

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

**WEDNESDAY, 21 JUNE 2023
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

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

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.	X		
Bruce Lavery		X*	*arrived 10:18 a.m., left 11:55 a.m.
Debbie Miller		X	
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.		X	

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

The following staff members were present:

Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner III
Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner II
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner I
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner I
Daniel Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner I

The following persons attended the online meeting:

Renee McKenzie
Stephanie Boggs Magagna, Esq., Klehr Harrison
Don Ringgold
Jay Farrell
Dennis Carlisle
Mike Bergen
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Rob Lewis
Jake Kaplan
Mark Flood
David Traub, Save Our Sites
Deborah Gary, Society to Preserve Philadelphia African American Assets
Alex Balloon

George Thomas, Ph.D., CivicVisions
Ed Gore
Carolyn Klepser
Yaroslav Kovaliv
Tacony CDC
Adam E. Laver, Esq., Blank Rome LLP
Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
Carrie Nase-Poust
Allison Weiss, SoLo Germantown Civic Association
Nancy Pontone
Steven Peitzman
Derrec Mongan
Kevin McMahon
Amy Lambert, University City Historical Society
Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society
William Berry

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 1122 E BERKS ST

Proposal: Rescind designation

Property Owner: Barbara Holland

Applicant: Barbara Holland

History: 1845

Individual Designation: 2/28/1967

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Laura DiPasquale, laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This owner-initiated application proposes to rescind the designation of the property at 1122 E. Berks Street, removing it from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The application argues that the property has no historical significance. The property at 1122 E. Berks Street was designated as historic and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places on 28 February 1967. At that time, the Historical Commission designated it as one of 48 properties identified as part of the City's "Model Cities Area," a federal program in which funding was given to cities to develop programs to alleviate poverty. The Philadelphia Planning Commission received money from the federal government to study the area between Spring Garden Street and Lehigh Avenue between the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers, and the Planning Commission in turn provided some of that money to the Historical Commission to survey the area for historic resources. Many designations came out of the survey work, which was conducted from 1967 to 1970.

The owner of the property at the time of designation, Walter Levin, acknowledged in a series of letters in March and April 1971 that he had received notice of the property's designation in 1967. In this correspondence, Mrs. Charles J. Maurer of the Historical Commission staff comments that the property and its neighbors are "most interesting, if only because so few frame houses still exist." Mr. Levin sold the property to the current owner, Barbara Holland and her husband Thomas, in 1971.

In 2021, the Historical Commission's staff misidentified the history of the property at 1122 E. Berks Street and conveyed to Ms. Holland that the property had been constructed by Thomas

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Dyott of the Dyottville Glass Works, which was incorrect. The brick properties on the opposite (east) side of the 1100 block of Berks Street were constructed by Thomas Dyott. The property at 1122 E. Berks Street was constructed in 1845 by Charles Cornwell, who purchased the undeveloped property that year from Peter Keyser with the stipulation that a building of “sufficient value to secure the said yearly rent” be constructed within one year. Charles Cornwell, a carpenter, is listed in City Directories as living at “Vienna [now Berks] below Franklin [now Girard]” beginning in the 1845 City Directory. The staff apologizes for this misunderstanding and any confusion it has caused.

The Historical Commission’s 1967 records do not assert an association with Dyottville, but do identify the property as one of 48 designated as part of the Model Cities Area survey efforts. Similar 2.5-story frame and brick buildings, as well as a handful of institutional buildings, in Northern Liberties and Fishtown were designated at that time, along with a few high-style buildings in Spring Garden.

Section 5.14.b of the Historical Commission’s Rules and Regulations governs rescission requests. It reads: “The Commission may rescind the designation of a building, structure, site, object, public interior portion of a building or structure, or district and remove its entry or entries from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places if:

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

The designation of 1122 E. Berks Street pre-dates the current preservation ordinance and Rules and Regulations, which outline specific Criteria for Designation; therefore, no specific criteria were or could be cited in the designation. The property at 1122 E. Berks Street is largely unchanged physically since the time of designation, and therefore has not lost the qualities that made it eligible for designation in 1967.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission decline to rescind the designation of 1122 E. Berks Street.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:08:30

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. DiPasquale presented the rescission request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. DiPasquale explained that she had spoken with the property owner by telephone, who indicated that she would be withdrawing the rescission request. However, the Historical Commission has not received that request in writing.
- Ms. Cooperman questioned the appropriate procedure if the owner has not confirmed the withdrawal in writing. She asked whether continuing the matter to the next meeting to allow time to confirm with the property owner in writing would be the

best course of action or if the Committee should proceed with the review of the application.

- o Mr. Farnham responded that the staff believes that the owner withdrew the application verbally, but unfortunately did not receive that request in writing. He explained that the Committee has three options: first, to acknowledge the withdrawal, with the understanding that the owner always has the option to resubmit; second, to review the application and make recommendation on merits, and the staff could attempt to confirm the withdrawal in writing ahead of the Historical Commission meeting; or third, to continue the matter to the next Committee on Historic Designation meeting and allow the staff to again attempt to confirm withdrawal in writing.
- o Ms. DiPasquale explained that the owner had stated that she is not comfortable participating in Zoom meetings, so the staff had offered to host her in the Historical Commission's office for the meetings, but she declined that offer. Ms. DiPasquale reiterated that it is her understanding that the owner wishes to withdraw the request at this time, without prejudice for future submission.
- o Mr. Farnham opined that the Committee would be on solid ground to acknowledge withdrawal, as there is no time pressure to make a decision since the applicant is the owner and occupant of the property.
- Ms. Barucco asked how quickly the request could be picked up if the owner decides to move forward.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that she could do so fairly quickly, given that this is a request from property owner, who could waive the typical 30-day notice requirement.
 - o Ms. Barucco noted that she is tempted to recommend continuing the application until a written withdrawal is received.
 - o Mr. Cohen noted that he is tempted to talk about the merits of the request but stated that it is probably better to continue and try to confirm the withdrawal in writing.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The staff believes that the owner verbally withdrew the rescission request but has not received that withdrawal in writing.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- It is appropriate to continue the review to allow the staff time to confirm in writing the owner's request to withdraw the application.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the rescission request for 1122 E. Berks Street to the July 2023 Committee on Historic Designation meeting.

