

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

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

PRESENT

Richardson Dilworth III, Ph.D., chair
David Schaaf, R.A., Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Janet Klein
Bruce Lavery
Douglas Mooney
Jeffery Cohen, Ph.D.

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

ALSO PRESENT

Kevin McMahon, Young Friends of the Preservation Alliance
Patrick Grossi, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
James Zameska
Deborah Gribben-Zameska
Leonard F. Reuter, Esq.
Ben Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
John Messing
Jeffrey Allegretti
Chip Roller, Wissahickon Interested Citizens Association
Rich Thom, R.W. Thom, AIA
Boris Kaplun, Trinity Realty Partners, LLC
Joseph Menkevich
John Manton
David Orphanides, Esq.
Steve D'Agostino

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Dilworth called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Klein and Messrs. Schaaf, Lavery, Mooney, and Cohen joined him.

720-22 CHESTNUT STREET

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Owner: Various condominium owners

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the 722 Chestnut Street portion of the parcel at 720-22 Chestnut 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, F, G, and J. The Henry C. Lea Building is an ornate terra cotta Renaissance Revival-inspired commercial building constructed in 1897, designed by the architectural firm of Collins & Autenrieth. The building was commissioned by Henry Charles Lea, a prominent Philadelphia publisher, author, historian, and civic leader in nineteenth-century Philadelphia. The Lea Building survives as an example of ornamental terra cotta and the use of bay windows in commercial “street architecture” of the late nineteenth century. The property is classified as significant to the National Register East Center City Commercial Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the 722 Chestnut Street portion of the parcel at 720-22 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, F, G, 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.

Mr. Lavery asked for a clarification with regard to a name mentioned in the nomination, Henry Charles Lea or Charles H. Lea. Ms. Coté stated the name on the nomination form is incorrect and it will be corrected by the staff. Mr. Leech confirmed that the correct name is Henry Charles Lea. Mr. Lavery noted that Henry Charles Lea gave a library, the Lea Library, to the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Leech reported that the legal parcel includes the lots at 720 and 722 Chestnut Street, which were consolidated relatively recently. The nomination only proposes the designation of 722 Chestnut Street, but without prejudice to a future consideration of 720 Chestnut Street, which has different history.

Ms. Klein asked if any condominium units straddle both 720 and 722 Chestnut Street. Mr. Leech stated that he is unaware of the condominium unit layout.

Mr. Lavery commended the Preservation Alliance for proposing the designation of this group of buildings on Chestnut Street. He stated that he thinks that the 700 block of Chestnut Street is the most intact and rich block, architecturally, in the entire downtown. He stated that he walked the block the day before the meeting and the south side is intact; most of the buildings are nineteenth-century buildings. Mr. Leech stated that the current list of buildings of four buildings on the 700 block of Chestnut Street does not include all of the historically significant buildings on the block; there are certainly others on this block that are worthy of designation.

Mr. Mooney suggested that Criterion for Designation I be added to this nomination because of the potential archeological significance. He stated that this was the site of the Robert Morris estate, Morris’ Folly, in the late eighteenth century, which was designed by Charles L’Enfant. The site was likely occupied before Morris as well. He stated that the site has a rather rich archeological potential. The Committee members agreed that Criterion I should be added to the list of Criteria for Designation satisfied by this property.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the 722 Chestnut Street portion of the parcel at 720-22 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, F, G, I, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

721 CHESTNUT STREET

Nominator: Young Friends of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Owner: Katy Dog LLC

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 721 Chestnut Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, C, D, E, and J. The Quaker City National Bank building, which was originally owned and occupied by the Chestnut Street National Bank, was built in 1889 and designed by Willis G. Hale. The building is the site of one of the most notable and consequential bank failures in Philadelphia during the 1890s. After the Chestnut Street National Bank's second president, William M. Singerly fraudulently borrowed large sums of money from the bank in 1897 without the knowledge of the other directors; the Chestnut Street National Bank was unable to meet its obligations to its depositors. On Christmas Eve of that year, the bank was forced to close, shocking the city and making national headlines, owing to the prominence of its directors. This building is classified as significant to the National Register East Center City Commercial Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 721 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, and J.

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

Ben Leech of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia thanked Kevin McMahon and the Young Friends for writing this nomination, which he hopes to be the first of many to come from this group.

Mr. Laverty noted the reference on page 2 to the "all seeing eye," which connects this building to the Masonic Hall that stood on the site. He stated that he never connected the architectural eyes with the earlier building, but the connection makes sense. Mr. McMahon stated that the connection is speculative as noted in the nomination, but seems logical.

Mr. Cohen stated that this is one of the most unconventional buildings designed in the 1880s. Mr. McMahon stated that, because it stands on a midblock site and not on a corner, Hale could not make it a more impressive three-dimensional sculptural composition, as he did in other cases.

