

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

**WEDNESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2015, 9:30 A.M.
ROOM 578, CITY HALL
RICHARD DILWORTH, PH.D., CHAIR**

PRESENT

Richardson Dilworth III, Ph.D., chair
Jeffery Cohen, Ph.D.
David Schaaf, R.A., Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Erin Coté, Historic Preservation Planner II

ALSO PRESENT

Dorothy Hamill, Esq., Sirlin Lesser & Benson
Carol Ray
Ben Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Stephan Salisbury, Philadelphia Inquirer
Vernoca H. Michael
Jettie Newkirk, Esq.
Stacey Dowling
Carol Whitaker
Leslie Smallwood-Lewis
Guy Orens

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Dilworth called the meeting to order at 9:46 a.m. Messrs. Cohen and Schaaf joined him.

ADDRESS: 1314-16 N BROAD ST, BLUE HORIZON

Owner: Ray-Whitaker Inc.
Nominator: Ben Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the Blue Horizon at 1314-16 N. Broad Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the Blue Horizon is a culturally and architecturally significant building and that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, and J. Originally constructed as three contiguous brownstone row houses around 1878, the properties were combined and converted into a fraternal hall by the Loyal Order of Moose in 1914, with a large auditorium addition designed by architect Carl Berger completed in 1916. In 1961, the property was renamed the Blue Horizon and hosted its first professional boxing match. Before its eventual closure in 2010, "The Blue" was the last-surviving and longest-operating of the many neighborhood boxing clubs which characterized the sport in twentieth-century Philadelphia.

A second nomination proposes to designate the Blue Horizon Auditorium as an historic interior and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the interior satisfies the definition of a public interior portion in the preservation ordinance and is historically significant. A "public interior portion" is defined as an interior space in a building or

structure that is, or was designed to be, customarily open or accessible to the public, including by invitation” and has in no way “been significantly altered physically such that a substantial portion of the features reflecting design for public use no longer remain.” The auditorium served as Moose Lodge’s primary public interior space, served not only the organizational needs of the Moose organization, but was also regularly rented out for public gatherings such as sporting events, lectures, and conventions. Then in 1961, the auditorium was converted with minimal physical changes into the Blue Horizon boxing auditorium.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 1314-16 N. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, and J.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Blue Horizon Auditorium at 1314-16 N. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Coté presented an overview of the nomination and the staff recommendation to the Committee on Historic Designation. Ben Leech of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia represented the nomination.

Dorothy Hamill, attorney for the developer, stated that the issuance of the building permit for the partial demolition of the existing building and construction of a hotel significantly affects this discussion. She stated that her clients received the right to pull the permit long before the nomination was submitted to the Historical Commission. She stated that this project has been ongoing and in development for approximately four years. She stated that it was only at the last minute that the proposal to designate the property was submitted and it was significantly after the permit had been approved. She explained that, although the permit was approved and awaiting issuance, they did not pay the permit fee and obtain the permit while they were working on financing for the project.

Ms. Hamill stated that they have met with the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia to discuss the organizations concerns. She stated that they have entered into an agreement with the Preservation Alliance, in which the Alliance has agreed to not contest the validity of the building permit for the hotel project if the developers do not commence any demolition that would impact any historical significance the building until they have guarantees of the financing. She stated that they will, however, begin asbestos abatement and violation corrections before the financing is completed. She distributed copies of the permit and stated that the permit covers the entire building. She contended that the Committee does not have jurisdiction to make a recommendation to the Historical Commission in light of the fact that the permit has been issued. She suggested that, should the project not come to fruition, the Preservation Alliance could resubmit the nominations at that time.

Mr. Farnham stated that the Historical Commission does not contend the validity of the building permit for the hotel project nor is it contending that it has the authority to review that permit. He stated that the developers can move forward with the work that is permitted without the Historical Commission’s review. He noted, however, that nothing prevents the Committee from reviewing the nominations before them today and making recommendations based on the current condition of the building. He stated that the Committee on Historic Designation’s purview is to review the technical merits of nominations and make recommendations to the Historical Commission based on those merits. He stated that the bigger question of whether a property with a valid permit to significantly alter it should be designated or not is a question for the Historical Commission, not this Committee.