ITEM: 1122 E. Berks St MOTION: Continue to July CHD mtg MOVED BY: Cooperman SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

ADDRESS: 3836 MOUNT VERNON ST

Name of Resource: Solomon Burke House

Proposed Action: Designate

Property Owner: Melanie D. Dukes

Nominator: Historical Commission staff

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3836 Mount Vernon Street in the Mantua section of West Philadelphia, known as the Solomon Burke House, as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination argues that, satisfying Criterion A, the property is “associated with the life of a person significant in the past,” Solomon Burke, one of the founders and greatest voices of soul music in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In fact, Burke, who was born in the small rowhouse that doubled as a church, may have even coined the name “soul music” as the musical genre emerged from gospel and R&B in the late 1950s. Satisfying Criterion J, the childhood home of Solomon Burke, “The Wonder Boy Preacher,” and his mother and grandmother Josephine and Eleanor Moore, who were religious leaders, “exemplifies the cultural and social heritage of the community.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3836 Mount Vernon Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:16:15

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- No one represented the property owner. Mr. Farnham noted that the Historical Commission sent requisite notice letters, but the owner had not contacted the Historical Commission in response.

DISCUSSION:

- The members of the Committee on Historic Designation discussed the fact that the front façade of the building had been reconstructed after Solomon Burke occupied the house. They agreed that, although the façade was rebuilt, it generally maintains its original appearance and continues to represent Solomon Burke.

- Mr. Cohen stated that the nomination was well written and tells a story in its full richness.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Amy Lambert of the University City Historical Society supported the nomination.
- Mike Bergen offered some comments about the appearance of the building related to floor levels and the cornice.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Solomon Burke was born in and lived in the house at 3836 Mount Vernon Street with his mother and grandmother.
- Solomon Burke is an extremely important figure in the history of American popular music and one of the founders of the soul music genre.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Satisfying Criterion A, the property is “associated with the life of a person significant in the past,” Solomon Burke, one of the founders and greatest voices of soul music in the late 1950s and early 1960s.
- Satisfying Criterion J, the childhood home of Solomon Burke and his mother and grandmother Josephine and Eleanor Moore “exemplifies the cultural and social heritage of the community.”

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3836 Mount Vernon Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

ITEM: 3836 Mount Vernon St MOTION: Designate; Criteria A and J MOVED BY: Cohen SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

ADDRESS: 150 BETHLEHEM PIKE

Name of Resource: Inglewood Cottage

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Massimo Cristofanilli

Nominator: Massimo Cristofanilli

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 150 Bethlehem Pike as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the house, constructed by 1850, satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D and E as a significant example of Gothic Revival architecture and as a work of notable architect Thomas Ustick Walter.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 150 Bethlehem Pike satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and E.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:28:50

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Property owner Massimo Cristofanilli initiated the nomination but was unable to attend the meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman opened the discussion by remarking that 150 Bethlehem Pike is a remarkable building and further wondering whether Cephas Childs was an influential enough person that the property might also qualify for designation under Criterion A.
 - o Mr. Cohen concurred that Childs is an interesting figure and that there is possibly more to be learned about him and his impact on Chestnut Hill from research.
 - o Ms. Cooperman noted that this is especially true of the relationship between Child's work with the railroad and as a possible speculative developer.
- Addressing the style of the building, Mr. Cohen remarked that it shows architect T. U. Walter "learning new tricks"; typically he was known for rectilinear forms but this design is more fun.
- Ms. Barucco expressed gratitude to the homeowner for initiating the nomination.
- Mr. Cohen and Ms. Cooperman noted that the National Historic District nomination materials should be cited more fully, with credit given to author Jefferson Moak.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Steven Peitzman supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building at 150 Bethlehem Pike is a worthy example of the Gothic Revival style.
- The property's proximity to the Chestnut Hill extension of the Reading Railroad is significant given it was built during the time of railroad expansion.
- Cephas Childs is an important historical figure as an engraver and as a developer in the neighborhood of Chestnut Hill, and his life and work are worthy of further research.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination satisfies Criteria C and D for designation, embodying distinguishing characteristics of the Gothic architectural style in the suburban setting of Chestnut Hill.
- The nomination further satisfies Criterion E as the work of Thomas Ustick Walter, an architect of national significance for his work on buildings such as the United States Capitol and his stature within the profession of architecture as an early leader of the American Institute of Architects.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 150 Bethlehem Pike satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and E.

ITEM: 150 Bethlehem Pike					
MOTION: Designate; C, D, E					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

ADDRESS: 764-72 S BROAD ST

Name of Resource: Prettyman Hall/Circle Mission Church, Home, and Training School

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Circle Mission Church, Home, and Training School

Nominator: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 764-72 S. Broad Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the connected structures, built in several stages between 1896 and 1904, satisfy Criteria for Designation A and J due to their associations with Charles B. Prettyman, developer and hotelier, and Father Divine and the Peace Mission Movement. Prettyman had a significant impact on the built environment of Philadelphia and was especially impactful in providing housing for a growing city. Father Divine and his followers also met the needs of Philadelphians, providing food and shelter as well as producing affordable goods and creating employment opportunities. Perhaps the biggest impact of Father Divine was in Civil Rights, where the Peace Mission's hotels led the way as sites of racial desegregation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 764-72 S. Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:40:00

