

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

**WEDNESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2025
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., Chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		
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:

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

The following persons attended the online meeting:

Allison Weiss, SoLo Germantown Civic Association
Ahmir Day, Office of Council President Kenyatta Johnson
Amy Lambert, University City Historical Society
Andrew Emma
Ashley de Vries
Becky Goodling
Brent Penman
Brian Bishara
Celeste Hardester
Cheryl Feldman, Ridge Park Civic Association
Dane Jensen
Daniel Trubman
David Gest, Chestnut Hill Conservancy
David Traub, Save Our Sites

Denise Way
Doris Baldwin
Eric Peterson
Eve Jacobs
Gene Moore
George Poulin
George Thomas, Civic Visions
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Helen Graner
Jacqueline Cusack, Roxborough Development Corporation
Jay Farrell
John Carpenter
John Hunter
Julia Hayman
Krista Gebbia, Chestnut Hill Conservancy
Leigh Ann Campbell, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Liz Svekla
Mark Russell
Marlene Schleifer, Ridge Park Civic Association
Matt Pasquali
Maura Reilly
Michael Gall
Nancy Pontone
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Rob Lewis, Esq., Kaplin Stewart
Sarah Griffith
Suzanne Ponsen
Theresa Stuhlman, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Timothy O'Brien
Xhulio Binjaku, Tacony Community Development Corporation

AGENDA

RIDGE AVENUE ROXBOROUGH THEMATIC HISTORIC DISTRICT

Proposed Action: Amendment

Property Owner: Various

Nominator: Ridge Park Civic Association

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to amend the Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic District to include fourteen additional properties that were constructed during the established period of significance, 1681-1908. The historic district was designated in 2018 and included 186 historic buildings along Ridge Avenue between the Wissahickon Creek and Northwestern Avenue. The Historical Commission found that the historic district satisfied Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J. The period of significance spans from 1681, when William Penn began conveying land to the original purchasers, to 1908, the dawn of the automobile age, when the completion of the Walnut Lane Bridge opened the southeastern section of Roxborough to new forms of residential development. The historic district inventory includes those buildings that best represent the development and varied architectural styles constructed through 1908.

The Ridge Park Civic Association requested the amendment. The staff of the Historical Commission authored the original nomination on behalf of a consortium of community groups and the district councilmember. At that time, the community representatives were concerned by the number of demolitions of older buildings along Ridge Avenue. The 14 properties included in this proposed amendment were evaluated in 2018, when the original district was formulated, and were not included, either because they were deemed to lack sufficient integrity or because insufficient information was available to fully evaluate them.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: While the properties proposed for inclusion in the thematic district were constructed during the period of significance and likely technically satisfy one or more of the Criteria for Designation, the staff questions the appropriateness of adding heavily altered properties with very low integrity to the district. The buildings at 7238 and 7350 Ridge Avenue have a fairly high level of integrity, but others like those at 6600 and 6807 Ridge Avenue have been significantly altered and may be unable to sufficiently represent the history of Ridge Avenue in Roxborough. The staff recommends inclusion of the properties that expand and enhance our understanding and appreciation of the historic Ridge Avenue corridor, but not those with little or no integrity.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:07:59