Ms. Hamill opined that it seems counterproductive and counterintuitive to review nominations of properties that have valid permits to significantly alter them. She stated that this project was started well before the nominations were submitted. She asked what significance could there be in designating a property historic when they already have the right to make changes and demolish part of the building and the part of the building being demolished is the sole subject of the interior nomination.

Mr. Dilworth asked if the developers are objecting solely to the interior nomination. Ms. Hamill explained that the project that is permitted includes the preservation of the front façade of the building. She stated that the preservation of the front façade is stipulated in the agreement with the Preservation Alliance. She noted that the Alliance will accept a façade easement for the front façade if no one if no other organization is found to take the easement.

Ms. Hamill stated that the owners are present to testify to the years and money that they have invested to maintain this building and the very little help that they have received. She stated that they will also testify to the condition of the building, which is not accurately reflected in the nomination because it was submitted before the nominator ever entered the interior. She stated that the nomination was based on internet research, but not first-hand experience with the building. Ms. Hamill suggested that the building is not in good condition as is evidenced by the fact that there are approximately 40 violations on the building. She informed the Committee that the boxing networks stopped booking events at the building because of the consistent health and safety issues associated with the building.

Ms. Hamill opined that, if the Blue Horizon was not attached to this building and boxing had not occurred in that venue, then this review would not be taking place. She stated that no one would be looking to preserve the façade of this building without the boxing history because the Moose Lodge left no indelible mark on the city. He stated that the building was renovated by an architect who was a member of the Moose Lodge and he did not make a dramatic impact on the City of Philadelphia. She stated that he did mostly residential work outside the city. She stated that this brownstone building is beautiful, but there are many brownstone buildings throughout the city. She stated that boxing made this property significant. The building is not significant because of Carl Berger, the architect; he was not an architect of the stature of Frank Furness. She stated that people want to save this building because of the mystic that surrounds the boxing that occurred there. She stated that the vast majority of significant boxing matches in the City of Philadelphia in the second half of the twentieth century occurred at the Spectrum and that building was recently demolished. She listed other significant boxing venues including the Blood Bucket and the Cambria, which held boxing matches far longer and more consistently than the Blue Horizon. She stated that the Blue Horizon was open for 50 years and 26 of those years they had four or fewer cards per year. She stated that there was only one significant match at the Blue Horizon in the last 30 years. She stated that Shibe Stadium and the Alhambra hosted more boxing matches over more years than the Blue Horizon. She noted the Olympic as well. She stated that all of these venues hosted significant boxing matches in Philadelphia. Mr. Schaaf asked if any of those venues still exist. Ms. Hamill stated that some of them do survive; Shibe has been demolished. She informed the Committee that the Olympic Club operated for 60 years. She stated that the building still stands, but the club is closed as a boxing arena because it can no longer be sustained. She stated that the Joe Frazier Gym, which is designated as historic, is no longer be used as a boxing club for the same reason. She stated that the nomination includes a quotation that claims that Philadelphia was a Mecca for boxing. She observed that that quotation dates to 1911, long before the Blue Horizon was used for boxing, which started in the Philadelphia in the 1800s. She stated that boxing had already begun to decline by the 1970s.

Ms. Hamill stated that the Blue Horizon interests people today because it feels like a throw-back; people romanticize the musty, smoky boxing venue. She asserted that the Blue Horizon is a less significant boxing venue than other arenas in the city. She reported that the Spectrum had some of the biggest, most important bouts that were ever held in the city and no one stopped the demolition of that building. She observed that boxing is somehow only tied to this venue, which is not representative of boxing's history in Philadelphia. She stated that the nominations claims that this was the longest continually operating boxing venue in the city, which is not true. She stated that there was a period of 12 years when the Blue Horizon hosted no boxing at all.

Ms. Hamill stated that the building has been shuttered since 2010 because boxing could no longer be sustained there and there were numerous code violations issued by the Department of Licenses & Inspections. She stated that this is one reason why a part of the building is permitted to be demolished. She stated that the expense of correcting those violations is far in excess of what anyone should take on.