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PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Hanna Stark of the Preservation Alliance and nomination author Mark Flood represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman clarified that “house” and “home” are not interchangeable: a “house” is a building type, a “home” is a psychological concept. There are a few instances in the nomination which should be “rowhouse” rather than “rowhome.”
- Ms. Barucco expressed curiosity about the use of “arcade” to describe the first floor. Other committee members confirmed that “arcade” primarily refers to something open to the air.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that although there are good primary sources used for the nomination, she would have liked to see more secondary material about Father Divine, especially from other nominations to the local and federal registers.
- Mr. Cohen agreed with Mr. Peitzman’s public comment about the architecture of these buildings being of note. He wondered about architects associated with Prettyman, noting that he had found one reference to William Free working with Prettyman on some houses in Lansdowne.
 - o The nominator, Mr. Flood, answered that though he had also found the instance of Prettyman working with Free, he had not found any other architects listed in connection with his other developments.
- Mr. Lavery noted his appreciation of the map of Prettyman developments in South Philadelphia; this analysis contributes to our understanding of the work of developers and the building trade of the nineteenth century.
- Mr. Lavery thanked the Peace Mission for its stewardship and preservation of so many gorgeous buildings in Philadelphia.
- Ms. Cooperman returned to earlier comments about whether Criteria for Designation C or D should be added to the nomination.
- Mr. Cohen suggested that Criterion D often is predicated on a single style, whereas the subject property is quite eclectic, but C is relevant.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed, stating that the buildings represent “the freer more eclectic styles of the late nineteenth century in terms of combining historicist elements in a free, novel and spirited composition.”
- Mr. Cohen wondered if there is more primary source evidence to find, but acknowledged that it is possible that Prettyman had a contractor and so did not need to post in the Builder’s Guide to solicit bids.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman supported the nomination.
- Deborah Gary of Society to Preserve African American Assets supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- That the Peace Mission Movement and Father Divine had significant economic and social impact on the City of Philadelphia and have been good stewards of many beautiful historic buildings over the decades.
- Charles Prettyman was a real estate developer and notable for having a sense of architectural style despite a sparse primary source record showing connection to working architects.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination satisfies Criterion A and J by demonstrating that the subject buildings' association with Charles Prettyman and later Father Divine and the Peace Mission Movement had significant impact on the City of Philadelphia and various communities within it.
- That while the nomination did not identify Criterion C, the subject property does "reflect the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style" owing to the mix of striking architectural styles employed, which tie the buildings together visually.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 764-72 South Broad Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J and that, owing to architectural significance, the property also satisfies Criterion C.

ITEM: 764-72 S Broad St MOTION: Designate; A, C, and J MOVED BY: Cohen SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery	X				
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 814-22 N 41ST ST

Name of Resource: Calvary St. Augustine Episcopal Church

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: The Rector, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of Calvary Church, NL

Nominator: Don Ringgold, with Heather Hendrickson (PHC staff)

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 814-22 N. 41st Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the church complex satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues the church property is significant owing to its association with both Rev. William White, first bishop of Pennsylvania, and Rev. Canon Thomas Wilson Stearly Logan, Sr., first African American clergyman to be called as rector to a white congregation as well as famed civil rights

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pioneer and community advocate. Under Criterion B and J, the nomination contends the church property at 814-22 N. 41st Street is closely associated with the impacts of the Great Migration and changing neighborhood dynamics in West Philadelphia during the early decades of the twentieth century.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 814-22 N. 41st Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, and J. The staff, which authored the nomination, requests an amendment to the proposed boundaries so that only the parcel with the historic buildings, being 814 N. 41st Street, is designated as historic.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:05:36

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Don Ringold represented the nomination.
- Renee McKenzie represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Pastor Renee McKenzie voiced her support for the nomination and posed two concerns to the Committee. Pastor McKenzie wondered if the Historical Commission would have such tight control over building modifications in the future that it might affect the Church's ability to grow and accommodate their future ministry. She said this concern was partially reflected in the proposed boundary modification. The other concern was the potential to alter a stained-glass window in the church which memorializes Bishop Henry Onderdonk, a known racist.
 - o Ms. Cooperman acknowledged that these concerns were outside of the purview of the Committee on Historic Designation, but that the Commission is sensitive to the needs of institutions that have a public benefit mission, as well as being sensitive to issues such as those concerning the window memorialization. Ms. Cooperman stated it was her belief that there would be flexibility regarding that issue as the Commission acts in the benefit of the citizens of the City of Philadelphia.
- Ms. Cooperman commented that Bishop White was deceased when the property was built, so there is no meaningful relationship between him and the property.
 - o Mr. Cohen pointed to the fact this church was built as a memorial to Bishop White.
 - o Ms. Cooperman reiterated that he was not alive at the time the church was built so there is no meaningful relationship and compared it to churches that are dedicated to saints. She said it speaks to its history, but not association.
- Mr. Cohen commented on the significance of the architecture, noting that the building is very remarkable. He said he believes the architect to be John M. Gries, architect of the two banks on the 400 block of Chestnut Street. Mr. Cohen indicated that the church was the work of a very sophisticated designer and remarked that by comparing the lithograph in the nomination to the building as it stands today, all elements of the 1850 church seemed to be reflected in the church today except the original larger tower. Mr. Cohen elaborated on the importance and significance of John M. Gries, the architect of three banks in downtown Philadelphia, whose life was cut short as his career was on the rise. He opined that the architectural description in

- the nomination could use some work and another set of eyes. He voiced his support for the nomination.
- Ms. Cooperman noted the fact that the church was moved will complicate the period of significance, especially if being attributed to Gries or as a church that dates to 1851.
 - o Mr. Cohen commented that the fact the design is remarkably intact and the fact that it was moved stone by stone, gave him the sense it was a very careful relocation and therefore marking the period of significance as 1850 when it was initially built, to 1883 when it was rebuilt in West Philadelphia would be an affirmation that they are referencing that design.
 - Ms. Barucco wondered if Criterion C was being considered.
 - o Mr. Cohen suggested that they could consider it, but more research would be needed.
 - o Ms. Cooperman noted that Mr. Cohen offered a lot of information about why Criterion C would be justified, but not Criterion E because the nomination did not include an architect attribution and it could be added to the file, but it was not part of the initial notice. However, she noted that C was discussed in terms of its relationship to the style of the period.
 - Ms. Cooperman asked if there was ever a tower at this location.
 - o Ms. Hendrickson stated she did not think so.
 - Ms. Cooperman said she would be comfortable adding Criterion C, perhaps with more discussion.
 - o Mr. Cohen agreed.
 - Mr. Lavery asked if there was an indication as to why it was moved instead of being built anew. He wondered if moving the stone church was cheaper than starting fresh or if it was moved owing to its association with William White, with the stones being considered sacred.
 - o Mr. Cohen said he did not know the answer, but if someone else was paying for it that could be the reason.
 - Mr. Lavery commented on the church's compact size and said that if it were built anew in West Philadelphia, it probably would have been a more rambling complex.
 - o Mr. Cohen added it would have been a crowded site on Margaretta Street.
 - Ms. Barucco asked to see a view of the proposed revision to the boundary.
 - Mr. Lavery asked about the location of the brick outbuilding with the heavy gable on the map on the screen.
 - o Ms. Hendrickson indicated the location with the cursor.
 - Mr. Lavery wondered if that building was inside the shrunken boundary.
 - o Ms. Barucco noted it did not appear to be entirely within the boundary.
 - o Ms. Cooperman explained it could be the product of georeferencing and the angle and height the photograph was taken.
 - o Ms. Barucco stated she did not think that was the case, that it ended outside of the boundary. She also wondered if there should be a buffer on the north side.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed.
 - o Ms. Barucco noted the same may be needed for the bottom boundary line, so the boundary line was not right against the building.
 - o After the Committee members were able to orient themselves to the site, Ms. Cooperman noted they need to consider some kind of buffer to the north and to the south of Building 3.
 - o Ms. Barucco stated she believed there was a small separate parcel to the south as indicated by the notch in parcel lines. She noted the north side was more

difficult because it was hard to tell where the parcels began and ended based on Figure 2 in the nomination.

