

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

**WEDNESDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2016, 9:30 A.M.
ROOM 18-029, 1515 ARCH STREET
EMILY COOPERMAN, PH.D., CHAIR**

PRESENT

Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair
Jeffrey Cohen, Ph.D.
Janet Klein
Bruce Laverty
Douglas Mooney, M.A.

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Kim Broadbent, Historic Preservation Planner II
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner I

ALSO PRESENT

P.B. Heyer, Rudolph/Mercy-Douglass
Justin McDaniel
Eapen Kalatuil
Amy Lambert, University City Historical Society
George Poulin, University City Historical Society
Sherron Walker, Rudolph/Mercy-Douglass
John Lingham, Rudolph/Mercy-Douglass
Fred Mauer
Deborah Majka
John Wisniewski
Michael Phillips, Obermayer
Leo Voloshin
John C. Manton
Chris Isaacson
Maria Sturm
Matt McClure, Ballard Spahr
Frank Brzozowski
Wanda Castaneda
Kenneth Perry
Deborah Kinhead
Joseph Jankowski
Dorothy Pilkington
Carolyn Devine
Timothy Devine
Marie Gaul
Vincent Lipczynski
Irene McAdams
Connie Flaville
D. Cornell
Kate Gabe

Chris Seamans, Star Newsweekly
Jon Barnes
Dave Barnes
Oscar Beisert
Andrew Palewski, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Janusz Romanski
Regina Gorzkowska-Rossi
Linda Bettershifer
Ed Bettershifer
Anton Michels
Venise Whitaker
Cathy Plunkett
Mark Wagenveld
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Wendy Wong
Elizabeth Stegner, University City Historical Society
Kathy Dowdell
Ben Leech
Liz Spikol, Mid-Atlantic Media
Adam Gondman
Mary Ellen Reuter
Hal Schirmer, Esq.
David Traub, Save Our Sites
Robert Shusterman, Esq.
Mary McGettigan, West Philadelphians for Progressive Planning & Preservation
Carl Primavera, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Joseph J. Menkevich
William O'Brien, Esq.
Stephan Salisbury, Philadelphia Inquirer
Todd Margasek
Henry Clinton
Sue Patterson, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association
Desiree Deluca, University of the Arts
Michael Sklaroff, Esq., Ballard Spahr

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Cooperman called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Klein and Messrs. Cohen, Laverty, and Mooney joined her.

1642 FITZWATER ST

Name of Resource: Tabor Chapel and Mission School

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: The First Colored Wesley Methodist Church

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1642 Fitzwater Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that property is significant under Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J. The nomination contends that the church is significant under Criteria A and J for its association with the African American church and community in Philadelphia, and as a representation of the physical development of the larger Presbyterian Church through the establishment of mission chapels or congregations by the Philadelphia Sabbath-School Association. The nomination further argues that the Samuel Sloan-designed church is significant as an early example of his commissions, satisfying Criterion E, but little information is provided as to how the building embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, mentioned in the nomination as Italianate or Italian Romanesque, and how the building reflects the environment in an era characterized by said distinctive architectural style.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1642 Fitzwater Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, E, and J. The staff contends that the nomination, not the building itself, does not make a cogent argument for Criteria C and D. Additionally, the staff notes that the correct address for the church building is 1642 Fitzwater Street, rather than the 1640 Fitzwater Street address that is found on the nomination form and throughout the body of the nomination.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee. Attorney Matt McClure represented the property owner. Paul Steinke represented the nominator.

Mr. McClure explained that his client recently purchased the property and intends to use the building as a private residence, but seeks additional time to investigate its adaptive reuse potential. Mr. Steinke stated that the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia does not object to the 60-day continuance request.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Commission table the review of the nomination and remand it back to the Committee for review at its 15 February 2017 meeting.

100 S INDEPENDENCE W ML

Name of Resource: Rohm & Haas

Proposed Action: Designation of building, public interior, and objects

Property Owner: KPG-IMW Owner, LLC

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: These nominations propose to designate the building, public interior, and chandeliers at 100 S. Independence W. Mall as historic and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nominations collectively argue that the building, interior and chandeliers are significant under Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, F, G, H and J. The building

nomination contends that it is one of Philadelphia's most significant mid-twentieth century buildings, satisfying Criteria A and J, for its association with the Rohm & Haas Company, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, who were heavily involved in its development. The nomination further argues that the building's high-profile location next to Independence Mall, and the influence that the setting had on its design, satisfy Criteria G and H. Finally, the building nomination contends that the involvement of architect Pietro Belluschi satisfies Criterion E, while the building's Modernist characteristics and innovative incorporation of modern materials satisfy Criteria C, D, and F. The interior nomination proposes to designate the public interior portions of the north pavilion ground floor lobby and south pavilion commercial space. The nomination contends that the public interior portions of the ground floor are one of Philadelphia's most significant Modernist interior spaces, satisfying Criteria C and D, and are tied to influential modern designers Pietro Belluschi and György Kepes, satisfying Criterion E. The nomination further argues that the incorporation of Plexiglas into the design of the building, symbolizing the importance of that material to the success of the Rohm & Haas Company, satisfies Criterion A. The object nomination covers the three Plexiglas chandeliers that are located along the west perimeter of the north pavilion in an area of the building designed and used for non-public functions. The remainder of the chandeliers is included in the public interior nomination. The object nomination contends that the chandeliers are significant under Criterion A, for the incorporation of Plexiglas into the design of the building, symbolizing the importance of that material to the success of the Rohm & Haas Company, and under Criterion E, for their association with influential modern designers Pietro Belluschi and György Kepes.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nominations demonstrate that the building, public interior, and chandeliers at 100 S. Independence W. Mall satisfy Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, F, G, H, and J.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee. Attorney Brett Feldman represented the property owner. Paul Steinke represented the nominator.

Mr. Feldman stated that his client is working with the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia to identify the best path forward regarding the three nominations. Mr. Steinke stated that the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia does not object to the 60-day continuance request.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Commission table the review of the nomination and remand it back to the Committee for review at its 15 February 2017 meeting.

ADDRESS: 1600-06 & 1608-10 E BERKS ST

Name of Resource: St. Laurentius Interior

Proposed Action: Interior Designation

Property Owner: Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the majority of the interior of St. Laurentius Church at 1600-06 and 1608-10 E Berks Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the interior of the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E, H, and J. The exterior of the property is already listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The interior designation would cover the narthex, towers, choir loft, nave, aisles, and main altar, and would place under the Commission's jurisdiction all window and door openings and the windows and doors therein (exterior windows and doors are already under the Commission's jurisdiction owing to the exterior designation), staircases, all interior trim, paintings/murals/frescoes, decorative moldings, plaster walls and ceilings (both painted and unpainted), and all light fixtures over 30 years in age.

The nomination argues that the interior reflects the environment in an era characterized by revivalist architecture as interpreted and articulated in the design of houses of worship in the late nineteenth century in Philadelphia. Specifically, the nomination argues that the interior of St. Laurentius Church exemplifies the Transitional style of architecture, which derives from a period of transition in architectural style between the Romanesque and the Gothic styles in the twelfth century. Furthermore, the nomination argues that the interior of St. Laurentius Church reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style in the use of traditional Polish motifs. The nomination also argues that the interior is significant as the work of Edwin Forrest Durang, a master architect of ecclesiastical buildings in nineteenth century Philadelphia.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff offers no recommendation on the satisfaction of the Criteria for Designation.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. John Wisniewski represented the nomination. Attorney Michael Phillips represented the property owner, Holy Name of Jesus Church, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Leo Voloshin represented the equitable owners.

Mr. Wisniewski presented a Power Point presentation. He thanked the Committee for allowing him to speak, noting that it has been an arduous project to try to delineate the aspects of the building that he would like to see designated. He noted that when he first compiled the nomination, it was all inclusive, but he has now narrowed the scope of the areas he would like to see designated, and those would be the focus of the presentation. He noted that the exterior of the property was designated as historic approximately one year ago. Mr. Wisniewski presented an image of the main altar, which is carved wood from Munich.

Mr. Wisniewski noted that it is important to understand the ideology of Polish immigrants and the reasons behind their design decisions for churches when they first came to America in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. He described the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which gave Poland and Lithuania control of most of the European continent,

but was not long-lived. Partitions of Poland began in the late eighteenth century, with Austria, Prussia, and Russia dividing the country into segments. He noted that, for a while, those nations allowed Poland to maintain some sovereignty, but by the late-eighteenth century, the third partition completely eradicated Polish-Lithuanian sovereignty. Eventually, especially in the Prussian sector of Poland, Poles were unable to even speak the Polish language. In Poland in 1831, 1846, and 1863, there were several unsuccessful Polish rebellions. As a result, waves of immigrants began coming to the United States. The Poles who came to America settled in large groups so they could maintain an identity and were able to use their own language. They did this in every area in the United States in which they settled, the first settlement being in Texas. When they came to big cities in the Northeast and upper Midwest, they began to form societies before they were able to establish churches. One of the prime national societies was formed in Philadelphia, the PNA or Polish National Alliance, which was founded in 1880, just two years before the founding of St. Laurentius. Some of the members of the organization were instrumental in petitioning the Archdiocese to establish a parish. In 1881 and 1882, local Polish people petitioned the Archdiocese to allow them to build a church. Mr. Wisniewski noted that the Archdiocese did not build the church for the immigrants, but instead, the immigrants built the church themselves over the course of several years. The upper church was not built until 1890. Unlike the immigration in the early 1800s to the United States, which had been more affluent Poles, the people arriving in the late 1800s were peasants, and did not have much money. They worked hard to establish a better life for themselves here, settling in large groups. Once they petitioned Archbishop Wood, he allowed them to build the first Polish church in this Archdiocese, St. Laurentius. In 1885, the church basement was built, and in 1890, the upper church.

Mr. Wisniewski described the Gothic design by Edwin Forrest Durang as being 114 feet long and 60 feet wide. St. Laurentius and many other Polish churches represent a Polish Cathedral style of church; some are Gothic, some Renaissance Revival. The churches in Philadelphia are more Gothic in appearance owing to the area of Poland from which the immigrant community came. The Polish people built churches in the United States to remind them of the churches in Poland. Mr. Wisniewski noted that St. Laurentius mimics in many ways a cathedral in Krakow, St. Mary's. He presented a comparison of the cathedral of St. Mary's in Krakow to St. Laurentius, noting that it has two towers, much like St. Laurentius. Mr. Wisniewski noted the resemblance between the interior photographs of St. Mary's and St. Laurentius from the 1950s, and in present day.

Mr. Wisniewski presented an image of the main altar, noting that it is one of the aspects of the interior he is nominating. He noted that there are three Gothic carved-wood altars, the statues of which have been removed by the Archdiocese. He noted that the main one is the center altar, with one on each side. He stated that the altars are one of two sets of objects that he is placing before the Committee for consideration for historic designation.

Mr. Wisniewski described the three altars, noting that the center altar is 57 feet tall, the statues themselves were also wood-carved. He stated that there are 11 stained glass windows, which along with the altars, were all imported from Munich, Germany. Mr. Wisniewski noted that the windows are already designated as part of the exterior designation. He explained that the windows mostly depict Polish saints, including St. Adalbert and St. Hedwig.

Mr. Wisniewski then turned his attention to the murals. The murals themselves tell the Polish story of St. Laurentius, and it is important to appreciate the care that was taken in placing these murals, because they tell the story of the immigrants from Poland and their entry into America, as well as their political and religious aspirations. He explained that Lorenzo Scattaglia was the

painter of the murals, which depict scenes specific to Polish Catholicism, scenes which are somewhat political in nature, and that there is a unique interplay in these paintings of culture, heritage, and religion. Mr. Wisniewski noted that, respectfully, when speaking of Polish heritage and culture, it is nearly synonymous with Catholicism. He noted that over 90% of Poland remains Catholic, and most of the immigrants who came to America were Catholic. He noted that there were also Jewish immigrants from Poland, but that the waves of Polish immigrants who came in the 1800s were mostly Catholic. Mr. Wisniewski presented an image of one of the murals, noting that Polish Christianity has existed for 1050 years, beginning in 966.

Mr. Wisniewski presented a photograph of the primary murals that line the upper center aisles, noting that there are five on each side, two in the back above the doors, and two in the choir loft. He noted that his presentation would focus on the ones with Polish significance, while many of the other murals feature universal Catholic scenes, such as the baptism of Jesus, ascension of Mary and the death of St. Joseph.

Mr. Wisniewski presented a significant painting in the church, which was a replica by Scattaglia of an original by Jan Styka, which is located in the Gesu church by St. Joseph's Prep. It is called Regina Polonia. In the painting, one can see peasants on the lower right bow down to the Blessed Mother, some of the clergy on the left, and some noblemen praying for the freedom of Poland.

Mr. Wisniewski presented an image of murals on the other side of the church, explaining that it depicts St. Hedwig blessing her son King Henry II, who is currently up for beatification. He noted that it is a very significant painting because it brings together everything of the Polish experience here and in Europe. It says the "Crowned Queen of Poland, pray for us," in Polish, and underneath that it says, "God Deliver Poland." He explained that in the left hand corner there is a Polish eagle on a background of red, which is representative of the Polish Commonwealth, and on the right hand corner there is a knight, which is representative of the Lithuanian Commonwealth. At the bottom, beneath the image of the Blessed Mother, is a picture of St. Michael the Archangel, the patron saint of Ruthenia. The goal was to unify Poland and Lithuanian and an area of Russia called Ruthenia.

