of-way and because the paving itself has very low integrity.

In 1998, the Historical Commission designated the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, a collection of several hundred blocks of streets in the city that retain their historic street paving materials. The designation covers the cartway itself, but not the curbs or sidewalks. The historic preservation ordinance authorizes the Historical Commission to review building permit

applications issued by the Department of Licenses & Inspections, but not streets permits for work within the right-of-way, which are issued by the Streets Department of the City of Philadelphia. Therefore, the Historical Commission acts in an advisory capacity regarding the historic streets under the auspices of the Streets Department, providing advice to the department about the appropriateness of alterations to historic cartways. Per an informal agreement, the Streets Department consults with the Historical Commission whenever it undertakes work to historic streets or reviews applications from third parties for work to historic streets. Nearly all of the paving in the historic district is in the right-of-way and most of it is within the Street Department's portfolio, but some is controlled by PennDOT as well as SEPTA, which maintains some paving around trolley tracks in the right-of-way. PennDOT and SEPTA have opted not to seek the Historical Commission's advice, and therefore the paving in the historic district under the control of those agencies is not regulated by the Historical Commission. In addition to the paving in the right-of-way, the Historical Commission included a small number of other paved areas in the historic district. It included the unit and 100 blocks of S. Orianna Street, the 300 block of Sansom Street, and the 400 block of St. James Place, all of which are walkways within Independence National Historical Park (INHP). The Historical Commission has no authority to regulate property owned by the federal government, so it has not reviewed applications for the paving at INHP. The Historical Commission also explicitly included three sections of privately owned paving, Bladen's Court, a dead-end street off Elfreth's Alley; Littleboy's Way, which runs between Cuthbert and Arch Streets in Old City; and the paved common area at the English Village, on line with the 2100 block of St. James Street. In all three cases, the properties with historic street paving are also designated as historic. The paving is protected, even without the paving district, because the paving is considered appurtenances to the otherwise designated properties. When the Historical Commission considered the nomination for the Historic Street Paving Thematic District, it sent the standard notice letters to the Streets Department, PennDOT, SEPTA, INHP, and the owners at Bladen's Court, Littleboy's Way, and the English Village. However, it appears that the Historical Commission was unaware that other street paving included within the historic district was located on private property and therefore failed to notify the owners of that paving of the proposed designation, including in the case of the so-called 1400 block of Rodman Street.

The paving on the alley in question, the so-called 1400 block of Rodman Street, is not now and never has been on the City Plan, the official record of public streets. It is not a public right-of-way. It is privately owned and has been since it was laid out in 1869 to provide access to the rears of buildings along South and Naudain Streets (See Deed JTO-203-516+). The buildings that backed up to the alley have been demolished and the parcels have been consolidated into one large parcel, 1441-49 South Street, which spans the alley. The property at 1441-49 South Street is a surface parking lot that is not designated as historic. The Historical Commission did not notify the property owner of the parking lot of the consideration or designation of the historic paving district. The Commission's failure to notify can be attributed to its incorrect assumption that the alley was within the right-of-way and managed by the Streets Department.

The alley in question is about 170 feet long, running east from S. 15th Street and ending at a fence. The alley is currently used for parking. The condition of the street paving at the alley is very poor. Historic paving materials are missing in many places and the alley has been patched and repatched with asphalt many times and is indistinguishable from the surface parking lot in many areas. Building permit applications for the surface parking lot are not currently subject to the Historical Commission's review because the parking lot property is not designated as historic in its own right and the fact that the alley is not a public street was unknown to the Historical Commission until this application was submitted.

The Historical Commission has amended the Historic Street Paving Thematic District three times, in 1999, 2014, and 2016, to add blocks overlooked initially and to remove blocks of low integrity. In 2013, the Streets Department retained a consultant to inspect the historic paving under its auspices and develop a prioritized list for repair with suggestions for additions to and removals from the district, which the Historical Commission adopted in 2014. The Historical Commission removed several blocks of street paving in the right-of-way from the district at that time because their integrity was low and condition poor, making restoration expensive and therefore unlikely.

Section 5.14.a of the Historical Commission's Rules & Regulations governs amendments to historic districts. While not precisely on point, Section 5.14.b governs rescissions of individually designated resources as well as entire historic districts and may be applicable. Pursuant to Section 5.14.b.1, the Historical Commission may rescind a designation when one or more of these conditions apply: the historic qualities of the resource have been lost or destroyed; additional information shows that the resource does not qualify for designation; and the Historical Commission committed an error when it initially designated the resource. In this case, all three conditions apply.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends amending the Historic Street Paving Thematic District by removing the private alley incorrectly known as the 1400 block of Rodman Street, pursuant to Section 5.14 of the Rules & Regulations. New information shows that the alley should not have been included in the historic district; it is not a public right-of-way. The Historical Commission committed an error when it initially included the alley in the district; it failed to understand that the alley is not a public right-of-way and it failed to notify the property owner of the proposed designation.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:40:42