- o Mr. Farnham interjected to say it was possible through atlas.phila.gov to see the deeded parcels as opposed to the tax parcels.
- Ms. Cooperman noted that adding the small parcel 057-N05-0152 to the south would create enough of a buffer on that end.
 - o Ms. Cooperman and Ms. Barucco postulated that adding a 20-foot buffer to the north side of the parcel would be sufficient.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub of Save Our Sites supported the nomination.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society supported the nomination.
- Amy Lambert of the University City Historical Society supported the nomination.
- Deborah Gary of the Society to Preserve African American Assets supported the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The architect is most likely John Myers Gries, who designed Christ Church Hospital in West Philadelphia and a collection of banks on Chestnut Street in Center City. If he designed Calvary Church, he would have been 22 years old at the time.
- The amended boundary should include a buffer around the buildings.
- The architecture of the Church is significant and could have been included in the nomination.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, C, and J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 814-22 N. 41st Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, B, C and J and should be listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places with an amended boundary to include only the parcels of land acquired by the church in 1882, which can be found on Page 4, Figure 2 in the nomination, with a 20-foot buffer on the north side.

ITEM: 814-22 N. 41st St MOTION: Designate; Criteria A, B, C and J (C added), boundary change MOVED BY: Cohen SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty	X				
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 724 LOCUST AVE

Name of Resource: Heartsease

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Kosa Properties Inc.

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 724 Locust Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the property with its Gothic Revival style cottage, constructed in 1866, satisfies Criteria for Designation A, I, and J. This quaint cottage was home to Miss Hannah Ann Zell from its construction in 1866 until her death in 1911. Miss Zell was a “Prominent Germantown Woman,” who devoted her life to charity, civic affairs, historic preservation, libraries, and various advocacy and fundraising efforts of all causes, satisfying Criterion for Designation A. As a single woman, she attained a position of prominence in her community and city, despite the challenges faced by female leaders during the nineteenth century. Miss Zell’s remarkable societal contributions had a direct impact on the cultural, political, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, satisfying Criterion for Designation J. The nomination also argues for designation of the property under Criterion I, for its potential to contain intact archaeological resources associated with the 1777 Battle of Germantown, which could include sensitive human remains.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 724 Locust Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, I, and J.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:45:45

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Hendrickson presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society represented the nomination.
- Attorney Stephanie Boggs represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Attorney Stephanie Boggs stated the property owner had no general objections to the designation of the house itself. However, they did take objection to the inclusion of Criterion I, as they believed there was insufficient evidence within the nomination itself to conclude the property was likely to yield historic information simply because of its proximity to the grounds that were part of the Battle of Germantown. For that reason, she requested relief from the Historical Commission on the designation boundaries included in the nomination. She noted a survey would need to be conducted to determine an appropriate historic boundary. She stated they will be seeking a continuance from the Historical Commission hearing to give them time to consider that issue.
- Mr. Cohen commented on the way the house is withdrawn on the lot, making the front landscape part of its modest presentation to the street, with the entrance facing the side of the lot as opposed to the front. He noted how this contrasted with the later rowhouse developments surrounding the property and noted that the house was a reminder of an earlier mid nineteenth-century Germantown. Mr. Cohen also noted the appearance of stucco over wood looked different than stucco over stone as was

- evident by the window appearance. There, he continued, were probably many rustic stucco-over-wood cottages and villas in this phase of building in Germantown.
- Ms. Cooperman addressed Criterion I. She noted that the absence of burial documentation did not mean burials are not there. She explained that human remains and burials from Revolutionary War skirmishes throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey are notoriously undocumented and the fact that there was a discussion of the removal of bodies from an adjacent parcel was very compelling to suggest there could be burials on this parcel.
 - o Ms. Barucco agreed.
 - Ms. Cooperman also highlighted the fact that the Battle of Germantown did not happen in a single site, but skirmishes were fought on the move and the aftermath was not well documented. She stated the fact that there were burials nearby is not evidence that there were not burials on this property. She noted that the only way to be certain would be to conduct a full subsurface test. Therefore, she stated she agreed with the inclusion of Criterion I in this nomination.
 - o Ms. Barucco added that, in her opinion, the documentation in the nomination made Criterion I easy to support and she appreciated that the nominator brought this possibility to light.
 - Mr. Cohen wished to confirm that, if Criterion I was mostly referring to the back of the lot, his previous comments pointed to the importance of the front of the lot as well. He argued it was important to preserve the front part of the lot.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed that, in comparison to the surrounding rowhouse developments, the space around this country house is a character-defining feature.
 - Mr. Laverty added some additional history of Miss. Hannah Ann Zell's younger brother, Thomas Zell, who achieved fame after the Civil War as the second member of the Military Order of the Loyal Legions of the United States. Abraham Lincoln was the first member.
 - Mr. Cohen wished to add to the record that "spinster" was not an insult in the nineteenth century. It referred to a single woman with no other connotation. He also added a correction to the name 'Pearsall Smith.'