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Marlene Schleifer and Cheryl Feldman of the Ridge Park Civic Association represented the nomination.
- Attorney Robert Lewis and architectural historian Dr. George Thomas represented the owner of 6807 Ridge Avenue. Owner Timothy O'Brien represented his properties at 7615 and 7617 Ridge Avenue. Eve Jacobs and Jeffrey Tucker represented the owner of 7350 Ridge Avenue.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Schleifer and Ms. Feldman summarized the Ridge Park Civic Association's reasons for submitting the amendment for consideration. Ms. Schleifer and Ms. Feldman expressed concern about potential demolitions along Ridge Avenue. They noted that all properties proposed for inclusion in the thematic district met the Criteria for Designation. They claimed that properties left out of the original district designation were at risk for demolition. They stated that all 14 properties were worthy of the Historical Commission's protection. Ms. Feldman stated that the amendment has garnered strong support from both elected officials and residents in the community. She urged the Committee on Historic Designation and Historical Commission to support the amendment request.
- Mr. Lewis stated that he represents the owner of 6807 Ridge Avenue, who are also the owners of the Cavity Busters dental practice at this location. He explained that the owner began planning in 2022 to consolidate 6807 Ridge Avenue with adjacent properties. Mr. Lewis said that they are asking for 6807 Ridge Avenue to be removed from consideration because of the owner's intent to consolidate multiple properties into one parcel. He asked Mr. Thomas to speak to their concerns about the substance of the nomination, as well as the property's history and physical condition.
- Mr. Thomas observed that the nomination claimed that 6807 Ridge Avenue was historically part of the Lafayette Hotel; he disagreed and stated that this claim was not accurate; the amendment is incorrect. He said that the property's earliest owner was a plumber, not the hotel. Mr. Thomas pointed out that the 1923 Sanborn map showed a complex of buildings with a group of stable buildings at its core. He explained that the Lafayette Hotel was likely a "drovers hotel" where farmers who were driving their cattle to Philadelphia would stay for the night. Mr. Thomas noted a property line shown on the 1923 Sanborn atlas that indicates that 6807 Ridge Avenue was not part of the hotel complex. He also pointed to a 1923 drawing by architect Joseph Miles that showed the property with a masonry front façade and front porch. Mr. Thomas reported that the physical condition of the building is poor, noting that it has lost a great deal of its original design and material integrity over time. He stated that the mansard roof is in poor condition, the cornice is missing, applied rough stucco covers the original stone or brick façade, the front porch has been removed, the front windows were significantly altered, and the original front door has been replaced. Mr. Thomas said that, owing to the nomination's documented inaccuracies and the building's condition, the property at 6807 Ridge Avenue should not be considered for inclusion in the historic district.
- Ms. Tucker, who represented the owner of 7350 Ridge Avenue, spoke in support of the property's designation and the historic district amendment. Ms. Tucker stated that a building on the adjacent property at 7330 Ridge Avenue was recently demolished and that the demolition was devastating.
- Mr. O'Brien, the owner of 7615 and 7617 Ridge Avenue, stated he did not support the historic designation of his properties, and he did not agree that they were historic. He said that he had put a lot of work into the buildings and was concerned that the historic designation would limit the number of people interested in buying the properties in the future. Mr. O'Brien explained that he is a barber, and his barbershop is located in one of the buildings. He asked the Committee on Historic Designation to take into consideration that these properties were purchased as an investment for his retirement, and that designating them would adversely impact their value and his retirement planning. Mr. O'Brien contended that the construction dates in the

nomination were not accurate. He also pointed out that the designation of the property would cause its maintenance to be more expensive.

- Mr. Cohen stated that based on Mr. Thomas' findings there should be a correction to the historic inventory nomination page for 6807 Ridge Avenue. He commented that he had never seen the 1923 sketches by architect Joseph Miles and that it was a wonderful addition to the historic record. Mr. Cohen stated that although the property at 6807 Ridge Avenue was not originally part of the Lafayette Hotel and has been altered over time, it still qualifies for inclusion in the historic district.
- Ms. Barucco said that she believed that all of the buildings proposed in the amendment nomination would contribute to the thematic historic district. She commented that some of these buildings may not qualify for individual designation, but when viewed within the context of the overall Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic Historic District, they do qualify for inclusion in the district. Ms. Barucco added that it would have been helpful to have a map showing where the amendment properties are located in relationship to the other properties in the historic district.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that the Ridge Avenue district is not a contiguous historic district, but instead is a thematic district scattered along the spine of Ridge Avenue. She pointed out that the Historical Commission has designated highly altered properties in the past and the case of 6807 Ridge Avenue would not be unprecedented.
- Ms. Miller said it is important to remember that all of the proposed properties are unique to their own communities. She noted that you cannot compare a Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic Historic District to an Old City Historic District as they are two very different places.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Suzanne Ponson, the president of West Central Germantown Neighbors, spoke in support of nomination.
- Jacqueline Cusack of the Roxborough Development Corporation spoke in support of the nomination.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites spoke in support of the nomination.
- Brian Bishara, the owner of Fountain Street Auto Service at 6501 Ridge Avenue, spoke in support of the nomination.
- John Carpenter, the president of Central Roxborough Civic Association, spoke in support of the nomination.
- Allison Weiss of SoLo Germantown Civic Association spoke in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The inventory form for 6807 Ridge Avenue must be reviewed and all inaccuracies corrected.
- Significantly altered properties can contribute to a historic district and qualify for designation.
- The proposed amendment has strong support from the community, as is seen in the public comment and letters of support.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination amendment demonstrates that the 14 properties satisfy Criterion A and J as they were constructed during Roxborough's early residential development