Ms. Hamill informed the Committee that the community and the Councilman's office are in support of this project. She stated that the hotel is going to take the history of the Blue Horizon and incorporate it into its theme. She stated that they plan to use the few remaining artifacts in the building that have not been vandalized and incorporate them into the hotel, which will also serve as a center for the community. She stated that some members of the community did not like the Blue Horizon when it was there because of the parking and noise problems it created. Ms. Hamill stated that Vernoca Michaels, the first African American woman boxing promoter, is at the meeting to testify that nobody wanted the Blue Horizon to succeed as a boxing venue more than she did. However, in the end, there was no market for boxing in Philadelphia and the venue was not sustainable.

Mr. Dilworth asked how the designation would adversely affect this project if it already has been permitted and not subject to the Historical Commission's review. Ms. Hamill stated that the financing could fall through if it were designated because it would create uncertainty for the investors. She stated that, if that happens, the current owners are not only saddled with millions of dollar in debt but also with a designated historic property that will be impossible to sell, develop, or maintain. She suggested that the Committee not offer recommendations on these nominations to the Commission, especially in light of the agreement with the Preservation Alliance. She stated that, if the nominations were stayed, no one's position would be compromised. She concluded that there is no reason to act on these nominations until the project is concluded.

Mr. Cohen asked how the permitted changes will impact the space. Leslie Smallwood-Lewis of Mosaic, one of the co-developers of the project, responded that the project consists of the removal of the auditorium space and the two large spaces below it. She stated that the building currently includes three levels of unusable space. She stated that they are removing and demolishing that portion and constructing hotel rooms in their place. She stated that the project included preserving the fronts of the three mansions on Broad Street. She clarified that everything behind the mansions to Carlisle Street would be demolished and replaced with 98 hotel rooms.

Mr. Dilworth asked if the agreement with the Alliance protects the façades of the former mansions if the property is sold. Ms. Hamill and Ms. Smallwood-Lewis affirmed that the agreement runs with the land. Mr. Leech responded that he was uncertain of the impact of the

agreement if the property is sold. Ms. Hamill stated that the terms of the agreement run with the land.

Ms. Hamill contended that a vacant shuttered building does not appropriately preserve the memory of the activities that occurred there, but rehabilitating the building and interpreting its history does preserve the memory.

Mr. Dilworth asked what impact an exterior designation would have that given that there is an agreement to preserve that exterior. Ms. Hamill stated that the agreement is different because it does not have the same legal effect as an historic designation. She stated that, if the project falls through, the current owners would be shackled with a designated building that will be harder to sell, develop, or maintain. Mr. Schaaf stated that, if that were to happen, then the owners could submit a financial hardship application to Commission. Mr. Schaaf stated that the Committee on Historic Designation is charged with reviewing nominations based on the Criteria for Designation to determine whether the potential resources have significance that merits designation. Mr. Dilworth asserted that there is no way of knowing now whether designating the exterior of the building as historic would result in a financial hardship.

Ms. Hamill stated that, in light of the fact that they have a valid permit, the nominations are basically moot because the building will be extensively altered. She stated that this project has been known to the public for five years. Prior to the inception of this project, the owners had been reaching out for help and no one helped them find ways to preserve the building. She stated that no one objected to the project or submitted a nomination until eight months ago, years after the project had been underway. Ms. Hamill claimed that the people who own the property and live in the neighborhood are impacted by what happens here. This is an opportunity for a minority-run business to undertake a project and support a minority community. She opined that, if the Commission is going to designate it for cultural reasons, it needs to consider the culture and how this building is or is not significant to the community in which it stands. She stated that, to determine whether this building has significance, the Committee must identify the group or community for whom this building might have significance. She stated that the community that constructed this building in 1917 is not the same community that lives and works around this building now. She stated that the community that glorifies and romanticizes the mystique of the smoky box arena is not the same community that lives and works around this building now. She concluded that the Blue Horizon does not have the historical or cultural significance claimed in the nominations for the community that has lived around and used this building for years.

Ben Leech of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, author of the nominations, stated that this is an unprecedented situation in that the developers have a valid demolition permit. He stated that the Alliance was not aware of the permit application at the time that the nominations were submitted. He informed the Committee that the permit was applied for and approved, but not paid for or picked up from the Department. That permit did not exist to the public because information was not available about it on the Department's website. The website only provides information on permits that have been issued, but not on those that have been approved but are awaiting issuance. He stated that they searched on the Department's website for a permit before submitting the nominations, but did not find one and therefore moved forward with the submissions. He suggested that the Department's website should be updated so that the public has access to information about permits that have been approved but not issued.