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Steven Peitzman commented in support of the nomination.
- Amy Lambert of the University City Historical Society commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- There is sufficient evidence to suggest there could be burials on the parcel of 724 Locust Avenue.
- The land around the Zell house is a character defining feature and representative of development in Germantown during the mid nineteenth century.
- Revolutionary War burials are notoriously undocumented and further complicated by the fact that many skirmishes were fought on the move.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination satisfies Criteria for Designation A, I, and J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 724 Locust Avenue satisfies Criteria for Designation A, I, and J and should be listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

ITEM: 724 Locust Ave MOTION: Designate; Criteria A, I, J MOVED BY: Lavery SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery	X				
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	4				2

ADDRESS: 3414-16, 3418-20, 3422-24 W WESTMORELAND ST

Name of Resource: Dobson Back-to-Back Houses

Review: Designation

Property Owner: Michael A Bergen

Nominator: East Falls Historical Society

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate three stone buildings on W. Westmoreland Street in the East Falls/West Allegheny neighborhood of Philadelphia. The buildings were constructed for textile manufacturer John Dobson in 1890 and 1891. The nomination contends that the properties satisfy Criteria for Designation A and H. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues for significance owing to an association with John Dobson, founder and co-owner of the Dobson Mills, which became the largest woolen textile manufacturing complex in the city. The buildings have a back-to-back plan, which was common in England but not in Philadelphia. Dobson was from England. Under Criterion H, the nomination contends that the buildings “can claim a highly singular appearance” and “they have been where they are since 1890-91, as an established and weighty feature of the neighborhood.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff offers no recommendation. The staff wanted to conduct additional research into claims made in the nomination, especially as it pertained to the “back-to-back house plan” which the property owner adamantly disputes, but time has not allowed for this.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:02:40

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Steven Peitzman of the East Falls Historical Society represented the nomination.
- Michael Bergen, the property owner, attended the meeting and participated in the review.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 21 JUNE 2023

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PHILADELPHIA’S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman asked if the staff would have time to conduct further research into claims made in the nomination if it were to recommend a continuance.
 - o Mr. Farnham responded that the staff certainly could research the claims made in the nomination, especially those related to these being back-to-back houses, but that the Committee should hear from the property owner before making any decisions.
- Mr. Peitzman summarized the historic significance of the properties as outlined in the nomination. He expanded upon the importance of John Dobson and the Dobson Mills. He stated that he selected Criterion H because the buildings have a striking appearance which does not necessarily fit into a specific architectural style. He stated that he initially included Criterion J but deleted it to shorten the nomination. He stated that there is ample evidence that these are back-to-back houses, but that this is not relevant owing to the Criteria having to do with John Dobson and the distinctive structures. He stated that he opposes any additional continuances of the review of the nomination.
- Mr. Bergen summarized his background and experience. He stated that he attended Spring Garden College Institute, spending two years with architects and engineers, followed by a four-year union carpenter apprenticeship, where he graduated number one out of 150 carpenters. He stated that he started his own commercial contracting business that evolved from a building into mechanical equipment firm. He stated that he worked for the City of Philadelphia as a building code inspector and as a plans examiner. He stated that, owing to this experience, he has firsthand knowledge and experience with the implications of historic designation. He stated that the nomination is flawed because these are not back-to-back houses, and when he called the nominator on the telephone to tell him that fact, the nominator hung up on him. He stated that these buildings began as six individual units inside, and that there is one framed opening for one stairway in each unit. He stated that the nomination is flawed and misrepresents the properties. He noted a cluster of the same buildings across the street. He asked why these buildings or other nearby buildings of earlier construction were not nominated. He stated that the designation of his properties would be an imposition. He stated that the historic designation will complicate his life owing to delays, extra administrative costs, processing delays, and extra financial costs. He stated that he vacated the middle building in 2008 owing to the economic situation. He stated that he is sensitive to historic concerns, and that, if the Commission ever needs someone who “actually understands construction, understands the code, understands what they are looking at,” he would be happy to provide this assistance. He stated that he still objects to the designation, and that he would rather have had this discussion in private with the nominator to let him know that the nomination is flawed.
- Ms. Cooperman reminded everyone that a property needs to satisfy only one Criterion for Designation to be considered for designation. She stated that the fact that these buildings are referred to as back-to-back houses in the nomination is a red herring, because what they clearly are is workers’ housing, built by John Dobson, and associated with the Dobson Mills industrial history. She acknowledged that there may be properties across the street which are also worthy of historic designation, for the same reasons, but that does not make these properties insignificant by the fact that there are more out there. She commented that it would be of historical interest for the Committee members as historians to know definitively if these were back-to-

back houses, but it is not an essential point because of the significance to workers' housing associated with the mill industry.

- Mr. Cohen agreed with Ms. Cooperman, and thanked Mr. Bergen for his offer to assist the Commission owing to his construction experience. He stated, however, that the Historical Commission cannot agree to stop the designation of historic buildings simply because someone says that designation requires extra time and expense. He suggested that the stated impediments may not be as bad as perceived. He stated that the Committee must determine if the properties are historically significant and satisfy Criteria for Designation A and H, and potentially Criterion J. He opined that these properties have great significance regardless of the back-to-back house claim, as a critical element of the built landscape of workers' housing.
- Ms. Barucco agreed with Mr. Cohen. She stated that the concept of back-to-back housing is interesting, but not important for the purposes of this designation. She stated that these are a generous form of workers' housing, being free-standing with windows on the sides. She stated that the Dobson connection is irrefutable.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that these buildings are not the conventional Philadelphia row house, but they were built as workers' housing for Dobson Mills. She stated that it recalls efforts that the Disstons were making in Tacony to introduce light and air to workers' housing. She stated that the variety of workers' housing represented in Philadelphia is a crucial part of the Philadelphia story, and that these buildings are a chapter in that story, which speak to the owners, developers, and lives of the residents of these buildings in the past.
- Mr. Cohen commented that there is the factual question of how these buildings were subdivided for occupation in their initial form, suggesting that it is possible these were intended to be flexible in their interior configurations. He noted that there are scars of separate entrances on the facades.
 - o Mr. Farnham explained that these buildings were constructed as three pairs of twins, and each twin had its own entrance door, from which the scars are still visible on at least two of the buildings. He explained that the buildings were converted to apartments around 1935, at which time they combined two doorways into one doorway for entrances to the apartment buildings. He noted that this is shown on the 1916 Sanborn atlas, which also shows a party wall perpendicular to the street running down the middle of each one of the twins. He concluded that these buildings were constructed as traditional twin dwellings. He agreed with Mr. Bergen that there are nearly identical buildings across the street which are rows, not twins, but which maintain their original doorways and provide a good sense of what the subject buildings looked like prior to being converted to apartment buildings in the 1930s. He noted that the only evidence he found in his research regarding the back-to-back house claim was the 1910 census, which treats these properties as twins and lists the residents of each one of the six dwellings by referring to households living in the front and rear. He suggested that this is the derivation of the nominator's notion of the back-to-back house. He explained that the staff did not have enough time to do additional research.
- Ms. Barucco opined that the rear doors look like front doors. She noted that the rear doorways are highly decorated for being at the rear. She suggested that more research be done. She noted that window openings at the rear have been infilled.
- Mr. Cohen suggested that evidence of staircases on the interior would provide information about the original configuration of the buildings. He stated that the bottom line is that this is a proposal to designate workers' housing as historic, and