Mr. Wisniewski asserted that the magnificence of St. Laurentius is found not just on the exterior but on the interior as well. He stated that when he initially developed the nomination with the people who were assisting him, they were looking to make everything inside historical, because they believe everything is. He noted that the building holds so much intrinsic beauty. He stated that his heart and soul is in this church and the hearts and souls of many people here and in this city. He explained that, at a minimum, the things that would speak to the cultural significance of the immigrants who came here are the paintings and the three Gothic altars. He stated that he is seeking the designations of the paintings and the altars. Limiting his nomination to these objects, he opined, would allow for some eventual repurposing of the church of some sort without compromising the exterior of the structure.

He reiterated that the beauty of the church is not solely on the exterior, but also in the interior. For most of the congregants who have attended St. Laurentius their whole lives, they associate the culture and heritage expressed in the inside as quite significant, he explained. Mr. Wisniewski read the Criteria for Designation under which he proposed designation.

Attorney Michael Phillips spoke on behalf of Holy Name of Jesus Church, stating that the Church is opposed to the interior designation for a number of reasons. First, however, he asked to speak to the nomination itself, and the presentation with respect to the murals, altar pieces,

and various other aspects that were referenced. He noted that the nomination was drafted as a nomination for the public interior portions of the building. The references to the murals and altar pieces as objects, he opined, are not even fleshed out in the nomination. He asserted that when a different nominator came before the Commission for the altar pieces at Old St. Joe's, those were specifically detailed, providing the history of each of the objects proposed for designation, and that that is not seen here, so he did not believe that the objects can be appropriately considered for designation under the nomination as it stands. He noted that many of the objects described in the nomination are no longer in the former church building. He explained that the church was relegated to "profane but not sordid use" by the Archdiocese in 2014, and as a result, can no longer be used as a Catholic church. Therefore, he continued, the items of Catholic faith must be removed from the building. He opined that the photographs in the nomination are from a snapshot in time in 2014 and do not accurately represent the property currently. Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Phillips to be more specific about which objects he referenced. Mr. Phillips responded that he can go through every single mural and altar piece. Ms. Cooperman asked if he could summarize what has been removed. Mr. Phillips responded that most of the paintings and statuary have been removed. He noted that the stained glass windows are still in place, but must be removed. He stated that the issue is not that all items have been removed; it is that the items that have not been removed must be removed. Ms. Cooperman asked him to list the items that have been removed from the church. Mr. Phillips asked Mr. Voloshin to speak to the current condition of the interior. Mr. Voloshin noted that the equitable owners have not removed anything; any items removed were done so by the Archdiocese. The Stations of the Cross and all the statues that were in the altars, and the altar table have been removed, he explained. The murals and frescoes that line the interior and are on the ceiling are still present.

Mr. Laverty asked what interest the Holy Name Parish church has in the building. Mr. Phillips responded that it is the owner. Members of the audience disagreed. Mr. Phillips replied that he can say that he is present both on behalf of Holy Name of Jesus Church and the Archdiocese. His point, he noted, is that it should not be sufficient merely to list dozens of objects and say that they should be designated within the interior without more detailed descriptions. However, he continued, his main point is much more significant. He stated that many of these objects are not in the building, and any objects of the Catholic faith that remain must be removed.

Mr. Phillips stated that the building has not been open to the public for nearly three years, and noted that it is not possible to enter the building right now without a hardhat and an insurance waiver. Members of the audience disagreed. Mr. Phillips continued that there are only two other examples of public interior portions of buildings that have been designated, City Council Chambers in City Hall and public spaces in the old Family Court Building, both of which at the time of designation were open to the public. The interior and exterior of the Blue Horizon were nominated, he noted, but the interior, which at the time was under contract with a developer, was not even recommended for designation. He stated that a "public interior portion," which is eligible for designation, is an interior portion of a building that is customarily open to the public. At one time, he conceded, St. Laurentius was open to the public by invitation, but it has not been open for three years, and, for that reason alone, the nomination should be rejected.

Mr. Phillips also noted that the photographs in the nomination are not reflective of the current condition of the interior of the property. The Commission's Rules & Regulations, he noted, states that "substantial portions of features reflecting design for public use" must remain, and if they do not, then the interior nomination should be rejected.

Mr. Phillips also argued that the interior nomination is redundant with the exterior nomination, because both were nominated under the same Criteria A, C, E, H, and J. He opined that to take both the exterior and the interior on the same basis is both redundant but also does not accomplish the mission and goal of historic preservation. He suggested that the Committee and eventually Commission would be asked to keep this interior portion for use as a church or as a museum, or would dictate how the owner operates the interior of the building, which would be crippling to the owner and the Archdiocese. He reiterated that the Committee should focus on the fact that the interior is not a public interior.

Mr. Wisniewski commented that the Committee should be aware that there is still an active appeal in Rome to reopen St. Laurentius as a church. Mr. Wisniewski opined that, unless substantial construction has recently been undertaken inside of the church, the murals on the ceiling should still be intact because they are very high up above the floor.

Ms. Cooperman opened the floor to public comment.

Hal Schirmer, an attorney representing the Faithful Laurentians, responded to Mr. Phillips' arguments, opining that one cannot close down a building and then say that the interior is no longer open to the public; the interior was constructed to be public, and to be a celebration of the Catholic faith. Mr. Schirmer opined that the original nomination was intended for both the interior and exterior of the church because they both reflect the same things. He described the spirituality of the earthly stone exterior opening up to the celestial interior. Regarding the internal condition, he continued, the owner is required to maintain the interior in the form in which it was at the time that the notice was sent to the property owner regarding the interior nomination. He argued that the owners could not short-circuit a designation process by letting an interior fall into disrepair or by deciding they do not want to repair it. He asserted that there are murals in many types of buildings, and they are more than just a paint job, but are a means of artistic and religious expression, put there for a purpose. He used the interior of 30th Street Station as an example, noting that 30th Street Station gets shut down occasionally, but it does not mean that it is no longer a public space.

David Traub, a representative of Save Our Sites, endorsed the nomination. He commented that in a marvelous essay on the interior of St. Laurentius, Jeanne Murphy Curtis, who could not attend the meeting, likens the imagery presented inside the church to a well-written book. He stated that she says that as the visitor is pulled inward on a lyrical journey, chapter upon chapter of meaning layered within meaning, one begins to see the story unfold until ultimately it becomes clear that the significance of the place lies not in its parts but in its wholeness. He stated that dismantling this church will have the same effect as tearing apart a book and scattering its pages. To further the book metaphor, Mr. Traub said that the exterior and interior are opening up a new chapter in the story of preservation in Philadelphia. He noted that he need not repeat the specifics of the finely detailed nomination, but opined that the nominators' ambitious and earnest effort to save St. Laurentius presents a larger sense of purpose in preserving the historic architecture of Philadelphia. Here the parishioners themselves are attempting to save their spiritual home for their children and grandchildren. Mr. Traub expressed his admiration for the parishioners and opined that their courage will be an inspiration to those who follow. Recently, he noted, the city sadly lost interior of the legendary Boyd Theater, which was not a religious structure, but a temple in the world of entertainment. He opined that the city should not again allow the destruction of such an architecturally significant interior. Saving only the exterior of the church while converting the interior to a residential use is second best, he opined. He reiterated that Save Our Sites supports the interior nomination.

Deborah Majka, representative of the Polish government, stated that she is currently serving her second five-year term as an honorary consul of the Republic of Poland for southeastern Pennsylvania. She noted that much of what she planned to say has already been said by Mr. Wisniewski, but that it is important to further emphasize that the Poles in St. Laurentius enhanced the interior of the building by constantly including examples of their Polish heritage and culture into the building: murals, stained glass windows, frescoes. St. Laurentius, as the oldest Polish Catholic church in Philadelphia, is considered to be the Mother Church for all of Polish descent in the community. Located in Fishtown, the remarkable interior is an established and visual feature of the neighborhood, and the larger Polish-American community of Philadelphia, she opined. Moreover, she continued, the interior is a symbol of the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Polish immigrant and Polish-American population of Philadelphia from the time of its inception until now. Over the hundreds of years of Polish emigration to the United States, the Polish government has continued to rely on the Polish diaspora, called Polonia, to maintain and share the rich Polish culture and heritage outside of Poland, and is most grateful to St. Laurentius' dedication to the rich traditions, family values, and strong faith that has been exemplar. With the designation of the exterior, and hopefully the interior, St. Laurentius will continue to be a shining beacon to all Polish residents and beyond, Ms. Majka concluded.

Joseph Jankowski, director of the Polish Beneficial Association, stated that the Historical Commission has previously voted to designate the exterior of St. Laurentius church in the Fishtown community as a historic site. He noted that he previously testified that both the exterior and interior of St. Laurentius are architectural masterpieces. In fact, the three altars, frescoes, paintings, and stained glass windows of St. Laurentius are both temporally and spiritually priceless. Furthermore, he continued, the St. Laurentius church interior exemplifies the cultural characteristics, social and historical heritage of Philadelphia's Fishtown community, and specifically St. Laurentius church, the oldest Polish Catholic church in the Philadelphia Archdiocese. He respectfully requested that the iconic interior of St. Laurentius be designated by the Historical Commission as a historical interior, to prevent it from being dismantled or removed in favor of private development.

Frank Brzozowski, a member of the Democratic State Committee and parishioner of St. Laurentius, read a prepared statement. He explained his letter of support for St. Laurentius, a block-long structure between Memphis and Berks Streets that has historical status as the oldest Polish Catholic church in Philadelphia. He opined that the interior paintings and artifacts may be unique, since many Catholic churches were lost in Poland during the World Wars, and to the anti-Catholic Communist government. He asserted that Philadelphia is a sanctuary city, and that, as such, public policy mandates recognition of immigrants and their heritage, and prohibits the destruction and depreciation of relics of national origin, treasures that must be preserved. The paintings and fixtures of St. Laurentius exemplify the heritage of the Polish-American community in Fishtown for over two centuries. He opined that the paintings on the ceiling date from the 1800s, and show the craftsmanship of the newly constructed church. He argued that the Historical Commission is empowered to prevent the depreciation or destruction by a developer of the significant artistic and architectural elements of the building. He described his family history with St. Laurentius, and displayed family documents. He explained the destruction of Poland during World War I, and that more than one million buildings were destroyed. The Polish Catholic church suffered under the Nazi occupation through World War II, and the Communist occupation after World War II. He opined that, although he has never been to Poland, the paintings in St. Laurentius might be the only ones of their kind left, owing to the destruction of similar churches in Poland. Mr. Brzozowski submitted his letter for the record.

Regina Gorzkowska-Rossi described community efforts to preserve the heritage of the Polish immigrant community, and the importance of St. Laurentius as the first Polish Catholic church in Philadelphia. She opined that the interior is a conscious adaptation of what the Polish immigrants intended to bring and cultivate in this country, so it is important. The church, she noted, was the center of life for organizing the Polish community, because Polish immigrants were used to working with and for and in the church. Religion, culture, and politics are blended in Polish culture, she argued, because Poland was segregated under three different governments, and always fighting to get reunited. She noted that Polish immigrants fought for America in World War I, with St. Laurentius sending 110 recruits to fight in France and Poland. She noted that she has a collection of postcards to Poland via Philadelphia. She noted the Polish community is still in mourning for the loss of an important church destroyed during World War I. She stated that it is very precious to the Polish community to keep the interior of St. Laurentius. She noted the importance of St. Laurentius and the depictions on the interior to the Polish efforts of liberate themselves. She opined that this church is like Independence Hall to the Polish immigrant community. The murals on the interior depict the words "God Deliver Poland," and after praying, one leaves with this message. She noted that another mural is a depiction of a saint and the immigrant desire for Poland to be resurrected. She reiterated the importance of the Regina Polonia mural which depicts three states (peasants, clergy, knights), praying for independence. She asserted that Polish immigrants accomplished something, and it all started at St. Laurentius, which is extremely important for Polish culture.

Janusz Romanski noted that he is president of the Polish People's University, established in 1918 and one of the oldest Polish-American organizations. He stated that the Polish-American community is very active in the Philadelphia area, and during the last century, had an impact on the cultural and religious life, and life itself. He noted that his intention was to emphasize that St. Laurentius is very important to the Polish-American community as a symbol of the unification of Polish heritage and also religious traditions. He explained that he came to the United States 34 years ago owing to a political situation in Poland at the time, and strongly believes that the value of religion still exists. He noted that he is sure that the great Commission will take into consideration the meaning of St. Laurentius' interior for the Polish-American community to Philadelphia. Poland became a Christian country 1,050 years ago, and the Polish community of Philadelphia wants to be properly recognized, he stated. Next year is very important for the Polish community, he continued, because it brings the 200-year anniversary of Tadeusz Kosciuszko, the great man who supported George Washington during the American Revolution. His sculpture will be installed next to St. Peter's Cathedral, Mr. Romanski explained.