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the amendment to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney David Smith and preservation consultant Nick Kraus represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman stated that some small alleys in Philadelphia are owned by no one.
- Mr. Smith stated that the alley in question is located within the property at 1441-49 South Street, which is not designated as historic. The alley is entirely within the property and is under private ownership. It has never been a public street. He stated that when the Streets Department evaluated all paving in the historic district in 2014, it concluded that the paving at this alley was in such poor condition that it would need to be entirely demolished and reconstructed to be restored. He noted that granite block paving like this paving is the most common paving in the district. This alley is not unusual.
- Mr. Kraus displayed a presentation with photographs, historic maps, and a deed associated with the alley.
- Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Farnham if the historic district was intended to be a collection of streets in the public right-of-way.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that he believes that the intention was to designate a group of streets in the public right-of-way. Of the more than 300 sections of paving in the district, only three were acknowledged at the time of designation to

be private property. The vast majority of streets in the district are publicly owned. And the three that are privately owned were already designated for other reasons at the time of the designation of the district.

- Mr. Farnham stated that this request to remove this paving from the district will be decided on legal and procedural grounds, not on the significance or integrity of the paving itself. The real questions are whether the Historical Commission made an error when it designated this paving without notifying the property owner and if there is a mechanism for regulating this paving if it is not removed from the district.
- Mr. Cohen stated that he agrees with the staff's recommendation and the request of the property owner. He asked what would happen to the rights of the abutting property owners to access this alley if it is removed from the historic district.
 - o Mr. Farnham explained that one property owner, the applicant, owns all of the property that abuts the alley, so no owner will be left without access.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites stated that it is a handsome alley, but he does not oppose the request to remove it from the historic district. He stated that he hopes that its removal will not set a precedent to remove other blocks from the district. He stated that the alley could be an amenity for a new townhouse development at the site.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded to Mr. Traub, stating that the removal of this paving from the historic district would not set a precedent. The Historical Commission has already approved and denied proposals to remove sections of historic street paving from the district in earlier cases. No precedent can be set with this case.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The private alley incorrectly known as the 1400 block of Rodman Street is not and never has been a public right-of-way.
- The Historical Commission failed to notify the owner of the private alley of the designation when it designated the Historic Street Paving Thematic District in 1998.
- The property at 1441-49 South Street, where the private alley is located, is not designated as historic.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The inventory of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District should be amended by removing the entry for the 1400 block of Rodman Street because the alley is not and never has been a public right-of-way, the Historical Commission failed to notify the owner of the private alley of the proposed designation when it designated the Historic Street Paving Thematic District in 1998, and the alley's paving is in very poor condition.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the entry for the 1400 block of Rodman Street should be removed from the inventory of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District.

ITEM: 1400 Block of Rodman St MOTION: Remove alley from inventory of the Historic Street Paving Thematic District MOVED BY: Milroy SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 3475 COLLINS ST

Name of Resource: Tioga Mills

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Vu Read Center LLC; Land Lapper, Inc.; Kevin Konieczny; Tioga-Collins Street Associates

Nominator: Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co.

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate 3475 Collins Street, historically known as Tioga Mills, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that Tioga Mills was a major producer of cotton yarns for Philadelphia's vast hosiery industry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and therefore satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. The company survived changes in the industry by successfully transitioning to producing specialized yarns in the early twentieth century as the cotton hosiery industry declined. The mill complex includes five contributing buildings constructed between 1886 and 1919 by the owner Thomas Henry & Sons. The Period of Significance begins in 1886, when the first mill building was completed, and ends in 1926, when the owner sold the building and relocated the company to Nashville, Tennessee.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3475 Collins Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:06:50

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Kevin McMahon represented the nominator and one property owner. No other property owners were present at the meeting.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cohen said the nomination was impressively researched and successfully presented the industry within the larger context of the history of hosiery and textiles

in Philadelphia. He said this contextualization supported the addition of Criterion A. Mr. Cohen reiterated that he thought the nomination was very well done.

- Ms. Milroy agreed with Mr. Cohen. She added that the nomination was a good read, and she learned a lot.
- Ms. Miller said she enjoyed reading the nomination. She continued that she was most surprised by the intact nature of the complex although there has been some demolition on site. Ms. Miller noted that the city has very few complexes such as this where most of the company's buildings are still intact.
- Ms. Cooperman agreed and stated that it is so rare to see complexes such as Tioga Mills, where all the pieces are surviving. She also agreed with the other Committee members on the quality of work that went into the nomination.
- Ms. Cooperman made a recommendation to the nominator. She pointed that it is helpful to the Committee if each Criteria for Designation argument is presented separately. She noted that she is not faulting the nomination's content or high quality but stressed that a clear statement at the beginning summarizing the Criteria for Designation provides a better document overall. Ms. Cooperman added the information in the nomination does support the argument for designation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Although the Tioga Mills complex has undergone some change and demolition, it represents a rare example of a largely intact manufacturing complex constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- The nomination is well researched and written. It presents successful arguments designation.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Tioga Mills was a major producer of cotton yarns for Philadelphia's vast hosiery industry during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries when the city was the world's greatest textile center. Important from its start in 1886, the mill was also significant later, after about 1910, as an example of an operation that successfully transitioned to new product lines, after the cotton hosiery industry began to decline, satisfying Criterion A.
- In the late nineteenth century, the textile industry in Philadelphia was located in Kensington and the adjacent communities of Port Richmond and Harrowgate. Technological developments in the nineteenth century prompted a shift from production in the home to production in large, purpose-built factories such as Tioga Mills in the Harrowgate community, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3475 Collins Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