that these buildings are fantastic examples of Dobson Mills workers' housing. He asked that any additional research which is found be added to the nomination.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- David Traub, representing Save Our Sites, commented in support of the nomination. He stated that the buildings are important for their grand, monumental appearances.
 - o Mr. Farnham reminded the audience that these buildings were constructed as traditional twin houses. The large central doorways are not original but were added after the proposed period of significance. The current appearance is deceptive.
- Oscar Beisert, representing the Keeping Society, commented in support of the nomination.
- Derrec Mongan, a Mount Airy resident, commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The buildings were constructed for textile manufacturer John Dobson in 1890 and 1891.
- The nomination assigns the name of "Dobson Back-to-Back Houses" as the historic name of the resources and claims that the buildings were constructed as back-to-back houses but does not assign a Criterion for Designation to this claim.
- The property owner claims that the nomination is factually incorrect owing to the claims made about the back-to-back house configuration, and therefore the nomination should be rejected.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The properties are significant owing to an association with John Dobson, founder and co-owner of the Dobson Mills, which became the largest woolen textile manufacturing complex in the city, satisfying Criterion A.
- The properties represent an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood owing to their singular physical characteristics, satisfying Criterion H.
- The nomination makes a compelling yet not explicit argument for significance under Criterion J, as workers' housing for the textile mill community.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the properties at 3414-16, 3418-20, and 3422-24 W. Westmoreland Street satisfy Criteria for Designation A, H, and J.

ITEM: 3414-16, 3418-20, 3422-24 W WESTMORELAND ST MOTION: Designate; Criteria A, H, J MOVED BY: Cohen SECONDED BY: Barucco					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

DISSTON-TACONY INDUSTRIAL WATERFRONT HISTORIC DISTRICT

Proposed Action: Remand

Property Owner: Various

Nominator: Tacony Community Development Corporation

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District and list it on the Philadelphia Register. The proposed district would include surviving sections of the Henry Disston & Sons Keystone Saw Works, which operated from 1872 to 1955. The company transformed the saw and tool making industry not only in Philadelphia but throughout the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the historic district represents the Keystone Saw Works, one of the most important industrial complexes in Philadelphia. Under Criterion G, the nomination asserts that the district is a distinctive area which should be preserved as an intact industrial plant. Finally, the nomination argues that the Keystone Saw Works satisfies Criterion J because it exemplifies the cultural, economic, and social heritage of the Tacony community.

The Historical Commission designated the Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District on October 8, 2021. The Commission found that the district satisfied Criteria for Designation A, G, and J. Many of the property owners in the district appealed the designation to the Court of Common Pleas. On July 25, 2022, the Court issued an order rescinding the designation of the district and remanding the matter to the Historical Commission for a new consideration of the nomination. The Committee on Historic Designation's charge today is to consider the nomination anew.

In preparation for this meeting, staff members visited the proposed historic district on February 23, 2023, and viewed all properties in the district from the public right-of-way and the private roadways within the district. The staff then prepared a report summarizing its observations and additional research and providing a recommendation. The recommendation seeks to balance the great historical significance of the Disston manufacturing facility on one hand with the current industrial activities at the site, the conditions of the buildings, inaccessibility of the site, and other factors on the other hand. The staff concluded that it would be infeasible to regulate this district like a typical historic building, owing to the unusual site, conditions, configurations, and uses.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 21 JUNE 2023

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

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The proposed historic district is an active industrial zone with machine shop, truck and automobile repair, automobile recycling and parts, storage, and manufacturing facilities operating out of the many buildings. The district is roughly 41 acres and is bounded by Unruh Avenue and New State Road, other industrial sites, and the Delaware River. The interior of the site is accessed on a series of private roads and is inaccessible to the public. A public recreation trail is being constructed between the district and the Delaware River, but a tall, opaque fence will block views from the trail into the site. Most of the roads are unpaved dirt roads but a few are paved with asphalt. The staff encountered no historic paving and a few remnants of railroad tracks during the site visit. Much of the land in the district is open and used for parking and junkyards. Many of the buildings appeared to be in poor to very poor condition. Some of the buildings are vacant. Most have been modified many times.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Historical Commission amend the Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District as follows.

1. Shift the district from a Geographic district to a Thematic district.
2. Retain Criteria for Designation A and J, but remove Criterion G, which relates to parks, squares, and other open spaces and is not applicable to this district.
3. Include the following resources in the district, all classified as contributing.
 - a. 5101-49 Unruh Ave, Resources 14 and 15
 - b. 5201-21 Unruh Ave, Resources 2A and 2B, gable roof sections only
 - c. 6745-95 New State Rd, Resources 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 22
 - d. 6801 New State Rd #A, Resource 17
 - e. 6801R New State Rd #D, Resource 7
4. Further evaluate the following resources for inclusion in the district based on any new information provided by the property owners and nominator at the public meetings.
 - a. 5235-45 Unruh Ave, Resource 4
 - b. 6801 New State Rd #A, Resources 16 and 21
 - c. 6801R New State Rd #D, Resource 3
5. Exclude the following properties in their entirety from the district.
 - a. 5101R-49 Unruh Ave
 - b. 5200 Unruh Ave, includes Resource 18
 - c. 5223-33 Unruh Ave
 - d. 5247-57 Unruh Ave
 - e. 6800 New State Rd, includes Resource 20
 - f. 6801 New State Rd, includes Resources 19 and 27
 - g. 6801 New State Rd #B, includes Resource 3A
 - h. 6801 New State Rd #C, includes Resource 3B
 - i. 6801R New State Rd #E, includes Resource 24
 - j. 6801R New State Rd #F, includes Resource 25
6. Exclude the following resources from the district, but not other resources at the properties.
 - a. 5201-21 Unruh Ave, Resources 1, 5, and 2C
 - b. 5235-45 Unruh Ave, Resource 6
 - c. 6801 New State Road, #A, Resource 17B
7. Exclude all so-called Infrastructure and Site Feature Resources from the district.
8. Limit the designation to buildings only, with no regulation over excluded resources and open land.
9. Limit regulation to applications for:
 - a. partial and complete demolition of the designated buildings,
 - b. work that removes, replaces, or covers significant character-defining features of