Venice Whitaker, a member of the group called the Faithful Laurentians, read a prepared statement. She noted that if one were to ask a Laurentian why the closure of the church has been so painful, they will say without hesitation that it is because their hearts are in the church. The church was designed to reflect the hearts of its people. All their hearts are in the church, as are those of their ancestors, filled with the boundless love they carried of those they left behind in Poland, she stated. St. Laurentius, as the only Catholic patron of archives, was chosen as the namesake of the sacred space, not only because he represents the work of the common man, but because within his walls, the history of the immigrant people was to be written and preserved for generations. It is more than a cultural space, she continued, it is a cultural repository of a great, strong, and resilient people who have contributed in great numbers to the growth of Philadelphia where they settled. Dismantling the interior will destroy this testament, the epic Polish novel, forever, she asserted. Truly the sacred space is far too important, precious, and beloved by its people to be lost, she argued. She stated that the Faithful Laurentians are asking the Historical Commission to recognize this interior as a historic and cultural entity in its own rights. She noted that her grandparents, who survived World War II,

came to Philadelphia to go to St. Laurentius, because they were Polish and wanted to go to a Polish church.

Oscar Beisert explained that he is a huge proponent of St. Laurentius, and wrote the original nomination for St. Laurentius, as well as the interior nomination, but asked that his name not be on it because he had problems with the idea of limiting the use of the building to just being a church. Given the significant cost of repairing the building, he argued, it would be prohibitive to use it as a church or community space again. He sympathized with the Faithful Laurentians and noted that he would like to see the whole city preserved at 1945. There are many interior spaces in Philadelphia that warrant designation, he noted, and to designate a church interior, the architectural quality must be extremely significant. St. Laurentius is special, he conceded, but it is an amalgamation of pieces over time, and each piece hinges on the other pieces being there. The church today is not the church that appeared when Durang designed the building, he noted, with many pieces added over time. Although that does not mean the pieces are not significant, he noted, it is not clear what still exists in the building and so much has been changed or removed, the pieces that are required to make it truly special as a whole space may be lost. He reminded the room of something Dr. Cooperman had said previously, which is to “not let the perfect get in the way of the good.” His fear, he noted, is that designating the interior may prevent the one chance of preserving the entire building. He argued in favor of the current development proposal, noting that there is a developer here who is willing to turn the building into apartments. Is that a perfect solution, he asked, no, but it is the only person here with funds to do something with the building now. In a city full of churches that need to be repurposed, there is someone here who is willing to do that with St. Laurentius; it is not someone who is planning to gut the building or tear it out and throw it in the garbage. He explained that, as much as he agrees with the spirit of preserving the interior, we cannot let the perfect get in the way in of the good.

Irene McAdams, a member of the Fishtown community and a former parishioner of St. Laurentius, noted that the former parishioners care about the church and community. Her family has invested six generations in the church, and it means so much to her and to the other people in the community. She noted that although she had moved away, she asked for special dispensation to have her daughter baptized there.

Mr. Voloshin, the equitable owner and developer, commented that he is part of the development team that has the building under contract for purchase, and stated that their mission is to preserve the building. He noted that his development company was the 300th prospective buyer contacted by the Archdiocesan real estate team, and one of only two groups that offered to take on the project. The other person who sought to buy the church had previously demolished a church at Marlborough and Belgrade several years ago, he noted. Mr. Voloshin stated that he and the development team are here in alignment with the members of the community who want to see the building preserved, and agreed with Mr. Beisert’s sentiments. He stated that his project to repurpose the church would be prevented if the interior is designated. He noted that there are significant structural issues on the exterior that will cost \$1 million to repair, and that when they went for the zoning application, the Commissioner of the Department of Licenses & Inspections required that they fix the exterior first before moving on to the interior. \$1 million is the cost to walk through the door, he explained. He stated that they are ready to move forward and complete the restorations that are required and to preserve the church for many future generations in Fishtown.

Mr. Lavery questioned the nominators, noting that there is obviously no doubt that the architect of the building is Edwin Forrest Durang, but that he is unclear from the nomination the design of

the interior can be attributed to Durang. He questioned the documentation for Durang's role in the interior design, as well as Lorenzo Scattaglia's role. He noted that there are references to a decoration program that was pretty much completed in 1912, and asked if there were things on this list that are post-1912, and if so, by whom were they designed. Mr. Wisniewski responded that the references for the decoration of the church came from parish documents. Mr. Lavery noted that there are parish histories from 1957 and the 100th anniversary issue. Mr. Wisniewski noted that he has the 1957 history with him, which is much more comprehensive than the 100th anniversary history. He noted that it details the history of the establishment of the parish. Mr. Lavery clarified that his main concerns are whether the nomination is claiming that the mural paintings and everything that is listed in the nomination are all works by Lorenzo Scattaglia. Mr. Wisniewski responded that the murals are by Scattaglia. Ms. Cooperman asked about the date of the murals. Mr. Wisniewski responded that they were produced in 1912. Mr. Lavery noted that all the interior structure is by Durang, if not the paintings. Mr. Wisniewski confirmed this, and noted that he might not have been clear enough when he modified his nomination earlier in the meeting. He stated that he is now only nominating the three altars and the murals. Ms. Cooperman asked whether he was proposing the designation of all the murals. Mr. Wisniewski responded affirmatively, but noted that, if not all the murals, at least the murals that depict Polish history and Catholic identity. The murals, he noted, are all by Lorenzo Scattaglia, who painted many other works for other Catholic churches. Mr. Lavery noted that Scattaglia worked closely with Durang, but asserted that he would like to be certain that there is a documentary connection, because, if one of the arguments is that these are important because they are works of Scattaglia, the Commission needs to know how we know that they are works of Scattaglia. Mr. Wisniewski passed the 1957 document to Mr. Lavery.

Mr. Wisniewski stated that it is important to note that the three wood altars were there from the inception in 1890. During the renovations in 1912, the paintings depicting Polish scenes were added. In 1957, angels were painted in and around the altar. Ms. Cooperman clarified that the altars were technically called "reredos." Mr. Wisniewski agreed. Ms. Cooperman asked for clarification that the reredos of the main altar dates to the original construction. Mr. Wisniewski confirmed that it does.

Mr. Wisniewski reiterated that he is nominating for designation the three altars and the murals depicting Polish scenes. Designating these objects would allow ample room for repurposing the interior.

Mr. Cohen noted that the nomination presents many issues, and that there are several things that are clear and other things that are not. What is clear, he noted, is the importance of St. Laurentius to the Polish community in Philadelphia. He explained that he had no idea that Polish immigrants went west before they came east, and noted how important the church was, in that it was effectively paid for by the congregants rather than being an Archdiocesan project.

Mr. Cohen addressed some of the earlier comments. He noted that Mr. Phillips had observed that the same Criteria are cited for the interior and exterior. Mr. Cohen responded that the interior nomination makes a good case that it satisfies those Criteria. He also noted that it is churlish to say "you can't come in," but then tell the nominator that the photographs do not reflect the present condition of the church. Mr. Cohen opined that what is actually critical is which objects are movable and which are not, and opined that the altarpieces and murals may present two different issues. He questioned to what degree the altars are still in the building. Mr. Voloshin responded that the three altars are still in the building, but the statues that were within them were removed by the Archdiocese. Mr. Voloshin noted that the only issue is that, based on Mr. Phillips' testimony, the other items are to be removed from the church under canon law.

Members of the audience disagreed. Mr. Phillips commented that the church has been desanctified, and that, while he does not want to get into the First Amendment issues at the Committee meeting because he knows that the Committee frowns on such discussions, these are objects of Catholic faith, and this was not presented as an object nomination. He opined that the nominator is now amending his nomination on the fly from an interior nomination to an object nomination. The nominator is proposing paintings for designation, but without getting into the substance of their significance. Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee does not have to agree or disagree with every point in the nomination, and that it simply provides a recommendation to the Commission.

Mr. Cohen asked whether the murals, which are immovable, would need to be removed for the development to occur. Mr. Voloshin responded that some of the murals are movable and some are immovable. He noted that it appears that the murals on the interior, the ones Mr. Wisniewski had referred to as significant to Polish heritage, are removable, whereas the ones on the insides of the arches on the sides of the church are frescoes on the plaster and therefore not easily moveable. Mr. Cohen noted that he wished that the two parties could agree on what can be preserved and what cannot. Mr. Voloshin asked if Mr. Cohen was suggesting retaining the objects proposed for designation in place or if they could be moved if designated. Mr. Cohen responded that either was a possibility, but that the Committee does not have the flexibility to sort through the list of objects and select those to be retained. Mr. Voloshin stated that the developers are willing to let anyone have anything that is removable, but that the building is still under the control of the Archdiocese, which may not be willing to allow release religious images. Mr. Voloshin stated that the developers are willing to donate artifacts to the appropriate people if they receive the building with artifacts still in it, and if they are removable. Mr. Cohen reiterated that a more effective way for both parties to get what they want is for them to work together rather than through the designation process. Ms. Cooperman noted that the Committee's purview is to assess whether these objects meet the Criteria, and the Committee cannot entertain any role in terms of negotiations.

Mr. Cohen noted that he is tremendously sympathetic to the significance of this place as a landmark of this community, and that his inclination is to say, yes, this is a place of historic value. At the same time, he noted, he worries to what degree the Historical Commission should assert municipal authority over religious interiors, especially for the parts that are not movable. He noted that the interiors that have been designated so far have not been religious. Ms. Cooperman replied that only religious objects have been designated, no interiors. Mr. Phillips noted that he has made the argument before about the religious object designations, but with this nomination there is a related and inherent First Amendment question with regard to the regulation of the objects in St. Laurentius. He sympathized with the parishioners of St. Laurentius, but stated that it is not a church anymore and cannot be used as a Catholic church, and that the objects of Catholicism, which are inherently religious, must be removed and used by the Catholic Church through the Ecclesiastical Exchange. With respect to the Cathedral Basilica mural nominations in the last year, Mr. Phillips continued, there was discussion about how Catholic objects are preserved and cared for and would continue to be cared for after a church is closed. Mr. Phillips clarified that he has two arguments, one about the First Amendment issues in designating religious works, and secondly, about whether the interior is even public, given that it has been closed for three years. Ms. Klein responded that the argument about the building being closed to the public is just a temporary condition, because it will be open again in the future. Mr. Phillips responded that it would not likely be open to the public again because it would be privately owned.

Ms. Klein noted that the interior structure is what maintains the exterior, and in her opinion, the historical significance is the interior architecture, with its vaulting, columns, anything that belongs to the structure itself. Mr. Phillips responded that that goes back to the perfect for the good. He noted that he has never argued that the building is not architecturally significant; his argument has always been predicated on financial hardship, which the Commission told him was not appropriate at that time. He asserted that Mr. Voloshin is in the room and is willing to save the exterior.

Mr. Schirmer asked to refute Mr. Phillips, noting that if anyone has been to the Cloisters in Manhattan, there is a huge collection of altars and chalices and decommissioned accoutrements from Catholic churches around the world, so the suggestion that the Cloisters stole everything from various churches and it all has to go back to those dioceses is patently incorrect. These are objects of art, he noted, which is why similar items are in art museums around the world. He listed that, within art museums, there are full sets of altars and alcoves, and other religious objects. Ms. Cooperman responded that everyone is aware that art museums hold objects of religious value.

Mr. Cohen asked if the Archdiocese has a procedure for desanctifying religious artwork. Mr. Schirmer responded that there is an internal church procedure for the profane, which is the opposite of sacred. Mr. Schirmer claimed that a directive, Opera Artis, an internal directive in church doctrine, dictates that the church has an affirmative duty to preserve objects of art within its churches and its possession. Mr. Cohen asked whether this means that, if the artwork was desanctified, it could be made available to members of the community, if not within the building. Mr. Schirmer responded that altars from demolished or closed churches are reused in new churches, or loaned to art museums. Mr. Phillips noted that Mr. Schirmer actually helped make his point; if these objects are designated as historic, they cannot be removed from the building. He stated that his point is that the Archdiocese does care for these items of Catholic faith and does repurpose them through the Ecclesiastical Exchange. What the Commission determined with regard to the Cathedral Basilica, Mr. Phillips continued, is that it was not appropriate to step in because the Historical Commission's goal is to protect items, and that is already being taken care of because the Archdiocese is preserving and reusing them. To prevent them from being removed from the building impinges on First Amendment rights and also prevents the objects from being preserved and repurposed, Mr. Phillips concluded.

Mr. Laverty asked about the Archdiocesan policy on art that cannot be removed from a church once it has been desanctified, for example the frescoes. Mr. Phillips responded that anything that is not removable but is part of the structure that has been relegated to profane but not sordid use would remain in the building. Anything that is removable, including the stained glass windows, will be removed and repurposed through the Ecclesiastical Exchange.

Mr. Mooney asked whether the designation of the interior would preclude the eventual removal of the pieces if they were designated as objects, noting that there are modifications made to the exterior of buildings all the time. Mr. Mooney opined that an object designation might not specify where they are preserved, but just that they are preserved.