Mr. Mooney suggested adding Criterion for Designation I to this nomination because of the potential archeological significance. He stated that building like this one from the later nineteenth century have basements, but shaft features and other archeological deposits can survive below the basement floors. He stated that he hopes that this building is never demolished, but, in the event that it is, the archaeological features of the site should be explored. The Committee members agreed that Criterion I should be added to the list of Criteria for Designation satisfied by this property.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 721 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, I, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

723 CHESTNUT STREET

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Owner: Sam Rappaport

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 723 Chestnut 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, F, G, and J. The former W.H. Horstmann Company building is an example of the structurally expressive, Italianate-influenced style of commercial loft construction developed and promoted in the 1850s in Philadelphia by Stephen Decatur Button, Joseph C. Hoxie, and other leading architects of the era. Originally designed as a tripartite commercial block occupying 723-725-727 Chestnut Street, the building at 723 survives today as the sole extant portion of the original design and one of only a handful of surviving examples of an architectural style and building type deemed “Philadelphia Functionalism.” The building at 723 Chestnut Street is attributed to architect Stephen Decatur Button, constructed around 1855, and was first occupied by original tenant W.H. Horstmann & Sons by 1855. This building is classified as significant to the National Register East Center City Commercial Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 723 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, F, G, 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.

Mr. Schaaf stated that Stephen Decatur Button also designed the Presbyterian Church at the corner of 18th and Arch Streets and the Italianate windows with the arches like those on the fourth floor of this building can be found in the drum of the dome of that church. He opined that this building is an amazing survivor of the three buildings that stood here. He stated that it reminds him of the Pomerantz Building and is almost a precursor of the skyscraper style that will emerge in the late nineteenth century.

Mr. Cohen commended the nominator for addressing similar designs by Stephen Decatur Button in the nomination. He opined that the nomination made the case for significance quite nicely. He asked about the cresting on top of the building. Mr. Leech responded that it was array of eagles, flags, and other patriotic elements; the first tenant, the Horstmann Company, sold military regalia.

Mr. Mooney suggested adding Criterion for Designation I to this nomination because of the potential archeological significance. He stated that building like this one from the later nineteenth century have basements, but shaft features and other archeological deposits can survive below the basement floors. He stated that he hopes that this building is never demolished, but, in the event that it is, the archaeological features of the site should be

explored. The Committee members agreed that Criterion I should be added to the list of Criteria for Designation satisfied by this property.

Mr. Lavery stated that he is amazed by this block and the significance of this building, even without its twins and 725 and 727.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 723 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, D, E, F, G, I, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

725 CHESTNUT STREET

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Owner: 725 Chestnut Street Development LLC

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 725 Chestnut Street, the former Philadelphia Blueprint Company building, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, G, and J. The building was originally constructed around 1855 as a six-story commercial building. In 1903, it received a French Renaissance façade designed by Chester H. Kirk. In 1935, the top four stories were removed and architect Carl F. Otto reconfigured the storefront. The building is essentially a “cropped” 1903 French Renaissance-inspired Beaux Arts design with 1930s commercial signage and a circa 1855 rear elevation. This building is classified as contributing to the National Register East Center City Commercial Historic District.

Regardless of the Historical Commission’s decision on this nomination, the building at 725 Chestnut Street will be altered again. The property owner obtained a building permit to construct a two-story addition prior to the issuance of the Historical Commission’s notice of the nomination review. The Historical Commission does not have the authority to review the permitted work.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 725 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, G, and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Côté 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.

Mr. Mooney suggested that Criterion for Designation I be added to this nomination because of the potential archeological significance for the same reasons noted earlier in this meeting. The Committee members agreed that Criterion I should be added to the list of Criteria for Designation satisfied by this property.

Ms. Klein asked if the building is occupied. Mr. Schaaf replied that it will be occupied soon. He stated that the Philadelphia City Planning Commission worked with the architect of this project. Mr. Schaaf displayed drawings showing the details of the new addition approved by the City Planning Commission. He stated that construction has begun.

Mr. Lavery commended the Preservation Alliance for the nomination. He asked why the upper floors of this building were demolished. He speculated that demolishing the upper floors alone would likely be more expensive than demolishing the whole building. Mr. Schaaf stated that,

when upper floors in buildings such as this one were not in use, they were simply sealed off. Mr. Mooney suggested that there could have been a fire.

Mr. Lavery asked about the sign at the storefront transom and if it was integral to the proposed designation. Mr. Leech responded that the nomination indicates that the sign is a character-defining feature. Mr. Lavery stated that the importance of the sign should be emphasized because it is a significant feature. Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Farnham if the sign is implicitly included in the designation. Mr. Farnham affirmed, stating that the sign is an exterior fixture and can be regulated by the Commission if the building is designated. He stated that the Standards and Guidelines are more flexible with storefronts than with other types of restoration and rehabilitation work. He stated that, in a case like this, where the storefront is non-historic below the decorative transom level, the Standards would allow for either a re-creation of the historic storefront or the installation of a storefront that is compatible with the historic resource. Mr. Lavery opined that the sign is more important than the Beaux-Arts façade above it, of which there are hundreds around Philadelphia. He stated that there is only one Philadelphia Blue Print Co. sign. Mr. Cohen asked if the importance of the sign should be indicated more prominently in the nomination. Mr. Farnham stated that it is already on the record that this Committee finds it to be a character-defining feature. He stated that, if the Historical Commission designates this building, the Commission will enjoy full authority to protect that sign. He stated that, although it is not original to the building, it has achieved its own significance.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 725 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, C, G, I, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

3948-50 WALNUT STREET, WEST PHILADELPHIA BRANCH OF THE FREE LIBRARY

Nominator: Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Owner: Free Library, City of Philadelphia

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3948-50 Walnut Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J. The West Philadelphia Branch of the Free Library, a Carnegie branch library building, was designed by Clarence C. Zantzinger and constructed in 1906. It is an excellent example of a Carnegie library.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 3948-50 Walnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Coté presented an overview of the nomination and the staff recommendation to the Committee on Historic Designation.