Mr. Dilworth asked if a permit approval can exist in perpetuity, awaiting the developer to pay the permit fee and obtain the permit. Ms. Hamill stated that the permitting code governs how long

an approved permit is valid and available. Mr. Leech stated that he understood that the approval can be renewed. Ms. Hamill stated that, when they recently asked the Department for an extension, they were granted a 30-day extension and told that they would not be allowed to renew again. Mr. Leech stated that the developer applied for the permit in September of 2013 and it has been renewed repeatedly. Mr. Leech stated that, in part, the Alliance decided to enter into an agreement with the developers to avoid what everyone agrees is the worst-case scenario, the commencement of demolition and then the abandonment of the project. Mr. Leech stated that there are no guarantees that this project will progress to completion. Therefore, the Historical Commission should move forward with the designations of this very historic and significant site. He stated that the Alliance would not withdraw the nominations because no one knows what is going to happen. He stressed that the Preservation Alliance is not participating in this matter to obtain a façade easement; it will only accept the easement if no other easement-taking organization accepts it. He asserted that the historic resource is the entire building. He opined that the three Broad Street mansions alone are worthy of designation. He explained that the Alliance takes the position that demolition applications are properly reviewed in the hardship arena. He pointed out that that avenue would be open after designation. He stated that the Alliance is under no illusions that designation is going to preserve this building in perpetuity. He stated it allows for a fair process to review the claims that this building cannot be adaptively reused.

Mr. Leech respectively disagreed that the boxing history is insignificant and that this venue is unexceptional. He stated that the sport of boxing was defined by venues that came and went. He stated that a boxing venue that is known for 50 years is significant and exceptional. He stated that an auditorium built for a fraternal organization that survives in this condition is exceptional. He stated that he is unaware of any other space quite like this. Mr. Leech informed the Committee that the designation of this building was included as a recommendation in the City Planning Commission's Lower North District Plan that issued a year or two ago. He stated that there is a Pennsylvania historic marker at this building. He stated that it is the only state marker in the city that honors boxing and that the marker was sought by the owners of the building. He noted that, at one point, this hotel project sought federal historic preservation tax credits and as a result of that review this building was determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. He asserted that this is an historic building.

Mr. Schaaf stated that there are many layers to this building. He stated that the Moose history is significant; it was the largest Moose Lodge in the United States. He noted that before that the three houses had significant residents as well as a connection to Dropsie College. He stated that the gentleman who donated his library and money to Dropsie College lived in one of these houses. He asserted that those facts alone make this site eligible for designation.

Mr. Dilworth asked if an auditorium for a fraternal lodge is unique or significant. Mr. Leech responded that, at the time, it was not unique, but is now unique because of its state of intactness, in terms of original seating, original lighting, and original fixtures. He stated that it was fortuitous that boxing lent itself so well to the special arrangement of the auditorium. He stated that this is a great example of a great space designed to be a social setting. He stated that this social gathering space has been preserved here in a way that is noteworthy.

Carol Ray, one of the current owners of the property, stated that, when she decided to buy this property in 1994, her decision was based on a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Avenue of the Arts. She reported that they purchased the building in April 1994 with the help of a loan and, in May 1994, the Department of Licenses & Inspections cited the property for 26 violations. She explained that, since 1994, they have been pursuing all kinds of help,

historical or otherwise, to maintain the building. She stated that they have been unable to acquire aid and the building has drained their resources. She stated that the owners are all now retired and praying that the building does not drain them of their last blood. She opined that, if boxing was that important, we would not be having this meeting because people in boxing with money would have saved this building. She stated that they closed the building because they could not sustain the overhead costs. She stated that they must sell the building and wipe out the debt attached to it. She stated that no one objected to the development plans for years. She urged the Committee to deny the nominations, so that they can move forward with their project.