ITEM: 3475 Collins St MOTION: Designated, Criterion A and J MOVED BY: Cohen SECONDED BY: Miller					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 1424-26 CHESTNUT ST

Name of Resource: Jacob Reed's Sons' Store, Main Sales Floor

Proposed Action: Interior Designation

Property Owner: Sunny Spring LLC

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the first-floor interior of 1424-26 Chestnut Street historically known as the Main Sales Floor of the Jacob Reed's Sons' Store, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The exterior of the building has been designated since 1966, when it was added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The nomination argues under Criterion E that the Main Sales Floor of the Jacob Reed's Sons' Store is the primary public interior space in this landmark building designed by prominent Philadelphia architect William L. Price for Alan H. Reed, successor to one of the leading menswear merchants of the nineteenth century in Philadelphia. Under Criteria C and D, the nomination contends that the store, constructed between 1904 and 1905, was the first commercial building in Philadelphia constructed of reinforced concrete, a structural system which is most expressed by the public interior space of the Main Sales Floor. The Main Sales Floor is also the only major Arts and Crafts-style commercial interior in Philadelphia, serving as a significant early example of Price's influential ideas on the appropriate expression of materials, structure, and labor. Finally, under Criterion F, the nomination asserts that the interior space features craftsmanship and artistry in the form of tilework from Henry Chapman Mercer's Moravian Pottery and murals by local artist Gertrude Monaghan, which reflect Price's thinking on architecture and its relationship with ornamentation.

This Main Sales Floor maintains a high degree of architectural integrity and has undergone few major alterations since its completion in 1905. The proposed period of significance is 1905 to 1983. This date span reflects the period it was operated as a men's clothier by Jacob Reed's Sons'.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the interior main floor of 1424-26 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E and F.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:16:50

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Patrick Grossi and Kevin McMahon represented the nominator.
- No one represented the property owners.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman said she was delighted to see this nomination because it is one of the most important interiors of this period in Philadelphia.
 - o Ms. Milroy agreed with Ms. Cooperman's assessment of the importance of the interior space.
- Mr. Cohen asked if the Historical Commission has designated private, commercial interiors in the past.
 - o Mr. Farnham confirmed that the Commission has designated this type of interior space. He cited the designation of the Grand Court interior space in the John Wanamaker Building. Mr. Farnham stated that this space, if designated, would be the second privately owned interior space designated on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.
- Mr. Milroy commented on artist Gertrude Monaghan's quote suggesting it was unusual for Quakers to be artists. Ms. Milroy noted that Quakers creating art was widely prevalent in Monaghan's generation and she believes no one has really studied the topic at length. She added that it is worth a book-length study to dispel the lingering idea of Quakers lack of involvement in art making.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Main Sale Floor interior space is one of the most important interiors on this period in Philadelphia.
- The number of interior spaces listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places is small. If designated, this would only be the fifth interior designated space on the register and the second privately owned commercial space.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The Main Sales Floor of 1424-26 Chestnut Street is the only major Arts and Crafts-style commercial interior in Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion C.
- Constructed between 1904 and 1905, 1424-26 Chestnut Street was the first commercial building in Philadelphia constructed of reinforced concrete, a structural system which is most expressed by the public interior space of the Main Sales Floor, satisfying Criterion D.
- The Main Sales Floor was designed by prominent Philadelphia architect William L. Price serving as a significant early example of Price's influential ideas on the appropriate expression of materials, structure, and labor, satisfying Criterion E.
- The Main Sales Floor features craftsmanship and artistry in the form of tilework from Henry Chapman Mercer's Moravian Pottery and murals by local artist Gertrude Monaghan, satisfying Criterion F.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the interior main floor, historically known as the Main Sales Floor, of 1424-26 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E and F.

ITEM: 1424-26 Chestnut St					
MOTION: Designate Interior, Criteria C, D, E, F					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Miller					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 6740 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: The Pelham Trust Company

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sovereign Bank

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Pelham Trust Company building satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that the building stands as a distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style. Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the former Pelham Trust Company building represents the economic and historical heritage of Pelham, the planned suburban residential development in the Mt. Airy neighborhood.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:35:00

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nominator.
- No one represented the property owners.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Keller noted that the property was under an agreement of sale at the time notice was sent and that the staff has been in contact with the equitable owner.