Mr. Wisniewski asked to make a point of clarification, noting that all the objects that the Archdiocese considered sacred have already been removed and are in the Ecclesiastical Exchange. The murals, if the church were to be demolished, would be demolished with the church. He noted that the altars were for sale online on a site located in Georgia, and there was a purchase order for the main altar to be reused in a restaurant, but that was suspended when the Archdiocese heard about the interior nomination. The altar table, all the Stations of the

Cross, all the statues, and the items used for the mass have been removed; nothing else is considered sacred. Mr. Phillips responded that that is flatly not true; there are objects that have been removed, as well as objects that have not been removed yet but are intended to be removed.

Going back to the nomination, Mr. Cohen noted that the interior was called “transitional” in the nomination, but he asserted that this building is clearly Gothic in style.

Mr. Cohen reiterated his suggestion that both parties come together in good faith and devise an agreement that pleases both parties. Mr. Phillips responded that the fact is that the proposed development is not to reuse the building for public use, and would defeat the purpose of the interior designation.

Mr. Cohen reiterated that he is wary of placing municipal restrictions on immovable religious objects, but again sympathized with the parishioners who see the interior as so critical to their cultural identity. He reiterated his hope that the parishioners and Archdiocese and developers could come to an agreement that would preserve these objects somewhere else in the community where the public could still access them. He stated that he believes that there is room for compromise.

Ms. Cooperman noted that the Committee could find that the interior meets some or all of the Criteria, could find that the objects (the reredos and murals) meet one or more Criteria as objects, or could say that they do not find that anything meets the Criteria. Between now and the Commission meeting, she recommended that the parties try to work out some sort of negotiated disposition. Mr. Phillips suggested that there is a fourth option for the Committee, which is to find that the interior does not satisfy the definition of “public interior portion,” owing to the fact that it has been closed for three years and has been relegated. Mr. Schirmer opined that the Committee only needs to figure out whether the objects or interior is historic, and that there is a process for changing the nomination from an interior nomination to an object nomination. He opined that the Committee should recommend designation for what is there now, and that they need not worry about what will be there in the future.

Mr. Phillips commented that Rules and Regulation 5.6.d states that, “when designating a public interior portion or structure, the Commission may designate realty and fixtures as defined in Section 2.10 of these Rules & Regulations. Articles within a nominated public interior portion or structure that do not constitute fixtures may not be designated as part of the public interior portion, but may be nominated for designation as objects, as defined in Section 2.16 and as prescribed in Section 5.5.b of these Rules & Regulations. A nomination to designate an object or objects located within a public interior portion of a building or structure that is itself under consideration for designation may be attached to the nomination of the public interior portion as an addendum.” Since there is no addendum or separate nomination for the objects, Mr. Phillips reiterated that the only matter properly before the Committee for consideration is the question of a “public interior portion,” and that this property does not satisfy that requirement. Mr. Schirmer responded that the items in question, the murals and altars, are currently part of the building, but they would become objects if detached from the building. He claimed that they are part of the building right now and meet the Criteria.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the review, return the nomination to the nominator with a request that the nominator submit object nominations for the

three Gothic altarpieces and mural paintings, and that the Commission remand the object nominations to the Committee on Historic Designation for review.

ADDRESS: 3827-33 POWELTON AVE

Name of Resource: Pennsylvania Industrial Home for Blind Women

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: The Edith R. Rudolphy Residence for the Blind

Nominator: Historical Commission Staff

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3827-33 Powelton Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the building, constructed in 1880 for the Pennsylvania Industrial Home for Blind Women, is significant under Criteria for Designation A and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the property has significant interest and value as part of the development of the City and nation in the late nineteenth century, an era characterized by the establishment of benevolent institutions to address the myriad of societal concerns that resulted from the industrializing nation. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the property exemplifies the cultural, social, and historical heritage of the community of West Philadelphia as it transitioned from a rural landscape in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Home, which was one of the earliest of nearly 50 benevolent institutions to locate or relocate to West Philadelphia in the second half of the nineteenth century, has been in continuous operation as a working home for the blind for nearly 150 years.

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

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. John Lingham and Sherron Walker represented the property owner.

Mr. Lingham thanked Ms. DiPasquale for assisting with the nomination, and noted that, without Ms. DiPasquale's help, they would probably not be here today. Mr. Lingham stated that the building has been in existence for almost 150 years, and the owners feel it is very important to maintain the facility because it helps the community, and the low-income blind individuals who live there. He noted that the organization has also been adopted by the Presbyterian Hospital, who comes in and helps as well. He stated that the building has grown and been part of the community for so many years, and they want it to continue to do so. Ms. Walker, the property manager, thanked the Committee for considering the property as a historic site.

Ms. Cooperman opened the floor to public comment. George Poulin of the Powelton Village Civic Association thanked the Historical Commission staff for sponsoring the nomination. Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance expressed the Alliance's support for the nomination, and pleasure in seeing the nomination from the Historical Commission staff with the support of the property owners. He noted that the resource clearly merits designation.

Ms. Cooperman opined that it was a well-written nomination, and agreed that it meets Criteria A and J. Mr. Cohen agreed, and mused that the building in its original form was really extraordinary and put a domestic face on an institutional building in a surprising way. He noted, however, that it is hard to fault the organization for making modifications to make the space more usable, and noted that the building is still remarkably intact. He expressed his 100%

support for the nomination. He pointed out a few minor typographical errors, and noted that he would provide those minor edits to Ms. DiPasquale.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3827-33 Powelton Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

ADDRESS: 435-41 N 38TH ST

Name of Resource: Christ Methodist Episcopal Church, Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church

Nominator: Michael J. Lewis and Amy Lambert, University City Historical Society

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 435-41 N. 38th Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that property is significant under Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J. The nomination argues that the former Christ Methodist Episcopal Church is significant as the work of renowned architects Frank Furness and George W. Hewitt. The nomination contends that Furness and Hewitt adapted High Victorian architectural ideas to the symbolic and practical requirements of a Methodist congregation in the design of this property, and created a plan that was an important precursor to the Auditorium Plan, the chief innovation in American religious architecture in the second half of the nineteenth century. The nomination further argues that the church and its congregation were intertwined in the development of the Mantua and Powelton Village neighborhoods of West Philadelphia, and that the property is significant for its association with various prominent members.

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

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. Amy Lambert represented the nomination. No one represented the property owner.

Ms. Cooperman asked Ms. Lambert to clarify that the nomination did not include the interior, noting that there was significant discussion in the nomination about the interior. Ms. Lambert confirmed that the interior was not part of the nomination.

Mr. Cohen opined that the nomination was extraordinarily well researched and written. He noted that it opened his eyes to certain things, such as looking for the central aisle, which has incredible meaning. He noted his appreciation for searchable newspaper archives, which had supplied the nominators with additional information that would not have been apparent from the exterior. He opined that it makes great arguments about Methodist design principles, but noted that he does not know that it can necessarily state that the design led to the Akron Plan, and that that might be a little bit of a reach. He noted that many churches probably had movable partitions in the basement, and that the developers of the Akron Plan were not looking solely at this church for that inspiration. However, he noted, the nomination raised interesting points about the origins of the Akron Plan in its early forms. He reiterated that it was well researched and well written.

Ms. Cooperman noted that she had a minor quibble, which is that when the notes are at the end of the document, they are just called “Notes,” not “Endnotes.” Mr. Cohen and Ms. Cooperman expressed their desire to see footnotes at the bottom of the page in nominations rather than endnotes. Mr. Cohen also recommended generally for nominations that photographs be included right above the paragraph describing them, and that they be numbered.

Mr. Cohen commented that architect responsible for the design of this building may have been more Hewitt than Furness. Ms. Lambert noted that that is what her co-nominator Michael Lewis also believed. Mr. Cohen quipped that it is still Furness who gets the credit.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 435-51 N. 38th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J.

Mr. Mooney excused himself from the meeting.

2117 E YORK ST

Name of Resource: Weisbrod & Hess Brewery

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Autowerkstatt LLC

Nominator: Andrew Fearon

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 2117 E. York Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that the former Weisbrod & Hess Brewery loading room, condenser and storage/boiler, and the wash house buildings, constructed between 1890 and 1899, are significant under Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J. The nomination contends that the buildings are significant as part of the formerly much-larger Weisbrod & Hess Brewery complex, as well as for their association with Christian Hess, a prominent citizen in the German-American communities in Philadelphia and Atlantic City, NJ. The nomination also argues that the buildings are architecturally significant as representative designs of the Rundbogenstil style, which was used for German-owned breweries in Philadelphia and across the United States. Under Criterion E, the nomination contends that the property is significant as a work of German-American architect Adam C. Wagner, who designed more than 50 breweries during his lifetime.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2117 E. York Street satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and E, but that the nomination does not make a cogent argument for Criteria A and J; it simply provides a history of the company and its owner without identifying the significance of the company in the broader context of the neighborhood or the city. The staff also recommends correcting references to the Industrial Revolution, which dates from the late eighteenth century to about 1840 in the United States. The nomination appears to confuse the Industrial Revolution with what might be broadly called the Industrial Age.

DISCUSSION: Ms. DiPasquale presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. Oscar Beisert and Maria Sturm represented the nomination. Attorney Carl Primavera and owners Anton Michels and Chris Isaacson represented the property.

Mr. Beisert noted that the nomination was a community effort, as there was concern about these buildings being preserved and reused, or potentially demolished. Ms. Sturm noted that she is a member of the German Society and Andrew Fearon reached out to her to write the contextual history of the German-American brewers in Philadelphia. Ms. Sturm noted that both Weisbrod and Hess had been members of the German Society.

Mr. Michels explained that he is attending the meeting as a co-owner of the property, and not in his capacity as the president of the German Society of Pennsylvania. He stated that he is dedicated to preservation and to the German Society building and other buildings. He stated that, although he was drawn to this building because of its architectural appearance, he has learned in the last six years as a contractor working on the building about the limitations of the building, and does not agree that it should be designated as historic. He asserted that he does not believe that it is that architecturally significant. He opined that the nomination was copied and pasted together and that, although it is flattering as a German to be compared to the Ludwigskirche in Munich, it is just a building style. He noted that he sees all of the structural deficiencies not just in and around the building, but in and around the chimney stack, and it is not a good idea to designate it as historic, because it will take \$5 million to preserve it, and no one is going to be willing to do that. He stated that he is not in the position to fulfill other peoples' dreams.

Mr. Isaacson explained that he purchased the building and had a different business partner until a few years ago, when Mr. Michels bought out his other partner. He stated that he purchased the building solely for use as storage for his antique cars, since he is unable to move out of the city for family reasons. Mr. Isaacson read a prepared statement. He noted that Building 1 is missing more than 20% of its original façade and has no interior structure, and that it has a leaky roof and structural defects on all walls. Building 2 is in very poor condition with missing brickwork on all four sides, and structural defects including visible openings in the brick walls. The roof is a corrugated roof. The Department of Licenses & Inspections has issued violations for both brick and roof problems, Mr. Isaacson noted. After reviewing the nomination and its references, he continued, he could not find that either building has an identifiable architect. The description of Building 1, he asserted, is entangled with the description of a building that would have been just to the north, at the corner of Holman (now Martha) and Adams Streets. That building, which was designed by someone of significance, is gone. Mr. Isaacson argued that the reference for Building 1 should have been clear and obvious, especially in this longer nomination. The nomination clearly lists the designer and contractor for the corner building, but not for Building 1. Building 2 does not have a designer listed. Mr. Isaacson opined that the building was built, in his opinion as a professional engineer, to mimic or copy an adjoining building in a clear attempt to unify the facades for the sake of similarity. The act of unifying a set of building fronts is the most logical reason for the design, and the design does not meet the Criteria, he asserted. He opined that many of the pictures in the nomination are caricatures of buildings, not what was actually constructed.

Mr. Isaacson asserted that the building is not an engineering marvel, nor was it any kind of special construction. He reiterated that it is just repetitive and the copy of someone else's design. He stated that the building is in clear distress and poor condition to what it might have been 120 years ago. He reiterated that the Department of Licenses & Inspections has issued violations, and some permits for some repairs. He opined that the facades are severely altered from what was probably a very nice original appearance. In his opinion, the nomination is poor and the buildings forsaken.

Lastly, Mr. Isaacson stated that he opposes the nomination of the entire property. He noted that the quoted deed is not accurate. He stated that he is working on a correct survey of the property. He suggested that there are three specific portions of the property have no historical significance, and as such, should not be included in the designation. These three locations are as follows: the open lot, which is the actual address of the property; the office building, of which he replaced the façade around 2006, and its irregular shaped rear yard; and third, the chimney stack, which is structurally deficient and has been altered. He noted that soon after purchased the building, the chimney was hit by lightning, and he removed approximately 25 feet from the stack and added a concrete ring to the top to try to secure it.

Mr. Primavera commented that, since the nomination, the owners have contacted Tantara Associates, structural engineers, who have some concerns about the structural integrity of the building. He stated that the owners oppose the designation. However, Mr. Primavera continued, to the extent that there will be a recommendation, the owners would like a careful dissection of the property, because the chimney has been identified as structurally deficient, as is the office section of the building. Ms. Cooperman responded that structural issues are not under the purview of the Committee. Mr. Primavera commented that, in the act of trying to preserve a building, the Commission might create a public hazard.