- the designated buildings, and,
- c. restoration work to the designated buildings.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:47:30

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Ashley de Vries of the Tacony Community Development Corporation (CDC) and consultants Alex Balloon and Oscar Beisert represented the nomination. Mr. Beisert authored the nomination.
- Attorneys Adam Laver and Rob Lewis, and consultant George Thomas represented the property owners.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. De Vries introduced Alex Balloon, who had been the director of the Tacony CDC and is now working as consultant for the CDC.
- Mr. Balloon pointed the Committee to the letters of support submitted by members of the public regarding the proposed historic district. He stated that he has read the staff report and nonetheless advocates for the designation of all of the properties included in the nomination.
- Mr. Lewis identified his clients and submitted the report by Dr. Thomas for the record. He stated that they have two objections to the nomination. He stated that the preservation ordinance authorizes the Historical Commission to designate important, distinctive, and exemplary buildings that have sufficient integrity and can convey their significance to the public. He claimed that that is not the case at this site, as Dr. Thomas will show. The site does not meet the regulatory standards. He stated that the buildings at the site have been systematically degraded and demolished for the last 70 years resulting in the loss of more than half of the original Disston site. There is a lack of public access to the site. Many of the buildings are in a state of collapse. Several are under demolition orders. Designating this site in its present condition will certainly cause economic difficulties for the property owners. Jobs will be lost. A designation will ultimately force the abandonment of many of these structures and lead to more deterioration and loss. There is no opportunity for redevelopment of this site. Mr. Lewis stated that, on its face, the nomination was well prepared, or at least voluminous. However, upon close evaluation, the nomination was ill prepared. It was incomplete and wholly misleading. The petition was devoted almost entirely to the history of the Disston company, not to the actual properties at issue. Mr. Lewis stated that, despite available materials, the nomination presented almost no analysis of existing conditions, and wholly ignores the last 60 years of history of these properties. The nomination presented a distorted view of the site. As the staff confirmed, of the 40 buildings nominated, at least 30 do not warrant designation. Mr. Lewis stated that he agrees with the staff's suggestion that there is no basis for a geographic district; at best, it might qualify as a thematic district. He stated that it leads to one conclusion, that the nomination should be dismissed in its entirety, because it is incomplete. It is inaccurate and has no integrity.
- Dr. Thomas stated that the question they are asking the Committee to consider is whether the nomination itself is adequate. He argued that it is not. He stated that the photographs are not adequate to convey the condition of the site. The nomination itself relies on images created 15 to 150 years ago. He stated that the nomination ignores the reality of the site. It ignores the conditions of the structures. It ignores the

environmental problems at the site. It ignores the fact that much of the site is in the floodplain. It ignores unsafe conditions. It ignores the consequences of a designation, which would not be in the public good. He stated that the nomination ignores the fact that two-thirds to three-quarters of the buildings that stood on the site have been lost. There are more parking lots than anything else at the site. The uses of the buildings are primarily automobile recycling. The buildings are extensively polluted. He stated that the staff report is a very good beginning and addresses the reality of this site. Dr. Thomas asserted that the nomination itself is severely inadequate. Of the hundreds of photographs in it, only 34 are recent. The rest of the photographs are well out of date and give you almost no information about the actual site. The historic photographs provide no information about the current state of the site. He stated that the descriptions of the buildings were inadequate. For example, the descriptions of windows for every building simply state "historic and non-historic," to which Dr. Thomas responded "Duh!" He stated that that description provides no real information. He objected to the nomination's claim that many sites included infrastructure and site features but did not document those features. He contended that the infrastructure claims were made to merely extend jurisdiction over open land. He pointed out buildings that have been demolished since the nomination was written and buildings that are the subject of Unsafe violations. Dr. Thomas objected that a 1950 Sanborn map was used to document the current conditions of the site, even though that map is 73 years old. He stated that much newer maps would give a more accurate image of the site. He stated that Dallin and DVRPC aerial photographs show just how the site has changed over the years, but they are not incorporated into the nomination. He added that Google Earth now provides terrific aeriels that are of a high enough resolution that one can actually discern the types of cars in the junkyards. He showed images with buildings slated for demolition and with structural problems and violations for dangerous conditions highlighted in various colors. Dr. Thomas displayed a copy of the staff's color-coded list of buildings it proposed to include and exclude and then reviewed the list. He compared photographs of the current conditions of failing buildings with photographs of them from the nomination and contended that the nomination failed to provide adequate information about the conditions. He showed photographs of abandoned, failing, collapsing, and altered buildings. He discussed the engineer's report on Resource 4, which is Unsafe and failing. He showed photographs of buildings that demonstrate that they have been significantly altered and, in some cases, partially demolished. He asserted that they are fragments of buildings with significant structural and other problems. He showed photographs with all windows infilled and of buildings that have been painted to hide significant issues with masonry. He showed photographs of Resource 16, where pilasters that support trusses are failing. He concluded that the nomination does not document the current conditions. He indicated that some buildings along New State Road that are owned by Disston Precision and have not been used for automobile repair and dismantling may be worthy of designation. He concluded that "the nomination itself is the prime problem. It is sort of looking at the world through Pollyanna, rose-colored glasses and ignoring, you know, what's all around you." He suggested documenting the site rather than designating it.

- Mr. Lewis stated that the nomination should be dismissed in its entirety. The Committee has the job of ensuring that there is integrity and reliability in the Historical Commission's work. The nomination is so fundamentally flawed, inaccurate, incomplete, and misleading that it just needs to be dismissed. He stated that allowing a flawed nomination to be processed results in an unfair shift of the burden to the property owner. It is guilty until proven innocent if a flawed nomination

is allowed to be reviewed. He concluded that the nomination has already caused his clients to spend tens of thousands of dollars, has blocked the sale of at least one property, and has delayed demolition.