Mr. Schaaf stated that this is an obvious candidate for designation and that the nomination is extraordinarily well written. He stated that the Commission has established a pattern of designation of Carnegie libraries already over the last several years. He stated that Philadelphia has more Carnegie libraries than any city but New York City. Ben Leech of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia stated that 20 Carnegie Library branch buildings survive in Philadelphia. Six Carnegie libraries are already listed on the Philadelphia Register. He stated that 30 Carnegie libraries were commissioned for Philadelphia and 25 were built.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 3948-50 Walnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

8711 GERMANTOWN AVENUE, CHESTNUT HILL BRANCH OF THE FREE LIBRARY

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Owner: Free Library, City of Philadelphia

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 8711 Germantown Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A and E. The Chestnut Hill Branch of the Free Library, a Carnegie branch library building, was designed by the prominent architectural firm Cope & Stewardson and constructed in 1908. It is an excellent example of a Carnegie library. This building is classified as significant to the National Register East Chestnut Hill Historic District.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 8711 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A and E.

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.

Ms. Klein commented that most of the city's Carnegie libraries were built on podiums, giving users the sensation of walking up to a monument of knowledge. However, this one is set at about the grade of the street. Mr. Lavery pointed out that this library is located at the top of a hill, Chestnut Hill. Mr. Schaaf speculated that the location of the library building likely relates to the previous building that stood on the site. He stated that the Christian Hall Library stood at this location and the porch of the current library is almost an exact replica of that of the earlier library. Mr. Schaaf stated that the gate and fence are much older than library branch building and likely date to the earlier building.

Mr. Leech stated that Jorge Danta, a former member of the Historical Commission's staff, helped to produce this and the next Carnegie library nominations for the Preservation Alliance.

Mr. Dilworth observed that different Criteria for Designation are cited in the three nominations for libraries listed on this agenda. Mr. Leech stated that that results from the fact that the library nominations were produced by different individuals over time. Mr. Schaaf stated that he would add Criterion H because this building is a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood. Mr. Dilworth asked the Committee if any of the Criteria for Designation cited for the West Philadelphia Branch do not apply to the Chestnut Hill branch. Mr. Schaaf stated that they all apply and should be cited for consistency in all three of the branch library nominations. Mr. Cohen concurred and commended Mr. Danta.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property at 8711 Germantown Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

601 W. LEHIGH AVENUE, LEHIGH (LILLIAN MARRERO) BRANCH OF THE FREE LIBRARY

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Owner: Free Library, City of Philadelphia

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 601 W. Lehigh Avenue as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and H. The Lehigh or Lillian Marrero Branch of the Free Library, a Carnegie branch library building, was designed by the prominent architectural firm of Hewitt & Hewitt and constructed in 1906. It is an excellent example of a Carnegie library.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Lehigh (Lillian Marrero) Branch of the Free Library on the property at 601 W. Lehigh Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, and H.

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.

Mr. Schaaf suggested that Criterion for Designation J should be added. The Committee agreed. Mr. Schaaf stated that the area around the library is interesting. It included the Edison High School and a Water Department pumping station; with these grand public buildings, it was a civic center of sorts. The high school building was lost in a fire. Mr. Leech pointed out that there is also a very ornate fire station on the same parcel as the library. Mr. Schaaf stated that the pumping station is quite ornate and deserves designation. Mr. Leech agreed and stated that this area could be a campus of designated buildings. Mr. Cohen stated that the buildings are so grand that it appears that the City believed that this section of Lehigh Avenue was an important location. Mr. Leech stated that this nomination was written for the library only, not the fire station, but without prejudice to a later designation of the fire station, which stands on the same parcel as the library.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Lehigh (Lillian Marrero) Branch of the Free Library on the property at 601 W. Lehigh Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

365 GREEN LANE

Nominator: John Manton

Owner: Roger Ross

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the Benjamin Kenworthy House at 365 Green Lane as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, G, H, and J. The Benjamin Kenworthy House sits prominently on the southeast corner at the intersection of Green Lane and Manayunk Avenue. It was built in 1871 by William F. Raynor, an English stonemason, for Benjamin Kenworthy and his family. Kenworthy was an affluent and a prominent member of the Roxborough and Manayunk community, who owned textile businesses.