- Mr. Beisert stated that the property is a distinctive architectural landmark along Germantown Avenue.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the property is worth adding to the Register. The nomination, he continued, was well argued and well researched, though with a few minor errors.
- Ms. Miller observed that the nomination includes the entire parcel, including the building and adjacent lot. She stated that a block away, at the corner of Westview Street and Germantown Avenue, a Revolutionary War soldier's remains were recovered during building renovations in 1985. Given the proximity and that the British Army marched down Germantown Avenue, Ms. Miller continued, there may be archaeological resources on the parcel. She added that it did not appear any other structure occupied the lot prior to the bank's construction. She asked to discuss the potential for archaeology and the inclusion of Criterion I.
 - o Mr. Beisert stated that he did not research the site's earlier history and is apprehensive about adding Criterion I to nominated properties without justification in the nomination, though he acknowledged the Committee's ability to recommend the addition of the Criterion.
 - o Ms. Miller commented that she did some research and did not find any evidence of previous structures, so the likelihood of having cultural resources is high.
 - o Ms. Cooperman opined that, if an individual wants to nominate a building without addressing archaeological potential, then confining a nomination to the building footprint could be a possible strategy rather than including an entire parcel. She then acknowledged the potential for artifacts related to the Battle of Germantown.
 - o Ms. Milroy stated that the Committee continually returns to the challenge of Criterion I, adding that there is the potential for archaeological remains everywhere in the city and that asking nominators to accommodate that is difficult. She questioned whether the Committee should be asking nominators to research the archaeological potential in areas impacted by the Battle of Germantown.
 - o Ms. Miller contended that the reason she requests that Criterion I be added after a nomination has been submitted is because archaeological potential has not been addressed in the nomination. She argued that this property is a special case, being located along a major thoroughfare and capped under a parking lot.
 - o Mr. Cohen asked that nominators consult the earliest atlas for a property to see whether there is ground cover. He suggested that the staff add that information for certain nominations located in areas of high archaeological potential that lack Criterion I.
 - o Ms. Miller concluded that the nomination's focus is on the development of Pelham, and that while she feels it is important to raise the issue of archaeological potential, she is not insisting on its inclusion without the necessary research.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman commented on Criterion I.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property boundary includes the former Pelham Trust Company building and an adjacent parking lot.

- The property is located on Germantown Avenue in Mt. Airy in an area impacted by the Battle of Germantown. The nomination does not explore the potential for archaeological resources, though the adjacent parking lot seems to contain undisturbed land that could have archaeological potential.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- More research into the site's archaeological potential should be conducted to determine whether the property satisfies Criterion I. Nominations for properties located in areas of high archaeological potential should include historic maps or research to determine whether a property may satisfy Criterion I.
- The bank building represents a distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style, satisfying Criterion D.
- The former Pelham Trust Company building represents the economic and historical heritage of Pelham, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 6740 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J.

ITEM: 6740 Germantown Ave MOTION: Satisfies Criteria D and J MOVED BY: Milroy SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco					X
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	4				2

Ms. Barucco joined the meeting.

ADDRESS: 5008-10 GERMANTOWN AVE

Name of Resource: The Reser-Royal House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Nai Liang Li

Nominator: Keeping Society

Staff Contact: Megan Cross Schmitt; megan.schmitt@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5008-10 Germantown Avenue, known as the Reser-Royal House, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the Reser-Royal House is an important structure and represents the development and heritage of Germantown from the construction of the

house around 1727 until the closure of a fruit market in the house in 1969, satisfying Criterion A. The nomination notes that, while suffering from neglect and insensitive alterations, the structure continues to exemplify the basic form and features of early Germantown houses. The nomination also claims that the house exemplifies the commercial, economic, political, and social heritage of Germantown Avenue and Germantown as the area evolved from a village to a residential suburb to a dense residential neighborhood, satisfying Criterion J. Finally, the nomination contends that the house exemplifies the American institution of human chattel slavery during the colonial period, satisfying Criterion J.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5008-10 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:55:08