- period of 1681 through 1908.
- The nomination amendment demonstrates that the 14 properties satisfy Criterion C and D as they are representative of the development and varied architectural styles constructed through 1908.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend adding the properties in the amendment to the Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic Historic District.

ITEM: Amendment to the Ridge Avenue Roxborough Thematic Historic District MOTION: Add all properties to the thematic district MOVED BY: Cohen SECONDED BY: Barucco					
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: 1501 JOHN F. KENNEDY BLVD, #C

Name of Resource: Philadelphia Hospitality Center

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: City of Philadelphia

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Joshua Schroeder, joshua.schroeder@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate a portion of the property at 1501 John F. Kennedy (JFK) Blvd, #C, known as the Philadelphia Hospitality Center (also the Love Park Visitor Center or Fairmount Park Welcome Center), and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The Philadelphia Hospitality Center, located at the southwest corner of John F. Kennedy Plaza, commonly known as Love Park, was designed by architect Roy F. Larson of Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson and was constructed in 1959–1960. The nomination argues that the Philadelphia Hospitality Center at 1501 JFK Blvd. satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and E.

Under Criteria A and C, the nomination argues that the Philadelphia Hospitality Center was an integral feature in the development of John F. Kennedy Plaza, and Penn Center more generally, as part of the post-World War II era of urban renewal and was central to the city's efforts to revitalize Center City Philadelphia. Under Criterion D, the nomination further argues that the Hospitality Center is emblematic of the International Style. Finally, the nomination contends that the building is representative of architect Roy F. Larson, who had a significant influence on Modern architecture in Philadelphia, satisfying Criteria E.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the Philadelphia Hospitality Center at 1501 John F. Kennedy Boulevard satisfies Criteria for

Designation A, C, D, and E.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:17:01

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Schroeder presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Farnham explained that he had spoken with representatives of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, the property owner, who expressed support for the nomination.
- Mr. Cohen praised the nomination and the Preservation Alliance, particularly for contextualizing Roy F. Larson's venture into Modernist architecture. Mr. Cohen highlighted the Philadelphia Hospitality Center's unique geometric design. He also pointed out a misspelled name and wanted more detailed attribution of images.
 - Ms. Barucco agreed, noting the building is an iconic feature of Philadelphia and welcomed the nomination of Modernist buildings.
- Ms. Miller suggested adding Criteria H and J to the nomination. She stated that the Hospitality Center is worthy of recognition as a key and unique physical feature of Center City and John F. Kennedy Plaza, not just for its architectural importance. Ms. Miller expressed general support for more nominations based on historical and community significance.
- The members of the Committee on Historic Designation discussed adding Criteria H and J.
 - Ms. Cooperman suggested adding only H. She argued that Criterion J indicates neighborhood significance, but the Philadelphia Hospitality Center's significance is city-wide and is already covered by Criterion A.
 - The Committee members agreed and concluded after discussion that the nomination supported the addition of Criterion H as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites commented in support of the nomination.
- Julia Hayman commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The Philadelphia Hospitality Center was designed by Roy F. Larson and is a defining example of Mid-century Modernist architecture in Philadelphia.
- The Philadelphia Hospitality Center is an established and familiar visual feature of the City of Philadelphia, owing to its prominent location in John F. Kennedy Plaza.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the Philadelphia Hospitality Center satisfies Criterion A and C as a key piece of the mid-century redevelopment of Center City Philadelphia.
- The nomination demonstrates that the Philadelphia Hospitality Center is a definitive example of the International Style and is associated with Roy F. Larson during his transition toward Modernist architecture, satisfying Criteria D and E.

- The nomination demonstrates that the Philadelphia Hospitality Center is an integral visual feature of Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion H.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1501 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Unit C, the Philadelphia Hospitality Center, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and H.