The Committee on Historic Designation reviewed a nomination for this property at its November 2014 meeting. However, that nomination was withdrawn prior to the Historical Commission's review. The current nomination was submitted in late December 2014 by a different nominator.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 365 Green Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation A, G, H, and J.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Côté presented an overview of the nomination and the staff recommendation to the Committee on Historic Designation. John Manton represented the nomination.

Mr. Manton distributed historic maps to the Committee showing the prominent location of the property. He stated that this area had a park-like setting and the owners of the houses were interrelated, owing to family and business ties. He introduced the new owner of the property, Roger Ross, to the Committee. He stated that he has had the opportunity to look at Mr. Ross' plans for adding a third-floor addition and he thinks the proposal exquisitely matches to the rest of the architecture with the Mansard roof. He stated that Mr. Ross proposes to demolish the non-historic kitchen structure. Mr. Ross explained that building an addition in place of the non-historic addition is the best way to get the space he needs to use this house as his residence. Mr. Ross stated that he already applied for the building permit. He stated that the previous owner wanted to demolish the house, but the neighborhood was opposed. He stated that he took piano lessons in the house as a child and has always liked the house. He stated that he purchased it and plans to live there with his family once the renovations are complete.

Mr. Manton stated that this property is significant because the first resident owner was very prominent. The nomination focuses on the significance of the owner and his family.

Mr. Lavery asked about the implications of the pending building permit on the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Farnham explained that the permit is independent of the Committee's recommendation and the Commission's action. Mr. Farnham explained that the building permit application is under review by the Department of Licenses & Inspections and the proposal will not undergo any additional review by the Historical Commission. He stated that the Commission's staff has reviewed the proposal and considers it compatible with building. Mr. Farnham asserted that the building will retain its historic significance after the construction takes place. Mr. Manton stated that the civic association has approved the plans.

Mr. Cohen stated that Benjamin Keeley's son maybe William Keeley, who was an architect. He stated that there is a William Keeley collection of architectural sheets at Bryn Mawr. He commended Mr. Manton on the research for the nomination. Mr. Manton stated that he plans to submit nominations for the other houses in this group.

Mr. Mooney suggested that this property satisfies Criterion for Designation I for its archeological potential in the yard space, which appears to be undisturbed. He stated that privies or other features may survive in the yard. Mr. Cohen asked if there was evidence of a prior structure at the property. Mr. Manton stated that Mr. Ross's architect found a well head in the basement. Mr. Mooney stated that typically wells are not great places to find artifacts because people do not normally deposit trash in their water supplies. Mr. Manton stated that, according to the inventory taken of the house at the death of Sarah Kenworthy in 1911, there was a bathroom inside the house.

Mr. Ross asked what the inclusion of Criterion I would mean for him as the property owner. Mr. Farnham stated that the Historical Commission would have no authority to compel a property

owner to conduct an archeological investigation unless an owner first proposed some sort of major project that would include significant ground disturbance. Mr. Farnham stated that, if the house was lost to a fire and the property owner proposed new construction that would require major excavation, then the Commission could require an archaeological investigation. The Commission could not unilaterally require the home owner to conduct an archaeological investigation.

Ms. Klein remarked that the description of the interior of the house in the nomination is irrelevant to the Committee's review. She stated that, if the Committee recommends in favor of designation, that designation will include the exterior of the building and the grounds, but not the interior. The other Committee members concurred.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the property 365 Green Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation A, G, H, I, and J, should be designated as historic, and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

145 SUMAC STREET

Nominator: Jeffrey Allegretti

Owner: John Messing

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 145 Sumac Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and H. The house is associated with an important individual, Manayunk mill owner James Z. Holt, son of Edward Holt, who was among the first Manayunk mill owners. Holt and other second-generation mill owners provided much of the impetus for the development of the Wissahickon neighborhood. The Holt House is an extraordinary example of Eastlake Victorian styling, with ornamentation and trim with geometric patterns and incised lines. It is only one of a few remaining examples in Wissahickon, a neighborhood developed when the Queen Anne style was in vogue. The Holt House is an established visual feature in the neighborhood and for the community, not only for its architectural character, but also for its role in the streetscape resulting from its ample grounds, especially when combined with its adjoining twin at 147 Sumac Street. Together, the two houses occupy nearly three-quarters of an acre of ground in this otherwise densely developed urban neighborhood.

A nomination for the other half of this structure, the twin at 147 Sumac Street, was submitted and withdrawn, then re-submitted, but not in time to be included on agenda for this meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. The nomination for 147 Sumac will be included on the agenda of the next Committee on Historic Designation meeting.

Prior to the issuance of the Historical Commission's notice of the nomination review, the property owner applied for a demolition permit. As the date of application predates the date of notice and the start of the Historical Commission's jurisdiction, the Commission does not have the authority to review the demolition permit application.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 145 Sumac Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and H.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Cote presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation. She informed the Committee that the owner of the property applied for a demolition permit for the building before the Commission notified the owner of the consideration of the nomination. Therefore, if the demolition permit is issued, the owner may act on the permit without the Historical Commission's review or approval.

Jeffrey Allegretti, the author of the nomination, represented the nomination.