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nominator.
- No one represented the property owners.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Beisert if he had any comments.
 - o Mr. Beisert acknowledged that the house had been altered but argued that it still retained its basic original form. He added that the building dated as far back as the 1740s, perhaps earlier. Mr. Beisert explained that the house was built by someone who had arrived in Philadelphia at the same time as Francis Pastorius. He stated that this nomination also documented slave and indentured servitude in Colonial Germantown, which is important research.
- Ms. Cooperman asked Ms. Miller her thoughts about Criterion I. Ms. Miller responded that she believed Criterion I should be included in the nomination, owing to the likelihood of archaeological potential at the site. Ms. Miller commented that the only physical evidence of the enslaved people or indentured servants who lived at the house would be found in the ground of the property.
- Ms. Cooperman remarked that she agreed with Ms. Miller that Criterion I should be included in the nomination, particularly in light of the history related to the enslaved and indentured people who lived there. Ms. Cooperman commended Mr. Beisert for the thoroughness of his inclusion of Gary Nash's research of enslaved people in the nomination. She commented that the extent of slaveholding in eighteenth-century Philadelphia is not well understood and merits further study.
 - o Mr. Beisert agreed with Ms. Cooperman that the topic was extremely important and merits further study. He also stated that he had intended to include Criterion I and apologized for the oversight.
- Ms. Milroy stated that recent discoveries made in the papers of the Chew and Logan archives support Mr. Beisert's comments about researching slaveholding in Germantown and she commended Mr. Beisert for the wonderful nomination.
- Mr. Cohen agreed with Ms. Milroy that the nomination was very well done. He said that the typographical and other minor errors should be corrected before the draft is finalized so as not to compromise the integrity of the scholarship.
- Ms. Barucco agreed with Mr. Cohen that the nomination was very well researched despite the typographical errors and she commented that she was impressed with all of the images that were found of the property.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman supported the nomination.
- Allison Weiss of SoLo Germantown Civic Association supported the nomination.
- Patrick Grossi commented that the Historic Preservation Task Force discussed the need to address the treatment of archaeology in Philadelphia. He encouraged people to review the Executive Summary of its findings.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The house, located on Germantown Avenue close to the corner of what is now W. Seymour Street, was constructed in the 1740s, and possibly earlier.
- Documentation shows that the house was occupied by enslaved people and indentured servants.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The Reser-Royal House is an important structure and represents the development and heritage of Germantown from the construction of the house around 1727 until the closure of a fruit market in the house in 1969, satisfying Criterion A.
- The house exemplifies the commercial, economic, political, and social heritage of Germantown Avenue and Germantown as the area evolved from a village to a residential suburb to a dense residential neighborhood, satisfying Criterion J.
- The house also exemplifies the American institution of human chattel slavery as well as indentured servitude during the colonial period, satisfying Criterion J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5008-10 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, I and J.

ITEM: 5008-10 Germantown Ave MOTION: Designate, Criteria A, I and J MOVED BY: Barucco SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	5				1

VICTORIAN ROXBOROUGH HISTORIC DISTRICT

Proposed Action: Designation

Nominator: Central Roxborough Civic Association

Number of Properties: 343

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate a historic district that consists of 343 properties in three geographic clusters in Central Roxborough. The nomination contends that the Victorian Roxborough Historic District is significant under Criteria for Designation C, D, and J. The period of significance begins in 1830, the approximate beginning of the Victorian era broadly and Roxborough's suburbanization specifically. Satisfying Criterion J, the nomination covers a pivotal century in Roxborough's development, ending in 1930 with the construction of the Henry Avenue bridge over the Wissahickon Creek, which initiated a new wave of development in the community. Satisfying Criteria C and D, the primarily two and three-story detached and semidetached residential buildings, as well as handful of mixed-use, religious, and institutional buildings embody distinguishing characteristics of a variety of architectural styles found during the Victorian period. These include Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire and Queen Anne, as well as late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century revival styles including Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Dutch Colonial, and American Four Square. The district, which is bisected by the historic Ridge Avenue corridor, is composed of sections of the neighborhood that best reflect the historical and architectural significance of the community. This nomination is a direct result of the Victorian Roxborough Demolition Moratorium, which was passed by City Council in late 2021 and became law in January 2022.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the Victorian Roxborough Historic District satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:35:38

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- John Carpenter represented the nominator, the Central Roxborough Civic Association (CRCA).
- Multiple property owners were represented, as documented in the Discussion section.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Carpenter acknowledged the CRCA working group members who researched the district and assembled the inventory, noting that they worked closely with the staff of the Historical Commission (PHC staff). He explained that more than three years ago, members of the CRCA set out to preserve the historic fabric of the neighborhood in the face of significant development pressure to demolish and replace with new and out of character with the area. Community members worked with the PHC staff to survey the areas of greatest concern, examining historic maps, conducting deed research and research into the history of the community. Members photographed and visually surveyed each property and shared that information with the PHC staff, who then expanded on the research, developed maps, and wrote the comprehensive narrative that brings together the history of the neighborhood from a rural farm community to a new suburb of the growing city of Philadelphia. He noted that the CRCA was aided by the express support of Councilman Curtis Jones and his

Chief of Staff Joshua Cohen, who advanced a bill in late 2021 banning the demolition of structures in the broader area as the nomination was being completed, which prevented developers from undermining the nomination and pulling demolition permits for potentially historic properties. He explained that the CRCA announced the nomination publicly and held two public meetings prior to the Committee on Historic Designation meeting to discuss the nomination and the implications of designation, and also asked the PHC staff to include an invitation to one of the CRCA meetings in the formal notice letter sent to each property owner.