Vernoca Michael, a co-owner and boxing promoter, stated that she agrees with Mr. Leech that history has occurred at the building, but asserted that most of it was not related to boxing. She stated that she booked numerous events including boxing event to fund a learning center, but most of the events were not related to boxing. She stated that the building hosted cabarets, weddings, parties, receptions, and plays. She stated that she owns the boxing ring shown in all the photographs of the interior of the Blue Horizon and she reported that the ring was only erected once every couple of months. Most of what happened at the Blue Horizon was unrelated to boxing. She reported that students from 15 colleges from the Philadelphia area, doctoral law students from Harvard, and sports management students from Hampton, all participate in activities in the building. She stated that more than 18,000 students used the building in her time. She stated that the significance of the facility really relates to activities that were never mentioned in the nominations. The nominations focus on boxing, but matches were held very infrequently at the Blue Horizon. She contended that boxing is an interesting sport, but it has seen its heyday in Philadelphia. She reported that it is said that Philadelphia is a boxing town, but Philadelphia could not fill a 1200-seat facility for boxing. She stated that the developers, Mosaic and the Orens Brothers, have come forward with a project that will save the building and its history. She stated that the building has been vacant for five years and has deteriorated. She stated that this project will showcase the heyday of what makes this building significant in terms of the mansions, the Moose, the boxing history, and other aspects of its past. She stated that this project will bring the building back to its grandeur and reflect its history. She asserted that, if the building is designated, it does not have a chance.

Stacy Dowling, owner of the neighboring building and minority partner in the project, stated that he has been in business at this location and a part of the community for about 20 years. He stated that they have seen boxing come and go and towards the end of the run it was almost nonexistent. He stated the building has more cultural significance to the community as a result of the social activities that it housed such as cabarets, wedding receptions, jazz concerts, and poetry readings. He stated that they have overwhelming community support for this project, because those social events will return with the hotel. He stated that a designation will put an undue burden on the owners. He stated that a designation could possibly slow the project or perhaps even kill it. He stated that he hoped the Historical Commission will consider the community's desires.

Mr. Dilworth stated that this project has already been permitted and a historic designation will not affect the permit and by extension the project. He contended that a designation would not disrupt this project.

Ms. Smallwood-Lewis stated that a designation would have a negative impact on financial viability of this project. She stated that the "optics" of a designation would deter funders and potentially kill the project. She stated that funders would be confronted with divergent opinions on the project from the City; a City Councilman would be supporting the project and a City

agency would be opposing the project. She stated that a designation would definitely create confusion for lenders on this project.

Guy Orens of Orens Brothers, a developer of the project, stated that, although the Preservation Alliance was not aware of the approval of the permit, it was aware of the project as planned. He stated that the Alliance participated in the negotiations for an agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office that accompanied the state's involvement. He noted the Alliance submitted the nominations after the agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office was signed. He remarked that the agreement with the Alliance includes a provision for a façade easement. He stated that the owners and the developers would be open to discussing the designation of the façade rather than the entire exterior. He commented that the designation of a building after a major project has been permitted raises significant policy questions.

Stephen Salisbury, a reporter with the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, asked if anything in the public record documents the application for the permit and requests for and approvals of the extensions. He noted that a permit had been issued on 17 February 2015. Mr. Farnham responded that Mr. Salisbury should direct his question to the Department of Licenses & Inspections. He stated that the Historical Commission played no role in the review of the building permit and does not hold any records related to it. He provided Mr. Salisbury with the application number with which to request the information from the Department and noted that the application was submitted on 26 September 2013.

Mr. Leech provided photographs of the interior of the building to the Committee, which he had taken in December 2014. He stated that the owners were kind enough to grant him access. He stated that the photographs show that the interior space is intact. Mr. Dilworth asked if the boxing ring is part of the nomination. Mr. Leech stated that ring is not a permanent fixture and therefore not listed as a contributing feature in the inventory of the interior nomination. Mr. Dilworth asked about the Moose plaques. Mr. Leech stated that they had been removed and nobody knows where they are. He stated that those are the only items in the nomination inventory that no longer remain. Ms. Hamill stated that the inventory did not make the case that this space is exceptional. She stated that these items can be found in interior spaces throughout the city. Mr. Schaaf agreed, but claimed that the ordinary materials are put together in a beautiful way. He contended that the interior appears untouched. Ms. Ray stated that the interior is falling apart. Mr. Schaaf stated that condition is not a factor for the Committee. Others disagreed.