John Manton interjected from the audience that, although he had had some involvement with the nomination, he intended to let the author, Mr. Allegretti, speak for the nomination. Ms. Cote distributed hard copies of an email she had received from Joseph Menkevich earlier in the day. She explained that Mr. Menkevich disputed some of the factual claims made in the nomination, which are based on Mr. Manton's research. Mr. Cohen stated that he was having difficulty understanding the email from Mr. Menkevich. He asked Ms. Cote to summarize the email. Ms. Cote stated that Mr. Menkevich was attempting to provide a more nuanced reading of the deeds and correct Mr. Manton's misinterpretations of the deeds. She stated that Mr. Menkevich suggests that the houses were constructed in 1884, not 1882. Mr. Cohen asked if the Camac family had any involvement in the transactions in the early 1880s. Ms. Cote responded that the Camacs sold the property prior to that time and were not involved in the transactions in the early 1880s. Mr. Manton interjected, stating that the house at 147 Sumac appears to have been built about 1883 and is depicted on the Hopkins map of 1884. He asserted that the houses at 145 and 147 Sumac were built in 1883 or 1884. He noted that mason John Gilton, who built the Nugent Home in Germantown, erected the houses. He remarked that Mr. Menkevich provided additional information correcting his earlier research. Mr. Manton commented that someone named something like Striker or Strickland may also have been involved with the design, but he acknowledged that he did not know who had designed the building. He stated that the architecture of the building is important because it is "very unique to the area." Mr. Cohen concurred that the building is unusual. Mr. Manton stated that the building is in the Eastlake style, more than the Queen Anne style, but is "a hodgepodge of a lot of things." He claimed that the shed dormers are unique and not otherwise found in Roxborough. Mr. Schaaf stated that the building has the appearance of railroad architecture. Mr. Manton showed a photograph of the house and pointed out the shed dormers. Mr. Manton stated that the exterior woodwork has survived even though the elderly owners never painted it. He asserted that the wood is oak or some other very hard wood; it is not pine, not even yellow pine. He directed the Committee to photographs of the porch. Mr. Manton noted that there is no surviving paint on the porch, but contended that it would have been originally painted.

Mr. Cohen noted that many aspects of the building are strikingly similar to designs that the architectural firm of Frank Furness was producing at the same time. He noted that the property on which the twin houses were erected had been part of the Dr. William Camac estate and that the doctor's son, William Masters Camac, worked for almost 30 years as an architect with Furness. He pointed out unusual details of the house that were similar to those designed by Furness at the same time. Mr. Manton interrupted Mr. Cohen to add that 147 Camac was the residence of Morris Wilhore, the most famous inhabitant of the house. Wilhore was a postmaster and a magistrate. He was a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and connected with St. John's Church. He died and then his wife died in 1913, after which a succession of people owned the house. Mr. Manton then explained that the current owner has removed the windows on the first floor. The windows had colored glass. They are now stored in the basement. They should be reinstalled. The house currently has replacement windows. Mr. Manton also noted that the porch railing had been replaced. Mr. Dilworth asked Mr. Farnham to explain whether the Commission would require the reinstallation of the original windows if the

house were designated. Mr. Manton pointed to an older photograph that showed the original windows. Mr. Farnham explained that, if the house is designated, the Historical Commission will review each subsequent application within the scope of work specified by the property owner. Therefore, if the owner proposed to replace the windows, the Commission could require that the new windows have the appearance of the historic windows. He observed, however, that the Commission would not have the authority to unilaterally require the reinstallation of the historic windows, even if they are stored in the basement. He added that he does not believe that the Commission could require the owner to reinstall the original windows stored in the basement if the owner proposed window replacement, but could only require the installation of windows that replicate the exterior appearance of the historic windows.

Mr. Manton continued to address the Committee, noting that 145 and 147 Sumac sit on a large piece of land and claiming that the developer who is purchasing 145 made an offer of \$600,000 on 147. He observed that several houses could be built on the combined lot. Mr. Manton showed an aerial photograph of the lots at 145 and 147 to the Committee and commented on the size of the piece of land. Mr. Manton again stated that the architecture is unique regardless of the occupants of the houses.

Mr. Manton again addressed the Committee without being recognized by the chair. He asked, if the house at 145 Sumac is designated as historic, would a developer be allowed to build in the side yard. He suggested that the construction of such a house would destroy the “vista” of the house at 145. He asked if designation would protect the house alone or the entire tract of land. Mr. Schaaf responded that the Commission generally designates entire properties including all buildings and land. Mr. Dilworth noted that the Commission could specify other boundaries than the parcel boundaries when designating.