- Mr. Carpenter noted that Celeste Hardester had intended to speak as a representative of CRCA as well but had to leave the meeting early for an appointment. He noted that she is also a property owner in the district and has comments that she would like read into the record when the time is appropriate.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed.
- Ms. Cooperman opened the floor to comments from property owners in the district.
- Polly Cochran, owner of 262 Dupont Street, opposed the designation of the district based on the lack of parking, noting that designation would limit to whom the property could be sold. She opined that it does not make sense to designate a few buildings in an area when there are many new buildings nearby.
 - o Ms. Cooperman responded that issues with parking are not germane to the Committee on Historic Designation's purview.
- Olga McGarity, owner of 4436 Dexter Street, thanked the CRCA and PHC staff for the nomination and spoke in support of the designation to preserve the beauty of yesterday's craftsmanship and history of the community. She noted that she also represents the owners of 4418, 4434, 4408, 4446, 4450, 4440, 4432, 4416, and 4426 Dexter Street, all of whom are in favor of designation.
- George McClellan, president of the corporation that houses Leverington Church at 6307 Ridge Avenue, opposed designation and requested that the church be excluded from the historic district. He opined that the CRCA acted in its own interests without consultation or consideration of the impacted parties. He opined that the process was sneakily done and strips property owners of their rights and shifts burdens to property owners.
- Kate Riesterberg, owner of 261 Dupont Street, opposed designation. She noted that she signed a petition along with other property owners in Section 3 of the nominated area requesting to be removed from the district. She argued that the CRCA has been forthright that the proposed designation is not about preservation but opposing new development and protecting parking, and that the Historical Commission is increasingly being sought as a pawn in zoning and parking battles. She opined that the houses in Section 3 are not any more representative of the Criteria than other houses in the area and that the boundaries of the section were gerrymandered to exclude parcels where new development would be permitted by right. She noted that the PHC staff and CRCA have not provided specific estimates and case studies regarding potential costs related to work requiring Historical Commission review. She opined that the process is anti-democratic, and that homeowners were not consulted. She opined that the restrictions of designation will have a significant financial impact on owners.
 - o Ms. Cooperman acknowledged that the petition had been submitted to the PHC staff and supplied to the members of the Committee and to the public in advance of the meeting.

- Alexander Fidrych, owner of 544 Hermitage Street, supported designation. He also asked to read a statement from Celeste Hardester, as a property owner, into the record.
 - o Ms. Cooperman opined that reading the statement would not comply with the meeting guidelines, and that her testimony could only be accepted in person or in writing.
- Margaret Ann Morris, owner of 531 Hermitage Street, supported designation. She opined that the proposed district is composed of many interesting houses and is a walkable neighborhood. She argued that it is inaccurate to say that the CRCA wants to stop development, but rather the CRCA wants to make sure that when development occurs, it is not at the expense of beautiful old houses. She acknowledged that owning a designated property may create a slightly greater expense but argued that it is worth it to preserve the character of the neighborhood.
- Dan Herrman, owner of a property in the proposed boundaries, supported the creation of the district. He noted that his family takes a nightly walk around the neighborhood and enjoys seeing buildings that look more or less as they did when they were constructed more than 100 years ago. He highlighted the craftsmanship of historic details on neighboring blocks including beautiful stained and leaded glass windows on the 500 block of Leverington Avenue, the beautiful and well-maintained Furness and Evans-designed Roxborough Home for Women with its surrounding green space, the cornice details along Lyceum Avenue, and the porch details all along Green Lane. He noted that the brick and stonework seen in the district is a testament to the tradespeople who constructed the buildings and is not found in buildings today and are worth protecting. He also highlighted the similar scale and proportions of the houses in the district. He argued that preserving the architecture, green space, and legacy of the area is paramount and urged the Committee to support designation.
- Chris Taylor, resident of 532 Hermitage Street, opposed designation and asked that his property be excluded from the district, opining that designation impedes the ability to keep properties up to date.
- Mike Simone, owner of 419 Martin Street, noted that he has been supportive of various designations in the Germantown area and supports the designation of the Victorian Roxborough district. However, he noted, that his property is very deep, extending through to Monastery Avenue, and is on the edge of the district. He requested that the rear half of the property be excluded from the district.
- Marjorie Spaeth, owner of 372 Green Lane, supported designation. She opined that the district is filled with beautiful houses and wonderful green space and deserves preservation. She noted that there have been two evening neighborhood meetings for the owners to voice their opinions and learn more about the idea of designation.
- Gary Owens, owner of 248 Dupont Street, opposed designation, noting he signed the petition for Section 3 to be excluded from the designation. He opined that the street is a hodgepodge of homes and should not be categorized as historic. He argued that there was a lack of due process and that neighbors were not clued in until two years after the CRCA had begun studying the area. He opined that designation would deprive owners of their rights and that the CRCA is using the Historical Commission as a tool to prevent development.
- Kay Sykora, owner of 445 Green Lane, supported designation. She noted that she was involved in the creation of the Main Street Manayunk historic district and lived in that district and worked with some of the merchants when they had concerns. They found that the Historical Commission was understanding and reasonable and worked