ITEM: 1501 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Unit C MOTION: Designate under Criteria A, C, D, E, and H 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: 87-91 E HAINES ST

Name of Resource: Providence Baptist Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Providence Baptist Church of Germantown

Nominator: Denise Way, Providence Baptist Church

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 87-91 E. Haines Street, the site of the Providence Baptist Church, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination maintains that the church was built by its community from the bottom up and financed by pooling collective resources and fundraising. The nomination illustrates that Providence Baptist Church stands as a symbol of the community's faith, determination, and sacrifice and therefore satisfies Criterion for Designation J. The period of significance is proposed as 1943, the year that the church building was completed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 87-91 E. Haines Stret satisfies Criterion for Designation J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:33:03

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Denise Way, Doris Baldwin, and Gene Moore represented the nomination and property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Miller commented on the style of the church building and noted that there are many churches in Germantown that follow the same building pattern. She wondered if Maurice Rosenthal, the architect, had a broader campaign for this kind of church building, especially within the Black community of Philadelphia or more specifically in Germantown.
 - Ms. Cooperman noted that Maurice Rosenthal went to the University of Pennsylvania; little has been published about him. She said she did not have a good answer to Ms. Miller's question, but noted that it could be an interesting research project.
- Mr. Cohen commented that it was interesting that the architect chose to go with four centered Tudor-type arches, which makes the building appear more British. He opined that the church building was different than the Classical or High Gothic Catholic church form that one might expect. He noted that the Anglophilic architectural language was always a status amplifier in Philadelphia societies of all levels, so he wondered if that was part of the thought process. Mr. Cohen commented that the architect used cast stone very well and he thought that there was a remarkable economy to what the architect was able to accomplish with limited means.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Dorris Baldwin, a member of Providence Baptist Church, spoke in favor of the nomination.
- Gene Moore, a Deacon at Providence Baptist Church, spoke in favor of the nomination.
- Suzanne Ponsen, the president of West Central Germantown Neighbors, spoke in favor of the nomination and offered her support to the nominator, Denise Way, and other churches in the area that may want to nominate their buildings.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society spoke in favor of the nomination.
- Allison Weiss of So/Lo Germantown Civic Association spoke in favor of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Providence Baptist Church has played an important part in the history of twentieth and twenty-first-century Germantown and is deserving of historical designation.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion J, in that it exemplifies the heritage of the Germantown community.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 87-91 E. Haines Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J.

ITEM: 87-91 E Haines St MOTION: Designate under Criterion J 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: 1800 TASKER ST

Name of Resource: Presbyterian Church of the Evangel; Second Nazareth Missionary Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 18th and Tasker LLC

Nominator: Dane Jensen

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1800 Tasker Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the church building and annex at the site satisfy Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, H, and J. For Criterion A, the nomination argues that 1800 Tasker Street reflects key developments in Philadelphia's religious and community life, showing how congregations adapted to urban change. Additionally, under Criterion A, the nomination argues it is associated with the life of prominent architect Theophilus P. Chandler. Under Criterion C, D, and E, the nomination contends that the property is a high-quality example of the Gothic Revival style by Theophilus P. Chandler, one of Philadelphia's most important architects of the late nineteenth century and was later modified by another notable firm, Duhring, Okie & Ziegler. Under Criterion H, the nomination contends that, owing to its commanding presence on the corner of 18th and Tasker Streets, the property has been a longstanding visual anchor within the Point Breeze neighborhood. Finally, the nomination claims that the church at 1800 Tasker Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J because it has served as a vital religious and community center in Point Breeze.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1800 Tasker Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, H, and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:51:11

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Dane Jensen represented the nomination and property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Cohen commented that he believed this to be a well-documented and remarkable church. He noted that he was not sure if the church being built by T.P. Chandler was enough to satisfy Criterion A.