Ms. Cooperman opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Beisert whether there was a documented architect for either building. Mr. Beisert responded that he could not remember and would have to look back through the nomination. Mr. Isaacson noted that the nomination identifies an architect for Building 1. Mr. Cohen asked if there are any documents that definitively identify the architect. Mr. Beisert retorted that he had not memorized the whole nomination, and the Committee could just remove Wagner from the nomination if they do not believe that the architect is documented properly in the nomination.

Mr. Cohen reiterated that the Committee does not take structural issues into account when judging historical significance. These buildings, he opined, are remarkably good examples of a design that is disappearing to some extent. For buildings in the nineteenth century, he noted, every 20 years or so there was a redefinition of architectural ideals, and somehow something proposed in Germany in the 1820s was still relevant in Philadelphia in the 1890s. It is very distinct, he argued. Mr. Cohen stated that the building is clearly architect-designed, and is likely by Wagner. He noted that the buildings are remarkably “dressed up,” and that there is a unity with the other buildings with which it was associated through the continuation of using round arches of different proportions and scales to unify the whole complex. He noted that Mr. Isaacson was correct that there was an effort to unify, but the buildings are quite distinct from one another as well. The triple window in Building 2, he noted, is clearly more American-looking in the use of a Palladian triple window, which was a design approaching the Colonial Revival by the late 1890s. The use of round arches is very much a cohesive element and part of a style that has not been given its own name, Mr. Cohen opined. He noted that Betsy Hunter called it the “American Round Arch Style,” or an Americanized version of the Rundbogenstil, and it is something that clearly has a Germanic influence, which is a distinctive characteristic. He argued that, although the Commission’s staff is skeptical of Criteria A and J, the German community is more visibly identified in breweries than it is in other ways, and in a distinctive way, which makes it characteristic of the city. Mr. Cohen noted that Criterion J relates to the community, and this was very much a community in which Germans were among the leading population in the nineteenth century. Mr. Cohen opined that the nomination made a good argument that stylistic elements used in the 1820s were still applicable in the 1890s. Ms. Cooperman agreed.

Mr. Lavery noted that Adam C. Wagner is listed in the Builder's Guide in 1891 as designing a brewery for Weisbrod & Hess at the corner of Adams Street and Holman. He asked if those are the historic names for this site. Mr. Cohen confirmed the historic street names. Mr. Isaacson responded that Wagner designed the brewery, which has been demolished, but that he could not prove that Wagner definitely designed Building 1, and reiterated that the nomination entangled Building 1 with the very large main building that had been on the corner. Mr. Isaacson pointed out a portion of the wall from the building that is still attached to Building 1. Mr. Lavery noted that Wagner also designed a stable, according to the Builder's Guide, in 1896 on Adams, near Amber Street. Mr. Isaacson opined that that could be across the street. Mr. Cohen argued that the cohesiveness of the design seems to indicate one person designing the entire complex, and was always adapting the heavily molded round arches.

Mr. Cohen agreed that the Committee should recommend narrowing the scope of the designation to just the two buildings, and questioned how to handle the structural instability of the chimney stack. Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee could recommend that there is sufficient damage to the chimney that it no longer conveys its original design. Mr. Cohen agreed, noting that originally it had a capping at the top that is gone.

Mr. Primavera questioned whether the Committee was intending to include the office building in the designation. Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee seems to be limiting the recommendation for designation to Buildings 1 and 2. Mr. Primavera responded that that would be good, if there are conditions to the office building that require immediate attention for permitting. He noted that there is open space on the parcel that they would not like included in the designation. Mr. Isaacson responded that by the January Historical Commission meeting, he could have a better plot plan.

Mr. Beisert commented that he believes Building 1 was designed by Wagner, and apologized for his previous snippy response.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 2117 E. York Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J, provided the boundary description is revised to exclude the office building and vacant land at the corner of York and Martha Streets and the chimney stack is considered non-contributing, owing to its lack of integrity.

420-34 S 42ND ST

Name of Resource: 420 Row Historic District

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owners: Multiple

Nominator: Justin McDaniel

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate a historic district that consists of 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, and 434 S. 42nd Street, the properties on the west side of S. 42nd Street between Osage and Baltimore Avenues. The nomination argues that row is significant under Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, G and J. The nomination contends that the row was the first-built of Spruce Hill's earliest speculative real estate developments in the Queen Anne style, which influenced later residential development in West Philadelphia, and is the work of the

significant firm of the Hewitt Brothers. The nomination further contends that the row epitomizes the streetcar suburban development of late nineteenth-century Philadelphia, and is significant for its inclusion in the West Philadelphia Streetcar Suburb National Register Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the proposed historic district known as the 420 Row, which includes the properties at 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, and 434 S. 42nd Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, G and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. Justin McDaniel represented the nomination as author and as the property owner of 430 S. 42nd Street.

Mr. McDaniel stated that the neighbors wish to preserve this row because it is unified, monumental, and endangered. It was advertised by the Hewitt Brothers as a unified streetscape and remains intact. The design was the most significant and best example of a Queen Anne designed block, with massive houses for the area. Owing to commercial pressure and outside investors, the area is endangered and is threatened with unsympathetic alterations and houses being broken up into multiple units, which could detract from the unified nature of the block. He stated that he has support from the president of the Spruce Hill Community Association and Little Osage, and all owner-occupiers of the block support the nomination.

Ms. Cooperman asked for public comment. Todd Margasek commented that he lives in one of the affected houses, and that all owner-occupiers support the designation.

Mr. Cohen commended the nomination as being well-researched and compiled. He suggested a couple of minor edits regarding attributions of quotes.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the proposed historic district known as the 420 Row, which includes the properties at 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, and 434 S. 42nd Street, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, G and J.

Ms. Klein excused herself from the meeting.

559 RIGHTER ST

Name of Resource: Amos Barnes House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: James & Grace Barnes

Nominator: Historical Commission Staff

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 559 Righter Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that property is significant under Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and I. The nomination contends that the Gothic Revival building is an example of the ornamental farm house made popular by American landscape gardener Andrew Jackson Downing's *Cottage Residences*, which popularized Victorian Cottage styles in the mid to late nineteenth century, satisfying Criteria C and D. The nomination further contends that the building is associated with the lives of individuals significant in the past, satisfying Criterion A. Finally, owing to its location at the crest of the ridge

along a Native American trail, which became an early turnpike, the nomination argues that the large, primarily open site is likely to yield information important in pre-history and history, satisfying Criterion I.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 559 Righter Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and I.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. Attorney William O'Brien and the property owner's son, David Barnes, represented the property owner.

Mr. O'Brien opined that, although Amos Barnes is listed in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings database, there is nothing unique about being listed in that database, and anyone who has ever designed something in Philadelphia is listed in it. Ms. Cooperman commented that she and Mr. Lavery are responsible for creating much of that database, and that Mr. O'Brien is making a rather large assumption. Mr. O'Brien commented that Barnes's work is described in the nomination as being reflective of the taste of the times, and not necessarily innovative. He stated that Barnes was considered a successful, hard-working architect, but he also had challenges. He stated that Barnes had to sell a portion of his land in 1930 to avoid bankruptcy.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the Plays & Players Theater, highlighted in the nomination, is not designated as historic, and he questioned why it would be included in the nomination if it is not also designated as historic. Ms. Cooperman corrected Mr. O'Brien. Ms. Broadbent responded that the Plays & Players Theater is listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places as part of the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District. Mr. Cohen added that it is listed as "significant" within the district.

Mr. O'Brien continued to comment on individuals mentioned in the nomination. He stated that Francis Druck is referred to as "unusual," but is not described as significant. He stated that Henry Manger was a sculptor, but opined that the nomination does not indicate that he is significant. He noted that the resource for information on both Ms. Druck and Mr. Manger is findagrave.com, which he considered to not be a reputable source. He stated that, if every property associated with the Levering family was historic, most of the 21st Ward could be designated as historic. Members of the audience audibly agreed with this statement. He continued that the fact that the parcel was at one time owned by the Leverings is not significant, because much of the area was owned by the Leverings.

Mr. O'Brien opined that there is nothing distinctive or distinguishing about this property. He noted that other similar properties highlighted in the nomination are not designated as historic. He opined that the building is routine and not distinctive, and stated that there are many properties in Germantown, Mount Airy, Roxborough, and Manayunk that have a similar architectural style.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the nomination is overreaching, in that the lot is about 24,000 square feet, and the building sits on only a portion of the lot, but the nomination includes the entire parcel.

Mr. Barnes, Amos Barnes's grandson, stated that the plaque in the front yard was stolen by his father from across the street, at the site of the former Old Plow Tavern, despite it reading "Site of Hermit Lane & Ridge Ave." He stated that people sit on his front porch because they think the property is city-owned because of the plaque. He stated that his father told him that, when he

was younger, someone was paid to use an ice pick and hatchet to chop off all of the stucco that previous covered the building. He commented that most of the windows are replacement windows, the roof was originally wood shingles, and the interior has been altered over the years. He stated that the ground has been plowed over the years because his father was an avid gardener; therefore there are no artifacts on the property. He clarified that the property is broken up into several apartment units.

Mr. Cohen responded to several points raised by Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Barnes. He opined that Amos Barnes was fairly significant, based on Plays & Players Theater and other theaters that he designed, but that it is not essential in terms of Criterion A that significance is based solely on Barnes. He continued that Criterion A provides for "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." He suggested that the first clause applies to this property. Mr. O'Brien countered that the nomination focuses on the second clause. Mr. Cohen responded that this house is significant for creating character in a neighborhood. He stated that it is distinctive of an era of development. He stated that Mr. Levering is potentially more significant than Amos Barnes, as he may have built the house, and he was developing what was formerly rural land, at a time when the middle-class were likely commuting to the city and living in the countryside. He stated that this kind of development was beginning in the 1850s, and Levering was at the start of it, with buildings that looked modern in the 1850s, which included the decorative bargeboards that are characteristic of these types of buildings. Mr. O'Brien stated that this type of building can be found all over northwest Philadelphia. Mr. Cohen responded that the argument is that this building gives character to a place. Ms. Cooperman stated that buildings like this one are characteristic of an environment. Mr. O'Brien retorted that this building is not unique. Ms. Cooperman countered that "unique" is not one of the Criteria for Designation. Moreover, the Criteria do not require that a resource is the last surviving such building. Rather, a building satisfies the Criteria if it is reflective of the environment of a period of time. Mr. O'Brien suggested that it is not a distinctive architectural style. Ms. Cooperman disagreed. Mr. Cohen stated that the Committee is composed of experts in the field of architectural history, and the Committee is saying that this building is distinctive of a period of time. He stated that the Committee has "no horse in this race." He explained that a resource does not have to be unique to be distinctive of a place.

Mr. Cohen commented that the shrinking of the parcel may make sense, and to use just the footprint of the building. Ms. Cooperman interjected that there is an excellent case made for the entire parcel under Criterion I, which was supported by Committee member Doug Mooney, who had to leave the meeting early. It was explained that Mr. Mooney is the head of the Philadelphia Archaeological Forum, and he looks for sites that have been relatively undisturbed by building since pre-historic times, and that are located near known Native American trails. Mr. O'Brien responded that it is overreaching and just a guess. Ms. Cooperman stated that the Committee understands Mr. O'Brien's opinion, but that it is not a guess, but rather an expert assessment, which is different than a guess. She stated that there are scientific criteria used to assess archaeological potential. Mr. Cohen explained that it is an assessment of archaeological potential, not proven archaeological artifacts. Ms. Cooperman agreed, noting that the Criterion reads "has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history." Mr. Cohen continued that it has to do with two factors, one of which is demonstrated use of nearby land for Native American people, and the other is that much of the land has not been disturbed. Mr. O'Brien countered that the nearby Wissahickon Valley with 1,500 acres would qualify, but not this operating farm. Mr. Barnes used it extensively for gardening; the ground has been disturbed. He stated that it has not been built on, which was Mr. Barnes's mistake that his family will pay for, if this designation goes forward.

Mr. O'Brien reiterated that this property is like so many others in northwest Philadelphia, and suggested that the Committee go down Ridge Avenue and Germantown Avenue and exercise its authority and take the property rights from all of those owners. He reiterated that it is a common design found on every block in northwest Philadelphia. Ms. Cooperman disagreed, but noted that the Committee understands Mr. O'Brien's point. Mr. O'Brien stated that he has not yet made his point. He stated that the building needs to have some historic value, such as the Betsy Ross House or City Hall. Mr. Lavery argued that this building is a much more valuable property than the Betsy Ross House. Mr. Barnes suggested that Mr. Lavery should shovel his snow, mow his grass, and pay for his new heater.

Mr. O'Brien commented that the Barnes family consulted an architectural historian, who was shocked at this application, and found it wanting. Mr. Lavery asked why that architectural historian is not present. Mr. O'Brien responded that this is not a forum of record. Mr. Lavery disagreed, stating that the Committee would be happy to hear from or read a report from another architectural historian. Mr. O'Brien responded that he will present that to the Commission. Mr. Lavery commented that the Committee meeting is the appropriate forum at which to consider arguments for and against architectural and historical significance. Mr. O'Brien referenced Section 5.10.a of the Commission's Rules and Regulations, which indicate that the meetings of this Committee are not public hearings. Mr. Farnham responded that the distinction that rule is making is that they are not hearings, but rather they are meetings. He observed an audio recording and written minutes are the record of this meeting.