- Mr. Laver introduced himself and stated that he represents various entities owned by the Kaplan family. He listed the resources owned by his clients and showed images demonstrating that they are great distances from the public right-of-way. He referenced Historical Commission's materials that indicate that the Commission concentrates its reviews on facades and roofs that are visible from the public right-of-way. The materials indicate that protecting public views of historic properties is the Historical Commission's primary task. He asserted that Kaplan properties cannot be discerned from the public rights-of-way. Resource 7 is approximately 469 feet from the public right-of-way. Resource 17 cannot be seen by the public. The view of resource 16 is partially obscured by the stone wall. Resource 3 is not visible from the public right-of-way; it is located 671 feet from New State Road. Resource 21 is not visible from New State Road. The boiler plant is not visible from the right-of-way. Each of the buildings under consideration has appropriately been described by the staff report as "ephemeral." They were designed for industry, for the task at hand. They were not designed or constructed to last forever. They are constantly being altered for new uses and new equipment. Mr. Laver asserted that the proposed interference in the workings of the active industrial site threatens one of the only viable industrial sites within the city limits. The subject properties do not meet Criteria for Designation. Rather they fail to rise to the level of significance and exemplification to properly meet these Criteria.
- Ms. Cooperman asked if any other property owners or representatives of property owners wished to speak.
 - o No one responded.
- Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Farnham to confirm that the visibility of a resource from the public right-of-way is not addressed in the ordinance or Rules and Regulations.
 - o Mr. Farnham confirmed that that is true. Mr. Laver quoted a section about visibility from the public right-of-way from an informational sheet about the Historical Commission distributed with notice letters.
 - o Ms. Cooperman pointed out, however, that there is questionable public benefit to preserving something that the public cannot perceive. She did note that the public can see onto this site from the river. She recounted a trip on the river on a boat, from which she could see this site. She indicated that the river is a public right-of-way, from which the public can view this site.
 - o Ms. Barucco reported that the City is constructing a public trail along the river.
 - o Ms. Cooperman concluded that the waterfront portion of the site is perhaps visible to the public.
- Ms. Cooperman turned the discussion to the question of integrity. Integrity is a concept that is linked by Federal regulation to the National Register of Historic Places and it is not in the Philadelphia code. She contended that questions of integrity are a reference to that specific regulatory standard, which is not directly relevant to matters that are governed by the Philadelphia code.
 - o Ms. Barucco asserted that the property maintenance code requires property owners to maintain their buildings. She stated that she finds it interesting that people come before this Committee and are very glad to say that their properties have deteriorated to the extent that they require demolition. She opined that that is not an argument in their favor.

- Mr. Cohen highlighted the fact that Dr. Thomas's report demonstrated that the nomination does not provide an accurate view of current conditions. He stated that the Committee needs to take that into account because it cannot save buildings that are not there anymore. He also noted that everyone has acknowledged that the site has significance and that that significance is reflected in some of the buildings. Mr. Cohen objected to throwing out the entire nomination. He stated that he cannot speak to each potential resource individually. He remarked that he has a good deal of faith in the staff to help determine what should and should not be included in the district.
- Ms. Cooperman asked the staff to explain why it needed additional information on the yellow-colored resources.
 - o Mr. Farnham stated that, for example, for Resource 4, the staff wanted additional information on the condition of the building and the outstanding violation. Since issuance of the staff report, the property owner has submitted an engineer's report that documents the condition and indicates that the building should be demolished. Mr. Farnham stated that the staff was unable to examine Resources 16 and 21, owing to the constant truck traffic while at the site. Mr. Farnham stated that the staff was concerned about the condition of Resource 3, which is actually two attached buildings. He stated that the buildings appear to have been patched and repaired over and over and are in poor condition. He stated that the Historical Commission has never tried to regulate a site like this before. He stated that he is concerned about the Commission's ability to effectively regulate a site that is inaccessible, in very poor condition, and routinely altered for changing uses.
 - o Ms. Barucco observed that an Unsafe violation can be abated by repair instead of demolition.
- Ms. Barucco stated that Resource 3 is important, even if it is in poor condition and will be difficult to regulate and reuse.
 - o Ms. Cooperman agreed that Resource 3 is significant. She stated that the Historical Commission should allow reasonable alterations for changing industrial uses of Resource 3 going forward.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that she agrees with the staff with regard to the Site and Infrastructure features. She stated that they should not be included in the regulated features because little survives. She asked about a wall along Unruh Avenue, Resource 18, that might be made of former grindstones. She stated that the Historical Commission should include the resources that the staff identified needing more information in the district.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance noted the role of Disston in Philadelphia's industrial history. He stated, however, that the Preservation Alliance is aware of the need to allow this site to continue to operate as an industrial site and part of the contemporary economy of the city, providing jobs, tax revenue, and livelihoods to the many people who work at the site and to the owners of properties at the site. He noted the designation of the Esslinger Brewery complex at 10th and Callowhill, where a compromise was reached instead of designating the entire site. It too is still an active industrial site and production site. Portions of it that were most important as character-defining features were designated while other portions were excluded. He asserted that such a compromise should be struck in this case as well. He objected to the request to reject the nomination in its entirety and instead embraced the staff

report, which identified appropriate resources for inclusion within the historic district. He stated that the staff report provides the outlines of a very reasonable compromise, which everyone including the Preservation Alliance should support.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- Henry Disston & Sons Keystone Saw Works operated at this site from 1872 to 1955.
- The Keystone Saw Works transformed the saw and tool making industry not only in Philadelphia but throughout the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- The Keystone Saw Works was one of the most important industrial complexes in Philadelphia.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District represents the Keystone Saw Works, one of the most important industrial complexes in Philadelphia, satisfying Criterion A.
- The Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District represents the Keystone Saw Works, which exemplifies the cultural, economic, and social heritage of the Tacony community, satisfying Criterion J.
- The Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District does not satisfy Criterion G because it is not related to a park, square, or other distinctive area.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to adopt the staff recommendation with the following revisions:

- Resources 16 and 21 at 6801 New State Rd #A are included in the district,
- Resource 3 at 6801R New State Rd #D is included in the district, and
- Resource 18 at 5200 Unruh Ave is included in the district.

ITEM: Disston-Tacony Industrial Waterfront Historic District MOTION: Designate per staff recommendation with revisions MOVED BY: Barucco SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery					X
Debbie Miller					X
Elizabeth Milroy					X
Total	3				3

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 04:21:52

ACTION: The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Philadelphia Historical Commission and its advisory Committees are presented in action format. Additional information is available in the video recording for this meeting. The start time for each agenda item in the recording is noted.
- Application materials and staff overviews are available on the Historical Commission's website, www.phila.gov/historical.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

§14-1004. Designation.

(1) Criteria for Designation.

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

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