- Mr. Cohen commented that it struck him as an ambitious building that looks to have been built on a budget, pointing to the stretcher brick. He opined that there could have been some help from the outside, noting that Episcopalians built mission churches but said he did not know the degree to which Presbyterians built mission churches as well.
 - Mr. Jensen responded that the Church of the Evangel was a joining of two different Presbyterian congregations: the 15th Presbyterian Church and the West Tasker Street Mission. He further noted that the Presbytery was trying to consolidate churches because they were concerned with the number of “low-quality congregations” that were around Philadelphia, so they joined the churches together. He continued that it was funded primarily by Gustavus Benson and that one of the large stained-glass windows in the church was created in his honor and that they did also raise money from other groups and organizations.
- Ms. Cooperman thanked Mr. Jensen and commented that she agreed with Mr. Cohen about Criterion A and added that Criterion E is for identifying an important architect associated with a particular design of a building.
- Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Jensen if he knew where Gustavus Benson lived, saying that he had a vague recollection of him living in a different part of the city in a grand house.
 - Mr. Jensen replied that he believed it to be somewhere on Locust Street and not in the neighborhood around the church, which he found striking.
- Ms. Barucco asked Mr. Jensen if the building would be adaptively reused.
 - Mr. Jensen responded that their hope was to adaptively reuse the building, which was tied to whether the Historical Commission saw fit to designate it, as access to the zoning incentive would encourage him to invest in the property. He explained that he wished to turn the property into a space that the community could use in a non-denominational way and to keep it as a gathering place instead of converting it to housing.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance commented in support of the nomination.
- Becky Goodling, a Point Breeze resident, commented in support of the nomination.
- David Gest of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy commented in support of the nomination.
- David Traub of Save Our Sites commented in support of the nomination.
- Ahmir Day of Council President Kenyatta Johnson’s office, asked to be connected with the property owner and the Historical Commission’s staff member administering the matter.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Criterion E should be used as the basis for designating a property associated with a prominent architect.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination fails to satisfy Criterion A. The fact that architect T.P. Chandler designed the church is not sufficient to satisfy Criterion for Designation A.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria C, D, E, H, and J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1800 Tasker Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, H, and J.

ITEM: 1800 Tasker St MOTION: Designate under Criteria C, D, E, H, 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 Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 5831 YOCUM ST

Name of Resource: The Conchy-Leech Tenant House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: MNH LLC

Nominator: University City Historical Society

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5831 Yocum Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. A two-and-one-half story frame building, constructed in the first years of the nineteenth century, stands on the property. The nomination argues that the early nineteenth-century frame building at 5831 Yocum Street is rare survivor in a neighborhood that has seen significant redevelopment. It claims that the building represents the formerly rural character of the area along Darby Road, now known as Woodland Avenue, thereby exemplifying the heritage of the community and satisfying Criterion J. The nomination proposes a period of significance from the building's construction about 1805 to 1939.

The frame building underwent a major renovation in 2023 and/or 2024 that radically changed the appearance of the building. The gable roof of the two-bay section to the north was extended over a one-bay addition to the south, significantly altering the massing and volume of the structure. A large, two-story, shed-roof addition with deck was extended off the rear of the structure in place of a smaller one-story rear addition. The chimney was removed. All roofing and cladding were replaced with substitute materials. The cornice and other trim were replaced. Window openings were resized, and windows were replaced. A concrete pad was installed around much of the house. Recent real estate listings for the two rental units in the structure indicate that new interior fixtures and finishes were installed. Despite the major renovation and additions, the Department of Licenses and Inspections has no record of any building, zoning, plumbing, electrical, or mechanical permit for the work. Moreover, the property's RSA-3 zoning does not permit the two-family use. In the parlance of the National Register of Historic Places, the property at 5831 Yocum Street has lost six of the seven aspects of integrity owing to the recent renovation and earlier changes in the neighborhood. It retains its location, but has lost its design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

On pages 10 and 17, the nomination incorrectly states that Darby Road leads from West Philadelphia to Upper Darby. The former Darby Road, now Woodland Avenue, connects West Philadelphia with Darby, not Upper Darby.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the structure at 5831 Yocum Street has lost its integrity to such an extent that it can no longer exemplify the heritage of the community and therefore does not satisfy Criterion J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:12:05