Carol Whitaker, a co-owner, stated that the hotel proposal is the best option for the building. He commented that they have described how they will preserve the façade. He remarked that, if the project does not close, then the Commission can reconsider the nominations. He pointed out that the Committee has been informed of the financial situation surrounding the building. He asserted that the nominations do not make the case for historic designation. Mr. Schaaf stated that there is a continuing history at this site that started in the 1870s with the development of the houses and continues through the development of a club and institution and then the development of a boxing venue. He claimed that the events that have resulted in the physical evolution of the architecture are historically significant. Mr. Whitaker questioned the timing of the submissions of the nominations, after the permit application and the state review, in which the Alliance participated. He asserted that something was not right. He stated that they have worked hard for years on this project to get out from under the debt of this building and it is all about to be undone based on late nominations. He stated that Ms. Smallwood-Lewis testified earlier in this meeting that a designation could undermine the financing for the project. He stated that a designation would lead to extreme financial consequences for the current owners. He

stated that he is making the discussion personal because the outcome has extreme personal consequences for him. Mr. Schaaf stated that he understood the concerns, but observed that the Committee has a narrow purview; it considers the Criteria for Designation. He stated that there are ten Criteria for Designation and a property only has to meet one to be designated. Mr. Whitaker stated that the Historical Commission should be content with the agreement with the Preservations Alliance. He asked for time to secure financing and see if the project goes forth and is successful. He stated that, if the project is not successful, then the Commission is not in a worse position. He asked the Committee to consider delaying any action on the nominations out of fairness to the owners. Mr. Leech stated that the Alliance has agreed not to contest the validity of the permit. He stated that historic designation should not create difficulties with their lenders.

Mr. Schaaf stated that he would have liked to have seen the nomination include the social history from the last 20 years. Mr. Dilworth stated that it seems to him that the owners acknowledge the historic significance of the exterior even though they oppose designation. He clarified that the designation of the exterior of the building includes more than the front façade. He stated that he has less confidence in the interior nomination. Mr. Dilworth explained that inherent in the Criteria for Designation is an assertion that significance is tied to the public good. He stated that it is easy to claim the designation of the exterior would be for the public good because the public experiences the exterior from the street, from the public right-of-way. He contended that, to find that the interior has significance, one must identify the public good deriving from the preservation of the interior. He stated that he is concerned by the nature of this interior space, which is not public but is tolled. He stated that this space has served two primary functions, as a private auditorium for a fraternal organization with no public access and as a boxing venue where one had to pay a toll to enter. He stated that the historic preservation ordinance stipulates that the Commission may designate public interior spaces, including spaces that were accessible by invitation. He stated that any private interior space is open to the public by invitation. He stated that a theatre would be a privately owned property and a toll good because, in order to enter the theatre, one pays a toll. Mr. Cohen asked if there were any interiors of theaters designated. Mr. Farnham stated that there are only two interiors on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, the Family Court Building and City Council Chambers. Mr. Farnham informed the Committee that, when the preservation ordinance was amended to include the authority to designate interiors, the Commission was advised that "by invitation" includes private spaces like restaurants and movie theatres at which a visitor must pay a fee or toll but from which a visitor cannot be barred except for refusal to pay the entrance fee. Mr. Farnham stated that he would argue that this space satisfies the definition of an interior that is eligible for designation under the preservation ordinance because it was open by invitation when it was a boxing venue. Mr. Dilworth acknowledged that the preservation ordinance may allow for the designation of private interiors open by invitation, but asserted that he is of the opinion that the Commission should only consider designating interiors that are either publicly owned; owned by non-profit organizations which by nature of their tax-exempt status operate as quasi-public entities (such as in the case of a museum which charges for entry); or owned by for-profit organizations but which were always designed to be open to the public at no charge, such as in the case of hotel lobbies or the common spaces of shopping malls.

Mr. Dilworth stated that, based on the photographs, it is clear to him that the interior nomination claims that this space is significant because of its role as a boxing venue. He stated that, except for the boxing ring, which is not part of the nomination, there are no remnants of boxing in the interior. He stated that, if the boxing ring is removed, this is merely the interior of the Moose Lodge. He asked if the Commission would be considering this interior nomination if it were not for the boxing history. He stated that he did not see what the Commission or the public would

gain by designating the interior. He stated that the significance of an intact social gathering space is not justification enough to have regulatory power over the interior of a privately owned property. He stated that he would not recommend designation of the interior. Mr. Dilworth suggested that the Committee recommend designation of the exterior nomination but not the interior.