- to find solutions that were not necessarily more expensive. She noted that designation is important not only in the detail of the buildings but also retaining the proportions and historic relationships to the buildings around each other.
- Cart Reed, owner of 260 Dupont Street, explained that he is opposed to the designation at least of Section 3 of the nominated area, noting that he also signed the petition for exclusion.
 - Lisa Smith, owner of 415 Martin Street, questioned and opposed the current nomination as it relates to her block, noting that she did not see an explicit justification for the inclusion of the block other than the church on the corner of Pechin and Martin.
 - Patrick Nellis, owner of 259 Dupont Street, opposed the designation of Section 3 in the nomination.
 - Brandon Murdoch, owner of 350 Green Lane Unit A, noted that his property was constructed in 2013 and should not be included in the district owing to proximity. He opined that it is an undemocratic process with no community input and is an unnecessary regulatory overreach.
 - Tom Grahslar, resident in Section 3, also signed the petition in opposition to the inclusion of Section 3 in the district on the grounds that it does not meet Criteria C, D, or J. He noted that the houses in Section 3 is no more significant than any other part of Roxborough, although he understands the merit of the houses in Sections 1 and 2.
 - Amber Dubois, resident of Dexter Street, expressed support for the designation and noted that she is honored to have her house be part of the district. She noted that she and her husband purchased their home because of the beautiful architecture and green space in the neighborhood.
 - Donna Templin, owner of 4417 Dexter Street, opposed designation, opining that it is an undemocratic process and that she only found out about the nomination from a letter and was never asked her opinion prior to that.
 - Ann Levering, owner of 527 Hermitage Street, opposed designation. She opined that the neighbors were not told in advance of the meetings and the process is undemocratic.
 - Mr. Farnham clarified for the record that the Historical Commission staff followed the owner notification process set forth in the City's historic preservation ordinance, which was passed in 1984 and went into effect in 1985. He noted that the preservation ordinance has been litigated numerous times, and the Pennsylvania and United States Supreme Courts have both held that it is constitutional for municipalities to regulate for historic preservation purposes. The Historical Commission staff followed the notification process laid out in the ordinance, which requires that letters be sent at least 60 days in advance to every property in the proposed district as well as to the address of every property owner in the district, along with posters in the district, and a newspaper advertisement of the meeting. He explained that claims that there is no due process or that designating is unconstitutional are untrue.
 - Mr. Farnham addressed questions presented in the Q&A, describing the differences between the Committee on Historic Designation (CHD) and Historical Commission (PHC) meetings. He noted that the CHD is advisory and offers non-binding recommendations to the PHC regarding whether the proposed district meets one or more of the Criteria for Designation laid out in the historic preservation ordinance. Does the district have historical and/or architectural significance? The PHC is the body that is empowered by the preservation ordinance to make designation

decisions, whether to designate or not. It will consider the Committee's recommendation, the nomination, all any owner and public comment, and will meet Friday, 13 May 2022, to make the final decision. No decisions have yet been made. The letters the PHC staff sent were invitations for property owners to participate in the designation process, of which this is the first public meeting held under the auspices of the Historical Commission. Written comments or any other documentations or materials can be emailed to preservation@phila.gov. Everything received prior to noon on Thursday, 12 May 2022, will be posted on the PHC website and provided to the Historical Commission members.

- Mr. Cohen noted that it has been a while since the Historical Commission reviewed a district of this size. He asked whether the boundaries of the district are set in stone or could be amended at this point.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that the Committee could make a recommendation to reduce the size of the district, amend classifications, and add and subtract Criteria. It cannot, however, enlarge the proposed district at this time because doing so would violate notice requirements. It also cannot change a proposed classification from non-contributing to contributing without proper notice.
- Ms. Barucco asked the staff to confirm that 350 Green Lane, Unit A is classified as non-contributing. She noted that the nomination is not intended to include as contributing buildings built in 2013.
 - o Ms. Chantry responded that 350 Green Lane, Unit A was constructed in 2013 and is classified in the inventory as non-contributing. She explained that 25 out of 343 properties within the three clusters of the district are classified as non-contributing, meaning that those properties are located geographically within the proposed boundaries but do not reflect the Criteria for Designation cited in the nomination. Any work proposed to non-contributing properties would be reviewed not for the impact to the buildings themselves but for the impact on and compatibility with the overall historic district. She further noted that the PHC staff has the authority to approve the demolition of non-contributing buildings.
- Ms. Chantry presented the inventory pages for the properties in Section 3. She noted that one of the arguments of the owners in Section 3 is that the boundaries of that cluster were gerrymandered to exclude neighboring new construction, which was intentional in the sense that the goal was to exclude as many properties on the edges of the district that would have been considered non-contributing.
 - o Ms. Milroy questioned whether neighbors would have more input over new construction on properties adjacent to those in the boundaries of the historic district.
 - o Ms. Cooperman responded that the Historical Commission would not review work outside of the boundaries of the district.
- Ms. Cooperman remarked that the houses in Section 3 appear in keeping with those in other sections of the proposed district and held that they represent a variety, not a hodgepodge, corresponding to different periods of construction.
 - o Ms. Barucco agreed, noting that very few historic districts are completely homogeneous and it is typical rather than atypical that there would be some variety of style and period in a district.
 - o Ms. Milroy agreed, noting that she is a resident of Belmont Hills, formerly known as West Manayunk, across the river, and spends a great deal of time in Roxborough, which has a wonderful density of houses of historic value. She commented that so many historic houses remain, and are so loved and well taken care of.