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Amy Lambert of the University City Historical Society and author Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman opened the Committee on Historic Designation's discussion, speaking on the concept of "integrity" in historic preservation. She expressed doubt that this property can represent its historical significance in a way that benefits the public and that the Historical Commission could successfully regulate it. She further commented that she was skeptical of "last man standing" arguments as criteria for designation.
- Mr. Cohen suggested that this property, as a largely undisturbed site, likely has archaeological remains and may merit designation under Criterion I.
 - He applauded the nominator for his research, given the challenges inherent in a site of this era, when maps offer limited detail. Mr. Cohen acknowledged Ms. Cooperman's reluctance to adopt a "last man standing" argument but asserted that the rarity of this property should be balanced against the integrity.
 - He expressed regret that the property had not been nominated before the recent renovation, which significantly changed the appearance of the building.
- Ms. Miller contended that the building, despite its alterations, continues to be legible as a tenant house or farmhouse. She agreed with Mr. Cohen that the building is worthy of preservation.
 - Ms. Miller also noted that there is another local tenant house along the railroad tracks, which can be seen coming into town from Wayne Junction.
- Mr. Cohen speculated that the interior structure of this building might yield significant insights despite the outward changes.
- Ms. Barucco voiced an appreciation for Mr. Cohen's and Ms. Miller's arguments, but contended that this building lacks integrity, especially those portions of it that are accessible to the public.
- Ms. Cooperman also acknowledged the validity of Ms. Miller's comments but agreed with Ms. Barucco that she found it difficult to see how regulating this property through the provisions of the City's preservation ordinance would provide a public benefit. If the building were to be demolished, it could be documented, but that only when it is taken apart would the historic evidence be accessible.
- Mr. Cohen commented that the nomination offers a starting point for a future restoration, whether or not the building is designated.
 - He also wondered whether the property might merit designation under Criterion I

- alone.
- Ms. Cooperman said that while the Historical Commission was open to designations under Criterion I alone, greater evidence about the archaeological resources may be required.
- Ms. Miller reiterated her belief that the envelope of the building, including its siting, remains largely intact and worthy of designation. She acknowledged that more evidence would likely be needed to designate solely under Criterion I.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- George Poulin, a board member of University City Historical Society, commented in support of designation of the subject property. He contended that its form, even altered, stands out from the surrounding context, and that it is a real rarity in that part of the city.

DISCUSSION CONTINUED:

- Mr. Cohen moved that the Committee on Historic Designation recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5831 Yocum Street satisfies Criteria for Designation I and J. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which failed by a vote of two to two. Owing to the failed motion, the Committee declined to offer a recommendation on the nomination.

ITEM: 5831 Yocum St MOTION: Designate under Criteria I 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 Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	2	2			2

ADDRESS: 4900 LONGSHORE AVE

Name of Resource: Tacony Saving Fund Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Company

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Ashley DeVries and Darren Musatio

Nominator: Historical Commission staff

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 4900 Longshore Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building is historically significant and merits individual listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. The nomination asserts that the building satisfies Criteria C and D by mixing Romanesque and Italianate details in a harmony that is characteristic of Victorian Eclecticism. The nomination also argues that the building exemplifies Victorian Bank design and reflects Tacony's design environment. Finally, the nomination contends that the

important role that the Tacony Saving Fund Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Co. served in the development of the community satisfies Criterion J.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 4900 Longshore Avenue, the Tacony Saving Fund Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Company building, satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 2:43:51

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Ashley de Vries represented the property owner and supported the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman complimented the nomination's author, noted the key role of the Tacony Saving Fund Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Company in the development of Tacony, and expressed support for the building's preservation.
- Ms. Barucco noted the importance of banks in the development of communities.
- Mr. Cohen opined that the building is a remarkable example of classicism without being an example of Beaux Arts design. He noted that the description misidentified some columns as pilasters and that Mr. Silcox's first name is Harry, not Henry.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Xhulio Binjaku, the executive director of the Tacony Community Development Corporation, commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The harmonious mixing of Romanesque and Italianate details is characteristic of Victorian Eclecticism.
- Victorian Bank design and Tacony's design environment are exemplified by the Tacony Saving Fund Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Co. Building.
- The Tacony Saving Fund Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Co. served an important role in the development of the Tacony community.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criteria C and D, owing to the buildings distinctive architectural style.
- The nomination demonstrates that the property satisfies Criterion J because the bank building exemplifies the heritage of the Tacony community.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4900 Longshore Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J.

ITEM: 4900 Longshore Ave MOTION: Designate under Criteria C, D, 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 Lavery					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	4				2

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:51:48

ACTION: The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 12:32 p.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.

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.