Mr. Cohen stated that, if they had a nickel for every time they reviewed a nomination of a property that did not have people stepping up to the plate to provide financial support, they would have a lot of nickels. He asserted that the Committee should not ignore the historical significance of this property simply because an adaptive reuse for the entire building was not identified. He stated that the historical merit of the property is evident on the façade of the building. He disagreed with the claim that these three brownstones would not be considered historic without the boxing history. He stated that this building has significance in three different ways, because of its initial development in the late 1870s, its second life as a Moose Lodge, and as a social landmark referred to as “The Blue.” He stated that the exterior nomination is a “slam dunk,” which will not materially impede the project. He stated that, if the project does not materialize, the exterior of this building should be protected.

Ms. Smallwood-Lewis asked if their recommendation could be limited to the front facade of the building. Mr. Farnham stated that the Commission has the authority to designate a portion of a property. He stated that the Commission routinely designates an entire tax parcel including the exterior envelope of any buildings on the site and any site appurtenances, but the Commission may designate a portion of a property and then only exert jurisdiction over that portion. He noted that it has done so in a few cases. He informed the Committee that the Commission’s authority to designate is discretionary; it could choose not to designate even after finding that the property does meet the Criteria for Designation.

Mr. Dilworth suggested recommending for the exterior, but not the interior. His fellow Committee members were in general agreement. Mr. Farnham asked the Committee to clarify its thinking. He asked if the Committee was intending to recommend that the exterior satisfies the specified Criteria for designation and that the exterior be designated. Mr. Cohen stated that he thinks the exterior should be designated. Mr. Dilworth stated that he recommends that the exterior meets the Criteria for Designation but is happy to leave the question of designation up to the Commission. Mr. Schaaf stated that, if the Committee recommends that the exterior meets the Criteria for Designation, then inherent in that recommendation is an assertion that the Commission should designate it.

Ms. Michaels asked about the designation of the façade verses the whole building. Mr. Dilworth explained that the minutes from meeting will be clear that everyone agrees that the façade is historically significant but the recommendation includes the entire building.

Mr. Dilworth stated that the interior nomination should be denied and that it does not satisfy the Criteria for Designation. Mr. Cohen stated that he was torn. He stated right now they have the right to tear this interior space down, but, should this project fall through, he would want this space to be protected to allow for an evaluation of the feasibility of reuse of the interior. Mr. Dilworth stated he did not know enough about market value to place an interior space under the jurisdiction of a regulatory commission. Mr. Cohen stated that the arena is a treasured, place-making space that seems appropriate for hotel and restaurant use. Mr. Dilworth stated that the fact that the Committee is making suggestions on how a hotel could use the space indicates some of the problems with an interior designation of this space.

Mr. Schaaf reread the Criteria for Designation several times. He asked whether this space meets the suggested Criteria. Mr. Dilworth stated that satisfaction of these Criteria is predicated on a public good, but the space is not available to the public. He suggested that this space is different from a public school auditorium because it is a space that people paid to enter. He stated that it is fundamentally different. He stated that no public good would derive from the designation of this interior. He stated that the Committee's purview is limited to determining historic significance as it creates a public good. Mr. Cohen stated that the two interior spaces currently designated are public space and do or did not require a toll. Mr. Cohen noted that the interior of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art is privately owned, tolled space. He stated that that space is also a treasured space and he would say that it is in the public's interest in saving it. He stated that this interior is not as significant as the Academy space. Mr. Dilworth pointed out that the Blue Horizon and the Academy are fundamentally different organizations. He stated that a fraternal lodge was never meant to be open to the public in the same way that a museum is. He stated that even though it is toll good it still serves the public by virtue of its function and its non-profit status.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the exterior of the property at 1314-16 N. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, and J and should be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the interior of the property at 1314-16 N. Broad Street does not satisfy the Criteria for Designation and should not be designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dilworth moved to adjourn at 12:42 p.m. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.