Mr. Dilworth recognized Mr. Allegretti, the nominator, who asked to speak. Mr. Allegretti stated that this case began as a civic matter and, because of a conflict of interest, became a personal matter. He stated that this nomination was not intended to prevent the redevelopment of “buildable” parcels. He noted that this property was divided into a series of buildable parcels as far back as the 1880s. He stated that the original residents of 145 bought the land back to Kalos Street for their backyard, even though it was already subdivided for construction. He noted that there would be 100 year old houses on the site if the original owners, the Holts, had not purchased the extra property as a yard for their house. He stated that it is not his intention with the nomination to prevent the construction of additional structures on the site, provided they meet the zoning requirements. He stated that he is trying to prevent the unnecessary demolition of the historic house. Mr. Allegretti explained that he nominated the second half of the twin, 147 Sumac, but then withdrew the nomination at the request of the owners, who are in the audience. He asserted that the owners of 147 cannot afford to maintain a house that is designated as historic. He stated that the burden of historic designation on homeowners is a concern. He then reported that the Commission’s staff had informed him that it may be difficult to defend the designation on architectural grounds of one half of a twin without the other.

Attorney Leonard Reuter stated that he represents the equitable owner of 145 Sumac Street. He noted that the current owner of the property, John Messing, and the owners of 147 Sumac are also in attendance at the meeting. He stated that the current and equitable owners of the 145 Sumac are opposed to a designation of the property. Mr. Reuter stated that his client has attempted to secure the services of an expert to evaluate the nomination, but has not yet placed one under contract. Mr. Reuter therefore asked the Committee to recommend to the Commission that it table the nomination and remand it back to the Committee on Historic Designation for a review on the merits once the equitable owner has had a chance to obtain the

advice of an expert. Mr. Reuter reminded the Committee that the owner has applied for a demolition permit. He stated that the equitable owner has already made a substantial investment in the property. Mr. Reuter listed a series of alterations to and problems with the property. The roofing material is not original. The windows have been replaced. The porch railing is not original and the porch is in poor condition. The porch is in danger of collapse. The front doors may not be original. Mr. Reuter noted that the nomination includes a discussion of the interior of the building, which is irrelevant and perhaps prejudicial. Mr. Reuter reported that the property has been on the market since mid 2013. There is currently an agreement of sale. Mr. Cohen asked if referring to the buyer as the equitable owner implies that the agreement of sale is executed. Mr. Reuter responded that the agreement of sale is not yet executed. Mr. Reuter noted that the house was open to inspection by prospective buyers, but asserted that permission was not given by the current or equitable owner to photograph the interior for the purposes of a nomination. He contended that information about the interior of the house was "gathered in an unauthorized fashion." He added that the nomination should not include information about alleged windows that are allegedly stored in the basement. He stated that the building is Queen Anne or Eastlake in style. He asserted that there are many similar buildings in Powelton Village and Chestnut Hill. He claimed that it is not an important example of the style. He claimed that the building at 147 is in better condition than the one at 145. Mr. Reuter then asserted that 145 and 147 together form one structure. He questioned whether it would be prudent for the Commission to designate half of a structure when there is no reason that the other half should not also be designated. He noted that a nomination has been resubmitted for the property at 147 and will appear on the Committee on Historic Designation's next agenda. He contended that the Committee and Commission should consider the nominations for the two halves of the structure simultaneously. He asked the Committee to recommend that the Commission table this nomination for consideration at the upcoming Committee meeting, when the nomination for 147 will be considered. He noted that 147 has also been altered. He asserted that it would be "problematic" for the Commission to consider this nomination "piecemeal," without a nomination for 147 Sumac. He noted that the owners of 147 are strongly opposed to a designation of either side of the twin.

Mr. Allegretti explained that he nominated 145 Sumac first and then, at the staff's suggestion, submitted a nomination for 147. He later withdrew the nomination for 147 because the owners were opposed to a designation. He explained that he resubmitted the nomination for 147 after learning that failing to nominate it might have adverse implications for the 145 nomination. However, by the time he resubmitted the nomination for 147, the 30-day notice window had closed and the review of the nomination for 147 shifted to the June 2015 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation. Regarding the photographs and description of the interior of 145 included in the nomination, he stated that he would be happy to withdraw that portion of the nomination. He stated that, in his professional career, he has redeveloped more than \$2 billion in residential real estate including historic restoration projects and can say as an expert that the condition of 145 is not such that it cannot be restored. He stated that the building at 145 can be feasibly rehabilitated and stated that he would make a full-price offer for the property today. He stated that it was ironic that Mr. Reuter had argued that the full significance of the building cannot be understood by considering the half at 145 alone, when his client wants to demolish one half of the building. He pointed to a photograph of both halves of the twin and asked the Committee members to imagine what it would look like with one half demolished. Mr. Reuter responded, stated that his clients are not conceding the merits of the nomination. He reminded the Committee that designation is discretionary; the Commission need not designate, even if it finds that the property satisfies one or more Criteria of Designation. Mr. Reuter claimed that James Holt, a longtime owner of 145, was not significant, but was just "a rich guy." Having been owned by "some rich guy" does not make a property historically significant. Mr. Cohen

countered Mr. Reuter's contention, stating that the nomination does not make the case that the house should be designated owing to Holt's significance. Mr. Cohen reviewed the Criteria for Designation cited in the nomination and noted that none relate to Holt. Mr. Cohen also noted that the Committee will disregard any information about the interior in the nomination because the interior is not nominated for designation. The information about the interior is not prejudicial, Mr. Cohen asserted; it can be "read away." Mr. Cohen stated that he does not find the claims about the condition relevant. He stated that this Committee's task is to evaluate the historic significance of the property. Mr. Reuter stated that the Commission is never compelled to designate a property; once the Commission finds that a property satisfies the Criteria for Designation, it must then consider the public benefit of designating. Mr. Reuter stated that the designation of the property would create an immediate burden on the current and future owner. The Commission must balance the private and public interests. Ms. Klein stated that the Committee has an obligation to recommend for designation if it finds that the property satisfies one or more of the Criteria. The Commission, not the Committee, considers financial and other claims made by the property owner; the Committee sole purview is the technical merits of the nomination.