Ms. Cooperman asked for public comment. John Manton, research historian and nominator of other properties in the 21st Ward, commented that he is a lineal descendent from the Leverings. He commented that this was part of a Levering farm, but doubted that they would have farmed so close to the building. He commented that the farm included the entire block, so they likely farmed near the current location of the Cook-Wissahickon school. He commented that this house is constructed of Wissahickon schist ashlar, which is unique to the Roxborough Manayunk area. He suggested that the house may be older than 1850. Mr. Cohen asked about Mr. Manton's choice of the word "ashlar" and suggested that the term refers to the way the stone is cut. Joseph Menkevich, a nominator of a different property on the agenda, commented that he reviewed the nomination to determine correctness and completeness. He commented that he provided Ms. Broadbent with a newspaper article that referenced a cave in the back yard, but noted that the nomination was not altered to include the newspaper article because the nomination was already finished. He suggested that the newspaper article documents that there is archaeological potential at this site.

Mr. Cohen returned to the question of reducing the designated parcel versus including the entire site owing to archaeological potential. Ms. Cooperman suggested that the full Commission can address that question. She suggested that it is the Committee's responsibility to say if it determines that the property satisfies the Criteria.

Mr. Cohen asked if the plaque is relevant to the building, and if an argument is made in the nomination for the plaque. Ms. Broadbent responded that page 26 of the nomination explains what the plaque is referencing. Ms. Cooperman commented that the plaque does not identify the events as taking place on this property, so it does not cause confusion.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 559 Righter Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and I.

10751 and 10725 KNIGHTS RD

Name of Resource: Byberry Township Public Burial Ground

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: City of Philadelphia

Nominator: Joseph J. Menkevich

Staff Contact: Kim Broadbent, kim.broadbent@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the site at 10751 and 10725 Knights Road as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that site is significant under Criteria for Designation A, B, G, I, and J. The nomination contends that the Byberry Township Public Burial Ground is the first and oldest known public burial ground in existence in Philadelphia, established circa 1683 by John Hart, an important legislator of Pennsylvania, satisfying Criteria A, B and J. The nomination further argues that the site was laid out as a “rectangular square” similar to the several public squares and burial grounds within the center of Philadelphia which came later, satisfying Criterion G. Lastly, the nomination argues that the site has survived for more than 333 years in near-original condition, lying near a known Native American path, and may be likely to yield information important in pre-history or history, satisfying Criterion I.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the site at 10751 and 10725 Knights Road satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, G, I, and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Broadbent presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. Attorney Henry Clinton represented seven adjacent property owners. No one represented the City of Philadelphia as the property owner. Joseph Menkevich represented the nomination.

Mr. Menkevich stated that he did not steal any photographs that were the property of Fred Maurer, as had been suggested by Mr. Maurer at the previous Committee on Historic Designation meeting. He stated that he and Mr. Maurer had previously collaborated.

Ms. Cooperman asked for public comment. Mr. Maurer distributed copies of a supplement to his testimony, which included several maps. He explained that he has been involved with this project for a long time, and has submitted several letters that have stated his opposition to Mr. Menkevich's nomination. Mr. Menkevich stated that he and Mr. Maurer had previously collaborated, but that he does not know what happened to that relationship. Mr. Maurer stated that he is present to address the two Knights Road parcels. He questioned how it is possible that one burial yard of a single acre has two parcels with Knights Road addresses. He stated that the site should be named the John Hart Burial Yard. He directed the Committee's attention to the maps he provided, and asked again how the site could have addresses on Knights Road, when one of the parcels does not front on Knights Road. Ms. Cooperman responded that the Commission needs to use Office of Property Assessment-compliant addresses. Mr. Maurer responded that the Office of Property Assessment should not have given one of the properties a Knights Road address because it does not front on Knights Road. Mr. Cohen asked if the address concern can be remedied. Mr. Maurer responded that it can, but not by himself or the Commission. Mr. Cohen asked how it can be corrected. Mr. Maurer responded that it can be corrected by listening to his testimony and by denying the current nomination because it uses addresses that the City assigned which are wrong because one of the parcels does not front on Knights Road. He stated that he notified the Office of Property Assessment of his concern that it assigned a wrong address to a parcel, but has not received a response. He stated that the Office of Property Assessment is responsible for it, and the agency made a mistake. Mr.

Menkevich responded that Page 1 of his nomination explains that he met with an employee of the Office of Property Assessment. He stated that the reason why the nomination was rejected the first time was because it did not have a parcel number. For this reason, he had to get a parcel number. He met with an employee of the Office of Property Assessment and they assigned it a parcel number. The Office of Property Assessment chose a Knights Road address, and indicated that it was owing to how their system is set up as to why they could not assign it a Red Lion Road address. Mr. Cohen asked if there is a way to solve the disagreement between Mr. Menkevich and Mr. Maurer. Mr. Menkevich responded that he does not have a disagreement with Mr. Maurer. Mr. Maurer responded that he does have a disagreement, and that Mr. Menkevich cannot speak for him. Ms. Cooperman suggested that both gentlemen are trying to designate the same plot of land. Mr. Maurer responded with "yes and no." He again questioned how one site can have two account numbers. Mr. Menkevich responded that it is because there are two Office of Property Assessment accounts. Ms. Cooperman stated that the nomination makes clear which parcels are intended for designation and the location of those parcels. Mr. Maurer suggested that Mr. Menkevich's statements be stricken from the record. He stated that his organization has acted as caretaker of the site for seven years, but now Mr. Menkevich is getting credit for the site. Ms. Cooperman stated that the address cannot be changed by the Committee or Commission. She stated that both gentlemen are discussing the same place, no matter what address is assigned to it. Mr. Maurer commented that the State Historic Preservation Office previously denied his marker application, and suggested that it be based on an archaeological consideration. Ms. Cooperman responded that that is a different organization with a different set of criteria. Mr. Maurer stated that Erin Cote, a former staff member of the Commission, rejected his nomination because he did not have a parcel number. He continued that now there is a parcel number, but it is a wrong number. It was noted that Mr. Maurer's nomination was rejected by the staff for many reasons. Mr. Menkevich commented that his nomination was determined by the staff to be correct and complete.

Mr. Clinton stated that there seems to be some confusion as to where the parcels are located. Ms. Cooperman disagreed and pointed out that the nomination includes a map of the parcels. Mr. Clinton stated that the Commission needs to have an exact location before designating a site. He stated that the nomination also does not provide proof that bodies are buried at this site. He stated that the neighbors whose back yards abut the property in question have concerns that the designation of areas that are not property demarcated will be a long term problem. He stated that the neighbors whom he represents are opposed to the nomination. He suggested that there is no above-ground integrity to convey the historic nature of this particular property. He continued that the nomination suggests that a member of the Rush family was or is buried there, but there is no proof of that claim. Mr. Menkevich commented that more than one member of the Rush family is buried at the site.

Hal Schirmer suggested that something similar to a zoning map be provided that shows the exact boundaries of the site, because sometimes sites can span parcels. Mr. Cohen asked about proceeding. Mr. Schirmer responded that the Commission should do the best it can in terms of identifying the property. Mr. Menkevich stated that he used city maps, city plans, Parcel Explorer software, state maps and historic maps, and that the site of the cemetery is known and has been known for over 100 years, and those maps are included in the nomination. He continued that the nomination explains that Red Lion Road was moved, which is why there are two parcels. Part of the cemetery now lies on the opposite side of Red Lion Road because the road was moved by Francis A. Drexel. He concluded that there is no confusion about the addresses or boundaries of the properties nominated.

Mr. Cohen suggested that the Committee proceed on the merits of the nomination. Mr. Lavery stated that there are two parcels that have Office of Property Assessment account numbers and parcel numbers, and which have been approved by the staff as well as the Office of Property Assessment. He recommended that the Committee follow the staff's recommendation. Mr. Maurer objected. He stated that the two parcels are public parks and do not have a parcel number. He stated that the Office of Property Assessment accounts are wrong and someone needs to straighten out the Office of Property Assessment record system.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the site at 10751 and 10725 Knights Road satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, G, I, and J. Mr. Cohen abstained.

ADDRESS: 22-26 S 40TH ST

Name of Resource: West Philadelphia Institute

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: West Philadelphia Community Mental Health Consortium Inc.

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 22-26 S. 40th Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. The nomination argues that the property, a former West Philadelphia Institute building, is a rare surviving example of an early lending library established for working-class Philadelphians and serves as a direct precursor to the establishment of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The nomination acknowledges a series of significant alterations, but claims that the surviving footprint, massing, and visible roof features sufficiently convey the building's history. While the nomination does not directly seek designation under Criterion E, it presents arguments that the building may also be the work of significant Philadelphia architect Frank Furness.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 22-26 S. 40th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J, but notes that, owing to the unknown state of the building behind the cladding, the building may not retain sufficient integrity to represent its historical significance.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. No one represented the property. Patrick Grossi and Ben Leech represented the nomination.

Mr. Grossi commented that the nomination is unique, as there have been some insensitive alterations to the building that date to about 40 years ago. He noted that he had identified the property as a candidate for designation largely owing to its association with two of the most prominent architects in the city's history, but also for its association with the Young Men's Institute and the West Philadelphia Institute. The latter association, he continued, was the primary focus in the selection of Criteria A and J, but added that he is open to amending the Criteria based on a discussion with the Committee and what he believes to be a strong association with Frank Furness and John T. Windrim. Mr. Grossi then inquired whether the period of significance, which is identified in the nomination as 1876 to 1901, should be extended to 1930 in order to reflect the Philadelphia Electric Company alterations by Windrim. He recognized that any property owner seeking a restoration would likely use the Philadelphia Electric Company era as the most appropriate model based on features that potentially survive

below the cladding. The building, Mr. Grossi asserted, is prime for a success story and rediscovery. He added that it is associated with two of the city's architectural icons and holds a very rich history related to benevolent organizations.

Ms. Cooperman opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

Mr. Farnham noted that he spoke with the equitable owner, who is in the process of purchasing the building. He explained that the owner purchased the property to save it from what he believed may have been a demolition. Mr. Farnham stated that the owner had been through the building extensively and wants to retain as much of its historic significance as he can but believes he would likely have to restore it to its 1920s appearance, because quite a bit of original fabric has been lost. Mr. Farnham indicated that he would support the request to amend the period of significance to include the later adaptive reuse of the building, since it was his belief that the owner would seek to restore the building to its appearance during that period.

Mr. Lavery agreed that the period of significance should be extended to 1930, because the Philadelphia Electric Company connection is important historically, and John T. Windrim, the company's staff architect who designed the 1920s renovation, plays a much larger role than Frank Furness in what likely survives beneath the cladding.

Mr. Cohen agreed with Mr. Lavery in extending the period of significance, adding that if the cladding is removed, elements from the 1920s would be exposed, adding to those already visible, like the awnings. Mr. Cohen stated that, in terms of attributing the building to Frank Furness, he had found the same reference in a clipping that attributed the design to "Frank Turner," which is not a known name. In looking at all forms and misspellings of Furness's name, Mr. Cohen continued, the architect of the original design is most likely Frank Furness. He then asserted that, after removing the cladding from the building, there would not be much left beyond the massing, asymmetry, and volumetrics. He did, however, argue that the nomination should claim Criterion E and noted that the nominator was right to underscore the property's association with West Philadelphia civic institutions.

Ms. Cooperman remarked that she was troubled by the extent of the building's alterations, adding that its integrity hinges on extant material beneath the cladding. She contended that, based on what currently remains visible, it would be hard to argue that the building conveys the design of either Windrim or Furness.

Mr. Lavery countered that the fenestration patterns remain. He noted that removing the corbelling at the cornice line would have been expensive, and it was covered instead. Ms. Cooperman and Mr. Cohen agreed that the corbelling likely remains under the cladding. Mr. Lavery also noted that, in renovating the building in the 1960s or 1970s, the owner did not remove the tower, which would have been a less expensive solution to modernizing the structure.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 22-26 S. 40th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, E, and J. Ms. Cooperman dissented.

ADDRESS: 5250 WAYNE AVE

Name of Resource: Methodist Episcopal Church of the Advocate

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: New Covenant Baptist Church Missionary

Nominator: Sue Patterson & Oscar Beisert, Penn Knox Neighborhood Association

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 5250 Wayne Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the Methodist Episcopal Church of the Advocate satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E and J. The nomination argues that the building represents the establishment and enlargement of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Germantown, and that the property at 5250 Wayne Avenue represents the collective efforts of a congregation to raise funds to construct the impressive Gothic Revival structure. The nomination further asserts that the design represents the transition from Victorian to Neo-Gothic Revival style and serves as a significant work of the architectural firm Wilson, Harris & Richards. The nomination also identifies Henry A. Romberger, a prominent local manufacturer and philanthropist, as significant for his association with the Methodist Episcopal Church of the Advocate.