- Ms. Barucco commended the collaboration of the community organization and Historical Commission staff in putting together the nomination.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that the Historical Commission staff provided advice and support to the neighborhood group, particularly in light of the demolition moratorium.
- Ms. Chantry presented the district boundary map showing that the rear of 419 Martin Street extends to Monastery Avenue, while the adjacent properties do not. She explained that the owner is requesting that the rear of the property is excluded from the district.
 - o Ms. Milroy questioned why Monastery Avenue was not included in the proposed district boundaries.
 - o Ms. Chantry responded that she assumes the block was surveyed and the properties either were too late or did not satisfy the Criteria.
 - o Ms. Cooperman responded that it is difficult to make an assessment without additional information and suggested that the property owner submit the request in writing to the PHC staff.
- Ms. Barucco remarked that it is a good nomination, and applauded the approach to the district as discrete clusters focused on the most significant and worthy areas, rather than one enormous district that would have included many more non-contributing properties. She noted that she cannot speak to the neighborhood process, but in terms of the research and resources included in the nomination, is in favor of designation. She explained that the intent of designation is not to be a burden but to be a benefit, noting that studies show properties in historic districts maintain their value in comparison to comparable un-designated neighborhoods.
- Ms. Miller remarked that she appreciates the tremendous amount of work that went into creating the nomination. She opined that it exemplifies how wonderful the neighborhoods of Philadelphia are as communities in their own right and with different types of values. The character of the neighborhood brings people there. She noted that she enjoyed learning about a new part of the city with which she was not terribly familiar.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Hal Schirmer supported designation, opining that is good that the district is tailored to carve out discrete sections as much as possible rather than including numerous non-contributing properties. He noted that the Historical Commission staff approves most work to designated properties.
- Steven Peitzman noted that the East Falls Historical Society supports designation, noting that it is one of the most important nominations this year.
- Don Simon, resident of Roxborough just outside of the district boundaries, supported designation. He noted that he has seen numerous historic buildings destroyed in Roxborough for new development, including for a CVS, Wawa, and Wendy's, and opined that it is essential to preserve the remaining historic properties in the neighborhood.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported designation, noting that it is one of the largest recently proposed historic districts. From a personal perspective, he remarked that he owns a designated property in the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District and has not found designation to be burdensome.
- Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia supported the district, noting that it would be a remarkable addition to the Philadelphia Register. He commented that designation would only include the exteriors of properties, and that

reviews are focused primarily on elevations that are highly visible from the public view. He noted that there may be larger parcels where owners wish to apply for new construction or large additions that would warrant additional consideration, but that the majority of applications for work to historic properties are reviewed and approved by the PHC staff administratively. He noted that the Historical Commission cannot compel an owner to undertake work to their property, and that in the Alliance's experience, very few owners have issues managing their homes. The biggest hurdle would be if an owner wishes to demolish the historic building or sell to someone who wants to demolish it. On the merits of the nomination, the Alliance enthusiastically supports designation.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The proposed historic district consists of 343 properties in three geographic clusters in Central Roxborough.
- The period of significance begins in 1830 and ends in 1930.
- Section/Cluster 3 of the proposed district contains buildings of a variety of styles and periods, which is characteristic of the overall district.
- Additional information is needed to exclude the rear of 419 Martin Street from the proposed boundary.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the district represents a pivotal century in Roxborough's development, satisfying Criterion J.
- The primarily two and three-story detached and semi-detached buildings, as well as handful of mixed-use, religious, and institutional buildings embody distinguishing characteristics of a variety of architectural styles found during the Victorian period, including the Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire and Queen Anne, as well as late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century revival styles including Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Dutch Colonial, and American Four Square, satisfying Criteria C and D.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the proposed Victorian Roxborough Historic District satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J.

ITEM: Victorian Roxborough Historic District
MOTION: Designate, Criteria for Designation C, D, and J
MOVED BY: Barucco
SECONDED BY: Milroy

VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	5				1

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Committee on Historic Designation 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.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

§14-1004. Designation.

(1) Criteria for Designation.

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

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