Mr. Dilworth asked Mr. Reuter to confirm that he was claiming that any historical significance associated with this property is bound up in the complete structure and cannot be associated solely with one half or the other. Mr. Reuter agreed with Mr. Dilworth's characterization. Mr. Reuter stated that the Committee should recommend tabling to allow for both halves to be considered at once and to allow his client time to hire an expert. Mr. Dilworth suggested, setting aside the issue of tabling, that the property might satisfy Criterion 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." He noted that the halves of the twin are parts of a larger whole. Mr. Reuter disagreed, and asserted that Criterion G is intended, for example, for the buildings ringing Rittenhouse Square or another public space. Mr. Reuter asserted that the Commission should not designate one half of a twin and suggested that the Commission may not have the legal authority to only designate one half. He noted that there is a party wall between the two halves, but it does not extend to the top of the buildings. He contended that the properties may not be easily separable and therefore should not be considered for designation separately. He claimed that the Commission would not consider designating one half if the other half was already demolished.

Mr. Cohen asked if the building could be legally demolished during the period in which the nomination was tabled. Mr. Farnham responded that 145 Sumac could be legally demolished even if the Commission designates the building because the property owner applied for a complete demolition permit before the Commission issued its notice letter initiating its jurisdiction over the property. Mr. Farnham observed that the Commission authority to review any new permit applications would continue through the tabling period, but the Commission has no means of garnering jurisdiction over the demolition permit for which application has already been made. Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Farnham how the Committee should think about this nomination in light of the fact that an application has been submitted for a demolition permit. Mr. Farnham responded that the Committee should consider this nomination as it considers any nomination; it should determine whether the nomination cogently makes the case that this property satisfies one or more of the Criteria for Designation. He noted that the Commission may designate this property with the outstanding demolition application. He concluded that the demolition may or may not occur, but is completely outside the Commission's control. If the Commission designates and then the building is demolished, the Commission can rescind its designation. Mr. Cohen stated that he would rather review nominations for both properties simultaneously, but does not want to leave 145 Sumac vulnerable. Mr. Farnham responded that

tabling the nomination would not in any way change the Commission's capacity to review the current demolition permit application or subsequent permit applications; the Commission cannot review the current application, but can review subsequent applications regardless of whether the nomination is tabled.

Joseph Menkevich asked whether the Commission could designate a property under a Criterion that was not specified on the nomination form. Mr. Dilworth responded that the Commission can add Criteria not initially specified on the form. Mr. Menkevich reported that the builder was John Gilton, who has some "notoriety." Mr. Manton interjected that he would like to make three points. Mr. Dilworth advised the audience that the review must proceed in an orderly fashion. He called on a woman in the back of the room, who had asked to speak before Mr. Manton called out.

James Zameska and Deborah Gribben-Zameska, the owners of 147 Sumac Street, introduced themselves. Ms. Zameska stated that she has lived in the house for 50 years and has no plan to move. She claimed that she and her husband would not be able to restore the house if it is deemed historic. She noted that her husband is retired and she works two jobs. She claimed that a designation would be "a burden and a hardship." Mr. Schaaf informed her that she would not be required to undertake any work if the house was designated. He told her that the house can continue in its current condition forever. The Commission does not require owners to undertake work to their properties, but only reviews applications for work proposed by owners. Ms. Zameska stated that the house has been significantly altered from its original condition. For example, it no longer has the original slate roof. Mr. Schaaf responded that the Commission would not require her to install a slate roof. She stated that the windows are not original. Mr. Schaaf responded that she can retain the existing non-historic windows for as long as she wants. She again stated that she did not want her house designated as historic. Mr. Schaaf stated that he was seeking to reassure her that the Commission would not compel her to restore her house, but would only conduct reviews when she proposed work to the house. Mr. Reuter stated that designation can have an immediate impact on the value of a property. He postulated that, in this case, it would lower the value of the property. He stated that the parcels on Kalos Street, at the rears of the properties on Sumac Street, cannot be feasibly redeveloped without using the Sumac Street properties, owing to the slope at Kalos. He claimed that the equitable owners attempted to create a design for the new development that would allow for the retention of the Sumac building, but were unsuccessful in devising such a plan. He stated that it is economically infeasible to develop the rear parcels without using the Sumac parcels. He added that the fact that the rear lots cannot be developed without impacting the front lots is "unfortunate."