The Department of Licenses & Inspections has issued numerous violations for this property including Imminently Dangerous violations for cracked, bulging, and collapsed walls.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5250 Wayne Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. No one represented the property. Sue Patterson of the Penn-Knox neighborhood organization and Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

Ms. Patterson stated that she requested an additional structural examination from the Commissioner of the Department of Licenses & Inspections, who sent inspectors to examine the property. She then read an email the Commissioner, which stated:

We had the building reinspected. The only portion of the building that is unsafe is the terra cotta parapet spire at the top of the bell tower. Our inspectors determined that the bell tower itself and the rest of the building are not in danger of collapse. We will remove any older violation that calls for the complete demolition of the building. We're going to issue new violations limited to the terra cotta spires and require the building owner to hire an engineer to do a full assessment. The terra cotta parapet and spires can be easily removed without compromising the rest of the bell tower. By removing the imminently dangerous designation and replacing it with an unsafe violation for just the parapet and spires, a zoning application to change these may be submitted to the Department [of Licenses and Inspections]. As I understand it, the inability to file a zoning application to change the use caused a level of uncertainty that prevented the bank from lending funds. The terra cotta can be removed and stored until such time that the current owner or future owner has the funds to repair and reinstall.

Mr. Beisert added that he felt it was important to address the building's structural uncertainties, considering the Department of Licenses & Inspections had ordered the building to be demolished. The neighborhood organization, he added, was able to press the Department to reassess the building's integrity and wanted to share the results to clarify the status of the structure and the violations issued against the property.

Ms. Cooperman opened the floor to public comment, of which there was none.

Mr. Cohen stated that Mr. Beisert's nominations always leave him running to the architectural dictionary because of his use of obscure terminology. Ms. Cooperman concurred. Mr. Cohen and Ms. Cooperman clarified a few technical points in the nomination and identified several obscure terms. Mr. Beisert responded that writing architectural descriptions for church buildings is difficult and that he relies on a pictorial architectural dictionary that he would share with Committee members.

Mr. Beisert offered an aside about the transition of the church from a small wooden building to an imposing stone structure. He noted that the wooden church was left intact and in use while the walls of the new church were laid around it. The process, he added, allowed the church to remain in place without paying rent on a second property.

In reference to Henry Romberger, Mr. Cohen expressed concern over plucking any name associated with the history of the church and developing arguments for that individual's significance. He noted that not every church, pastor, or donor holds significance to the city, state, or nation. Mr. Cohen urged Mr. Beisert to devote more time to developing an argument for the building's significance rather than focusing on biographical detail. Ms. Cooperman agreed that Romberg was an interesting figure, but contended that the church does not best reflect his importance.

Mr. Cohen noted the building's 1910 date of construction and stated that the nomination indicates its Victorian style. In some ways, he continued, there is an implicit argument in the nomination that is not well defined, which suggests that the building reflects post-Victorian tastes. Mr. Cohen asserted that a discussion of the post-Victorian style would place the building into a more meaningful context, although he opined that that style is not well defined. He posited whether a stylistic discussion could draw conclusions about the distinctions between churches constructed between 1910 and 1919 and those constructed in the 1870s and 1880s.

Mr. Beisert stated that the building initially appears quite ordinary but actually reflects a transitional style. Mr. Cohen asserted that he would like to learn more about the stylistic changes that occurred between the 1880s and the construction of this church. Mr. Beisert contended that there are certain design elements from that earlier period carried over to this building. Mr. Cohen agreed and stated that the design is very conservative and the building stands as a Victorian church. Mr. Beisert directed the Committee members to an illustration of the proposed design contained in the nomination and commented on the cross gable and tower that was never realized. He added that there is a resemblance between the illustration and what was constructed, but the actual church was scaled back from the proposed design. Mr. Cohen stated that those observations would be worthy of some comment within the nomination, because the proposed design is more modern than the Victorian construction. He then applauded Mr. Beisert on the research and writing of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 5250 Wayne Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, E, and J.

ADDRESS: 401-11 S BROAD ST

Name of Resource: Gershman Y, Young Men's & Young Women's Hebrew Association

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: University of the Arts

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 401-11 S. Broad Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J. The nomination asserts that the impressive Georgian Revival building was the first center built jointly by formerly independent chapters of the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations and that numerous prominent figures were involved in the planning and construction of the building. The nomination further argues that the property, designed by architects Frank E. Hahn and S. Brian Baylinson in consultation with Paul Phillippe Cret, reflects more than nine decades of Jewish social, cultural, and educational heritage.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 401-11 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. Attorney Michael Sklaroff and Desiree Deluca, University of the Arts Assistant Vice President for Facilities and Operations, represented the property owner. Patrick Grossi and Ben Leech represented the nomination.

Mr. Grossi stated that this property is one of the most significant undesignated resources on S. Broad Street. He noted that it has served as a cultural hub of the local Jewish community since 1924 and stands as a highly intact example of Georgian Revival architecture by Hahn & Baylinson, with assistance from Paul Cret. One of the most interesting pieces of the story that was uncovered, Mr. Grossi continued, was that the Arts Council at the building invited prominent figures of Modernism and avant-garde art to the building from the late 1950s and into the 1960s. Tomorrow evening, he added, a celebration will be held to honor the 50th anniversary of the Velvet Underground's Philadelphia debut at the Gershman Y.

Mr. Sklaroff asserted that he was not at the meeting to address the nomination. Instead, he explained that he wrote to Mr. Farnham to request that the Commission not review the nomination until the spring, which would allow him the opportunity to meet with the Preservation Alliance over the next several months. He added that he was pleased that the Commission's review was scheduled as he requested. The Alliance, he continued, did not have access to the building's interior and stated that there are structural and other physical challenges to the building, some of which are obvious from the exterior and others that are strictly interior issues. Mr. Sklaroff explained that he, the property owner, and the Alliance have been in contact and will arrange to meet to conduct a joint assessment of the building. Additionally, he continued, since receiving notice of the nomination, a serious analysis of the building by a structural engineer has been completed. He indicated that he hoped that the owner and Alliance would be able to reach an agreement by the April Commission meeting as to which of the building's elements are considered character defining and are worthy and capable of preservation. Mr. Sklaroff further noted that he would like to find a respectful way to memorialize the building's history that is not entirely contained in its physical expression.

Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Sklaroff whether he was requesting a continuance at the present meeting. Mr. Sklaroff clarified that he is not requesting a continuance and is not opposing the nomination. He observed that the staff had not scheduled the Commission's review until the April 2017 meeting at his request to allow time for a meeting with the Alliance.

Mr. Farnham offered clarification, explaining that Mr. Sklaroff, on behalf of the property owner, requested in writing prior to the meeting that the Committee's recommendation not move forward to the Historical Commission until its April 2017 meeting to allow time for an evaluation of the building. The nomination would typically be considered at the January 2017 Commission meeting, he stated, but that meeting has not been scheduled and an agenda has not been issued to the public, so the staff has the liberty of scheduling the nomination for the April 2017 meeting. Mr. Farnham noted that the Committee should have been informed of the scheduling prior to the meeting. With regard to the current deliberations, he added, the Committee should proceed as usual with the discussion of the nomination's merits.

David Traub of Save Our Sites endorsed the designation of the property, adding that he is not aware of any structural issues. He reminisced about work his firm, David S. Traub Associates, completed in recent years by recounting the renovations of the lobby and the Jewish chapel. Mr. Traub then offered an aside on St. Laurentius and stated that it would be appropriate and important for members of the Committee to see the interiors of buildings when interior nominations are considered.

Mr. Cohen commented that the nomination was wonderfully researched, concise, and contained a few surprises, including that the Gershman Y fostered a taste for Modern art in the 1960s. He opined that he tried to imagine the conversation between Paul Cret and Frank Hahn about Cret's contribution to the design. Mr. Leech responded that he believed Cret's involvement was honorific, since the committee likely wanted Cret's name associated with the project. He clarified that he did not intend to imply that Paul Cret designed the building, but rather that there was public recognition of promoting the building as a project in which he was involved.

Ms. Cooperman agreed that the property's association with Modern art is interesting, particularly in parallel to synagogue design of the same period. She also noted her appreciation of learning more about the institutional history of the organization.

Mr. Cohen offered some minor corrections to the text. He recommended that the nominators consult the book *Manhood Factories* by Paula Lupkin. The book, Mr. Cohen continued, provides interesting information about YMCAs across the United States.

Mr. Cohen raised a series of procedural issues he found important to discuss with the Committee and asked whether the Committee automatically grants a continuance when a property owner and nominator jointly make a request. Ms. Cooperman answered that it has been the Committee's convention to grant joint requests. Mr. Cohen then opined that, when a property has been proven to be in poor structural condition, the nomination's Criteria for Designation could be crafted around the elements that are character-defining. In terms of current sequencing, he continued, issues that may impact a building's designation could follow the Committee's review. He asked Mr. Sklaroff how the process works strategically. Mr. Sklaroff answered that sequencing is a serious issue, especially in cases where a property is associated with an important historical movement or person but has an integrity issue. In that situation, he continued, a distinction should be made between character-defining features and those that are ordinary. However, Mr. Sklaroff contended that a separate issue arises when history is not

embodied in the site but the building is worth preserving. In both examples, he added, identifying which elements are character-defining would be useful.

Mr. Cohen considered the exposed east façade of the Gershman Y, which he referred to as utilitarian. Currently, he continued, the entire building is nominated. Mr. Cohen asserted that the façade could be excluded from the building's character-defining features, which would offer the owner more liberty. He then opined that the process should be determined after one has identified the challenges. Mr. Sklaroff replied that the Committee and Commission would need to determine the process, adding that the Alliance was careful in its nomination to identify what was and was not character-defining.

Mr. Grossi commented that Mr. Cohen's suggestion is sensible, but raised the issue that nominations are often quietly submitted to prevent a race against the property owner, who may file for permits once aware of a potential nomination. He observed that currently, property owners are reactionary once learning of a nomination. In the case of the Gershman Y nomination, Mr. Grossi indicated that he was trying to be proactive and correct an oversight of a building that should have been designated. He concluded that being more proactive would require a different relationship between nominator and property owner where the nominator has confidence that, in reaching out to the owner, the owner would not place the building at risk.

Mr. Sklaroff responded that there was no rush to pull a permit on the part of the Gershman Y's owner, so a dialog could have been started and common ground reached. Ms. Cooperman stated that identifying character-defining features is often a neutral process. Mr. Sklaroff agreed that there should be objective standards, but argued that at issue is the rigor of the Criteria for Designation. He contended that there should be some common understanding of what is significant and what is not. Mr. Grossi supported Mr. Sklaroff's statement and suggested that that understanding could be achieved if the nominator has flexibility. He offered an example of a recent nomination by the Alliance in which the nomination focused largely on the strength of the building's distinctive façade and made clear that there was no prejudice to potential alterations at the rear utilitarian façade. Mr. Cohen asked if that thinking is embedded in the Gershman Y nomination. Mr. Grossi answered that he is not comfortable commenting on it at the moment but did acknowledge that the east façade is more utilitarian than other facades.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 401-11 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J.

Hal Schirmer asked to make a statement. Ms. Cooperman noted that the Committee still had one matter to consider on its very long agenda, but stated that she would allow the comment, if brief. Mr. Schirmer voiced his concern over designating certain walls of a structure rather than the entire property, adding that it is difficult enough keeping track of which parcel, which address, and which building is designated, let alone which part of a building. He argued against creating a potentially time-consuming process of determining which portion of a building is protected. He asserted that a property should be designated, then later it could be determined which portion is most significant. Mr. Cohen stated that, while he understood Mr. Schirmer's argument, he wondered whether the Committee meeting was the appropriate forum for working through the issue rather than working through the challenges behind the scenes.

4054 CHESTNUT ST

Proposed Action: Rescission

Property Owner: Eapen Kalathil

Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to rescind the historic designation of 4054 Chestnut Street, a property which was designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places on 8 July 2016. At that time, the Commission found that the property satisfied Criteria for Designation A, C, D, G, and J. The property owner claims that the property is “largely devoid of character-defining features.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff reiterates the recommendation it offered to the Committee on Historic Designation at its June 2016 meeting: the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4054 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the rescission request to the Committee on Historic Designation. Attorney Michael Sklaroff, consultant Robert Shusterman, and property owner Eapen Kalathil represented the rescission request.

Mr. Farnham explained that the Commission considered nominations for three sets of twins in this row in July 2016, 4046-4048, 4050-52, and 4054-56 Chestnut Street. The Commission designated 4050-52 and 4054-56 Chestnut Street in July. It tabled the nomination for 4046-4048 Chestnut, owing to a pending demolition permit. Those structures are currently being demolished. Mr. Farnham read Section 14-1004(5) of the preservation ordinance, which states that “any designation of a building, structure, site, object, or district as historic may be amended or rescinded in the same manner as is specified for designation.” He explained that Section 5.14.b.1 of the Rules & Regulations elaborates, directing that “the Commission may rescind the designation of a building ... and remove its entry ... from the ... Register ... if:

- a. the resource has ceased to satisfy any Criteria for Designation because the qualities that caused its original entry have been lost or destroyed;
- b. additional information shows that the resource does not satisfy one or more Criteria for Designation; or,
- c. the Commission committed an error in professional judgment when it determined that the resource satisfied one or more Criteria for Designation.”

Mr. Farnham noted that Section 5.14.b.2 of the Rules & Regulations stipulates that “a person who seeks to have a designation rescinded shall make a written and documented submission to the Commission that demonstrates one of the three bases cited in Section 5.14.b.1 of these Rules & Regulations.” He reported that the applicants have provided a submission, which was sent to the Committee members by email last week and provided in hard copy to them this morning. He concluded that the staff reiterates the recommendation it offered to the Committee on Historic Designation at its June 2016 meeting: the nomination demonstrates that the property at 4054 Chestnut Street satisfied and continues to satisfy Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J.

Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Farnham to remind the Committee of the nominations and designations at this row. Mr. Farnham stated that 4046-4048, 4050-52, and 4054-56 Chestnut Street were all nominated. The Commission designated 4050-52 and 4054-56 Chestnut Street in July. It tabled the nomination for 4046-4048 Chestnut, owing to a pending demolition permit.

Ms. Cooperman invited the property owner and his representatives to the table to present their case.

Attorney Hal Schirmer interjected that the party who nominated this property leading to the designation in July 2016 should have been notified of the rescission request in writing. He claimed that the nominator has the same, or at least similar, rights as the property owner with regard to the Historical Commission's considerations of this property. Mr. Farnham responded that the Historical Commission is not required to notify a former nominator of subsequent requests to change the designation status of a property and did not notify the former nominator as the former nominator in this case. He stated that the Commission notified the property owner in writing as is required by the preservation ordinance. He noted, however, that the Commission did notify all interested parties of the consideration of this matter using its standard process. He observed that several persons involved with the nomination of this property are included on the Historical Commission's interested parties email list and would have received an email with this meeting's agenda listing the rescission request.

Elizabeth Stegner, the president of the University City Historical Society, which nominated this property last spring, acknowledged that she did receive the agenda, but asserted that "we just got notice of this." She stated that Aaron Wunsch, who was one of the nominators, just learned of this review yesterday and is unable to attend the meeting today. She stated that she appreciates the fact that the staff recommends that this property continues to satisfy Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J. She stated that she and her colleagues are not prepared to testify on this matter. Oscar Beisert stated that the Committee should continue this matter, as it had done recently with a cemetery nomination. Ms. Stegner again stated that she did receive the agenda via email.

Mr. Sklaroff opined that the nomination acted upon in July speaks for itself. The property owner has complied with the process and has waited patiently since 9:30 this morning to be heard. Mr. Sklaroff stated that the owner has gone to the expense of retaining an expert, who is waiting to testify. Mr. Sklaroff stated that it is his belief that all of the proper notices were issued. He explained that Mr. Kalathil, the owner, was not represented by an attorney at the reviews in June and July and deserves to be heard today with an attorney and expert present.

Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Farnham to comment on the Committee authority to table or continue this matter. Mr. Farnham responded that the Committee is advisory only, making non-binding recommendations to the Commission. He explained that it is within the Committee's discretion to decline to hear this matter today and recommend to the Commission that it continue the matter and remand the rescission request back to the Committee for review at a later meeting. Mr. Farnham reiterated that neither the preservation ordinance nor Rules & Regulations require the Commission to notify a former nominator of a request to amend the designation status of a property after that property has been designated. He stated that, in the more than 10 years that he has been the Commission's executive director, the Commission has never informed a former nominator of a request to amend the designation status of a property. At this point, the former nominator is nothing more than a member of the public and, in this case, several people involved with the nomination received the agenda of this meeting by email as members of the Commission's interested parties list. Mr. Farnham concluded that the appropriate notice of this review was provided.

Mr. Schirmer stated that the Rules & Regulations stipulate that "anyone who took an interest and voiced their opinion becomes a party on that for later consideration for designation; therefore also for undesignation." Mr. Schirmer stated that the owner appealed the designation of the property to the Court of Common Pleas. He claimed that that appeal has divested the Historical Commission of jurisdiction in this matter. He asserted that "you might get two bites at

the apple, but you don't two bites at the same time." He claimed that the Commission does not have jurisdiction over this rescission request when the designation is on appeal. Mr. Sklaroff disagreed strongly. He stated that he is exhausting his administrative remedies before proceeding with the appeal. If the Commission decides to rescind the designation, then the appeal before the Court of Common Pleas will be moot, Mr. Sklaroff explained. Mr. Schirmer again claimed that the pending appeal removed the Commission's jurisdiction in this matter. Mr. Sklaroff responded: "That's absolutely wrong." He stated that this rescission application is ripe for a decision. He stated that the Commission must determine whether the designation was "improvidently granted." He asserted that his client did not have an expert report when it was designated in July and the property was merely "swept up" with the others that were designated at that time. Mr. Sklaroff stated that he is asking the Commission to rescind the designation of 4054 Chestnut. He stated that he has an expert, who would like to testify about the building.

Ms. Cooperman suggested that the Committee decide the continuance question before proceeding with a review of the merits of the rescission request. Ms. Stegner stated that Aaron Wunsch is her expert and he is unable to attend today's meeting. Mr. Schirmer stated that the ordinance stipulates that rescission follows the same process as designation and the designation is not complete yet. He claimed that the designation is "under administrative review" and is therefore not yet complete. He claimed that the matter is not ripe for this "court" to hear because it is under administrative review. Mr. Sklaroff asked Mr. Farnham to state whether the property in question is currently listed on the Philadelphia Register. Mr. Farnham stated that the property at 4054 Chestnut Street is listed on the Philadelphia Register. The matter currently before the Committee, the request to rescind the designation of 4054 Chestnut, is not a part of the designation review. It is an entirely separate and distinct, new matter. He clarified that it is a matter primarily between the Historical Commission and the property owner. The public may participate in the review and the public has received notice in the same manner that it is notified for every review. Mr. Farnham advised the Committee that it can undertake the review of the rescission request today or it can decline to consider the merits of the request and recommend to the Commission that it table the matter and remand it back to this Committee at a later date. He asserted that nothing is precluded; the Committee has the discretion to move forward with the review or recommend tabling the matter. He reiterated that all of the notice requirements in the ordinance and the Rules & Regulations have been satisfied.

Ms. Cooperman asked her fellow Committee members whether they wanted to proceed with the review or recommend tabling the matter to a later meeting. Messrs. Cohen and Lavery indicated that they wanted to move forward with the review.

Mr. Sklaroff stated that he has retained Robert Shusterman to analyze the building, especially with regard to its character-defining features, and express his expert opinion as to whether it does or does not satisfy the Criteria for Designation. Mr. Sklaroff stated that the building next door to the subject building has retained its character-defining features. The building in question has lost its character-defining features. It should not have been designated. It was swept up with the designations of the other buildings.

Mr. Shusterman stated that, after he visited the property and examined it as well as its context, he prepared a report. In that report, he noted the large number of changes to the character-defining features of the building. He showed an annotated image of the building. He observed that the marble stoop and railing have been removed. The first-floor floor level was lowered and the doorway was lowered and extended. The original door and door frame were replaced with a historically inappropriate door and frame. They are inconsistent with the aesthetic elements of the building and with the neighboring twin. The glass in the doors and the transom are

inappropriate. The brick infill of the original door opening is inappropriate. The masonry work is of a poor quality. The two first-floor windows were removed, the window openings altered, and a tripartite window installed. The lintels are inappropriate. Mr. Shusterman stated that the nomination does not provide in-depth information about the changes. The nomination does not document the changes. He stated that the building is not entered as it was originally. The lower of the floor level and elimination of the stoop totally change the character of the façade, he claimed. The entrance now provides a totally different visual experience. Mr. Shusterman stated that the original windows at the second and third floors have been removed and the current windows are inconsistent with the historic appearance of the building. Mr. Lavery pointed out that other buildings in the group that was designated in July also have replacement windows. Mr. Sklaroff acknowledged that other buildings in the group have been modified, but not to the level that this one has been modified. He asked whether this building had reached a tipping point, owing to its numerous inappropriate modifications. Mr. Shusterman testified that the gable roof, dormer, and chimney, all character-defining features, have been removed. All of the other buildings in the group retain these features. Mr. Sklaroff stated that the building has been cut down from a four-story to a three-story building. Mr. Cohen corrected that it was cut down from 3-½ stories to 3 stories. Mr. Sklaroff stated that the report provides additional detail. Mr. Shusterman added that the original gate between this and the neighboring building to the east has been lost. The gate in its place is “crude” and “harsh.” Mr. Shusterman stated that Mr. Powers, the original developer, is better represented by other buildings in this group and by other buildings in the city. Mr. Sklaroff asked Mr. Shusterman if the ultimate test is whether or not this building is “significant.” Mr. Shusterman agreed. Mr. Sklaroff asked him if this building is were located in a historic district whether it would be significant or contributing. Mr. Shusterman opined that the building would not even rise to the level of contributing because of the removal of all of the character-defining elements. Mr. Shusterman stated that the removal of the stoop, gable roof, dormer, and chimney have so altered the massing of this building that it does not even qualify as contributing for massing alone. Mr. Shusterman stated that the building would detract from a hypothetical district. Mr. Sklaroff concluded that this building suffered so many profound losses and is so altered from its original state that it cannot be considered significant in a hypothetical district and cannot be legitimately individually designated. Its designation should be rescinded. It was swept up in the designations of the other buildings, which retain most or all of their character-defining features.

Mr. Cohen stated that he was not familiar with Mr. Shusterman. He asked him to state his qualifications as an expert. Mr. Shusterman stated that he is a licensed attorney and a licensed architect. Mr. Shusterman stated that he got his start in historic preservation in 1978, when he helped found the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation, now the Preservation Alliance. He stated that he has many years of experience with façade easements. He stated that he created the entity that restored Conversation Hall in City Hall. He stated that he was involved in the restoration of the Fairmount Water Works. He stated that he was involved with Philadelphia Architectural Salvage. He stated that he has represented the National Trust for Historic Preservation in real estate and enforcement actions. He was involved with the gift of the Louis Kahn Fisher House to the National Trust. He has been involved with preservation easements in Pennsylvania and several other states. He has represented the Elfreth's Alley Association and John Bartram House. He has experience with tax credits and tax incentives for historic preservation. He has lectured to the Pennsylvania Bar Institute on preservation. He stated that he helped incorporate and is still involved with Partners for Sacred Places. He stated that he was involved with the restoration of the William Penn statue on City Hall.

Ms. Cooperman asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment. Oscar Beisert stated that he helped author the nomination for this property in question. He asked Mr. Farnham to

comment on the staff's position on the rescission request. Mr. Farnham responded that the staff recommended that the property satisfied Criteria for Designation A, C, D, and J at the June 2016 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation and continues to offer that recommendation. Answering Mr. Schirmer's question, Mr. Beisert stated that none of the changes to the building cited by Mr. Shusterman have occurred since the building was designated in July 2016. Mr. Schirmer asked Mr. Beisert if the altered and missing elements pointed to by Mr. Shusterman are obvious when one looks at the building. Mr. Beisert responded that they are obvious to him. The Historical Commission has individually designated buildings many buildings in Society Hill and Washington Square West that have been altered in ways like this building has been altered. He stated that an example is 1005 Spruce Street; it has lost its gable roof and a storefront was inserted. The original building is still evident. He averred that Mr. Shusterman's assertion that this building would be non-contributing in a historic district is "pretty ridiculous." It would qualify as contributing in a National Register district and therefore certainly qualify in a local district. Mr. Schirmer stated that he was a "little bit fuzzy" about the June and July reviews of the nomination, but seemed to remember that these same issues were addressed. Mr. Beisert stated that they were addressed. Mr. Beisert stated that the building is exactly as it was when designated in July.

Patrick Grossi of the Preservation Alliance stated that the changes to the building cited by Mr. Shusterman were extant and evident to the Committee and Commission in June and July. Mr. Grossi asserted that the contention that this building would be non-contributing to a district is "absurd." He stated that it retains its basic massing, window openings at the second and third floors, watertable, brickwork, and other features. This building was designated on its merits, not those of its neighbor. He stated that he agrees with the staff's recommendation.

Mary McGettigan of West Philadelphians for Progressive Planning & Preservation stated that the applicants have not presented any new evidence. She stated that she objected to the Committee considering this matter. She asserted that the property owners only recourse is to appeal the designation to the courts. The property owner cannot request that the Commission rescind its designation. This is an attempt to "run around" that obligation. Unless your Rules & Regulations explicitly authorize you to consider a rescission, you cannot consider such a rescission within weeks or months of the original designation. You are giving any property owner who disagrees an opportunity to contest the Commission's decision, she claimed.

Ms. Stegner of the University City Historical Society observed that the entire row has been altered to one degree or another. The Commission has designated other altered properties. She objected with Mr. Sklaroff's assertion that this property has reached the "tipping point." She stated that the alterations are insignificant; the building was designated because it is a twin and twins are significant in West Philadelphia and its development as a suburb. She stated that the building is a contributing resource within the West Philadelphia Streetcar Historic District.

Mr. Sklaroff acknowledged that the building has not changed since July. What has changed is that the owner has had an opportunity to have an expert evaluate the building, prepare a report, and present his findings to the Committee. The lost elements relate to the functionality as well as the appearance of the building. The changes are profound; the character-defining elements are gone. The roof is gone. The stoop is gone. The massing has been lost.

Mr. Lavery stated that he is not convinced that this building does not meet the cited Criteria. It retains the original fenestration and massing. The alterations are relatively minor. This building is more than 145 years old. He observed that rescinding its designation would allow for the demolition of half of a twin.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend denial of the rescission request.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

§ 14-1004(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.