Mr. Reuter introduced John Messing, the owner of 145 Sumac Street. Mr. Messing stated that he is 75 years old and has owned the property for 16 years. He said that "the house is deteriorated and is going to fall down." He added that the rear is salmon brick and is deteriorating; the rear needs to be stuccoed. He asked who would pay him to do the work to the house. He stated that he replaced 22 windows because the original windows were deteriorated. He stated that he has worked on houses all of his life and, in his opinion, "this house needs to be removed; it is nasty." He claimed that his house was about to fall down and would pull the twin house at 147 down with it. He concluded that he does not have the money to fix it.

Mr. Dilworth asked the audience how many more people would like to comment. A few people noted their desire to speak. Mr. Manton began to speak, but Mr. Dilworth informed him that he had called on someone who had not yet had sufficient time to speak. Mr. Dilworth invited Mr. Allegretti to speak. Mr. Allegretti stated that the claims that the house at 145 Sumac is not viable are "patently false." He stated that he has evaluated this property and determined that it is

possible to build new houses by right while saving the historic house. He stated that he had determined that it is economically viable to develop the Kalos Street lots with the historic house. He reiterated that he is an expert in real estate development. He noted that the attorney represents the equitable owners of the property, but the current owner acquired the property at a nominal cost. When evaluated against the current owner's investment in the property, the property can certainly be redeveloped in a financially feasible manner. He observed that the current owner claims hardship, but stands to make considerable money from any redevelopment. In response to Mr. Allegetti's comments, Mr. Messing exclaimed that he "took care of them people for 30 years," but did not identify the people about whom he spoke. Mr. Manton interjected that Philadelphia is a city of neighborhoods and this property is located in the neighborhood of Roxborough. He claimed that this building and style are "rare" in Roxborough. Mr. Manton added that the doors on the building are original. Mr. Dilworth asked Mr. Manton clarify his comments. Mr. Manton stated that the doors behind the storm doors are original. Mr. Messing reported that the rear door is not original. Mr. Manton stated that demolishing half the twin would leave a party wall that would not be stable or weatherproof. Messrs. Dilworth and Reuter dismissed Mr. Manton's comments, noting that the exposed party wall would need to be treated in a manner that was compliant with the building code. Mr. Menkevich interjected that "a rich guy" might want to buy the house if it is designated as historic. He claimed that this is a "two-edged sword." Mr. Manton agreed and noted the recent gentrification of Manayunk and Roxborough. Mr. Reuter agreed that designation can increase the value of properties. Mr. Menkevich countered that "people knock houses down" because the properties are worth more without structures on them. Realtor Steve D'Agostino stated that repairing a historically designated building would inherently induce a hardship on the property owner because the repair would cost more than a repair to a building not designated as historic. Mr. Dilworth disagreed, noting that the assertion was not informed by an accepted definition of the term "hardship." Mr. Reuter responded that his client was not making a hardship claim. Mr. Dilworth contended that designation does not inherently induce a hardship. Mr. D'Agostino claimed that the costs are always greater to repair a property that is designated than one that is not. Mr. Farnham disagreed and stated that, generally, the costs are comparable. Mr. Schaaf added that the Commission provides valuable consulting services to property owners without cost. Mr. Cohen noted that the Commission is primarily concerned with views from the public right-of-way; it has lower standards of review for alterations at the sides and rears of properties.

Mr. Dilworth asked the Committee members if they wanted to discuss the proposed Criteria for Designation. Mr. Farnham suggested instead that the Committee first decide whether it wanted to support Mr. Reuter's request to table the nomination until he has a chance to retain an expert to evaluate it. He stated that, although he disagrees with most of the claims made by Mr. Reuter today, he does find that one persuasive. Mr. Farnham opined that, to avoid potential trouble on appeal, Mr. Reuter's client should be given time to obtain expert advice on the merits of the nomination. Mr. Farnham explained that the Commission would not cede any jurisdiction during the tabling period. It does not now and would not later gain jurisdiction over the current demolition permit application for 145 Sumac, but, by tabling, it would not lose any jurisdiction and would retain jurisdiction over any subsequent permit applications. He advised the Committee to recommend that the Commission table the nomination and refer it back to the Committee on Historic Designation at the Committee's next meeting, which is scheduled for early June. Ms. Klein and Mr. Lavery agreed that it would be advantageous to review the nominations for 145 and 147 Sumac at the same time. Mr. Menkevich asked the Committee to explain what type of expert the equitable property owner would hire. Mr. Manton interjected that such an expert might be biased. Messrs. Lavery and Farnham responded that such an expert would, of course, be biased toward his or her client. Mr. Menkevich offered himself as an expert for hire, but acknowledged that he has never been retained by anyone in such a capacity. The

Committee members observed that Mr. Menkevich's solicitation was inappropriate in the context. Ms. Gribben-Zameska stated that she has not yet been notified of the June meeting.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission table the nomination for 145 Sumac Street and refer the nomination back to the Committee on Historic Designation for review at a subsequent Committee meeting, at which time the nominations for 145 and 147 Sumac Street can be reviewed together.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dilworth moved to adjourn at 11:21 a.m. Mr. Schaaf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.