

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON CERTIFICATION
MINUTES

8 December 1983

Present: Mrs. Klein, Messrs. Baldinger, Levy, Mooney, Myers, and Pinkowski,
Chairman.

Also Present: Dr. Tyler and Miss Siemiontkowski, staff

AGENDA

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The seventeenth meeting of the Committee on Certification occurred at 2:30 P. M. on Thursday, 8 December 1983, in Room 1313, City Hall Annex.

Present: Edward Pinkowski, Chairman of the Committee on Certification and Member, Philadelphia Historical Commission
Janet S. Klein, Vice-Chairman, Philadelphia Historical Commission
David Baldinger, Chief, Area Planning Division, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Herbert W. Levy, A. I. A., Geddes, Brecher, Qualls, Cunningham, architects, and Chairman, Architectural Committee, Philadelphia Historical Commission
James E. Mooney, Director, Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Hyman Myers, Studio Four, architects
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OLD BUSINESS

2428-2438 Poplar Street
1891-1892, John T. Windrim, architect

The six brick houses located at the southeast corner of 25th and Poplar Streets appear as three separate twin houses, erected by the Girard Estate. Each twin stands three stories high with a central ground floor door opening. John T. Windrim, the architect, used three different designs for the twins, each standing on its own architectural merits yet harmonizing with its neighbors. None of the buildings have suffered any major alterations to their overall appearance.

These six houses comprised part of the Girard Estate's vast land holdings which they developed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and retained into the middle of the 20th century, using the rental income for the purposes of the estate. The Estate maintained possession of these particular houses until 1976. It developed a long and mutually profitable relationship with the Windrim family, especially John Torrey Windrim (1866-1934). Windrim began his long career working in his father's architectural office (James H. Windrim). By the 1890s, the elder Windrim had advanced to the post of Director of Public Works in Philadelphia allowing his son to operate the architectural office. These six house represent some of the earliest independent work of John T. Windrim, whose reputation grew rapidly. Two years after receiving the contract for these houses, he refused an offer by the Commissioners for the Erection of the Public Buildings to become the third architect of City Hall, pleading a heavy workload prohibited him from leaving his firm. His later work for Bell Telephone Company, the Philadelphia Electric Company and other commercial firms gave him a well-deserved reputation as a top-ranked architect. The Girard Estate turned to him time and again with the result that many buildings at Girard College and on land presently or formerly owned by the Estate (including 21 S. 12th Street and the Girard Farms development in South Philadelphia) owe their designs to John T. Windrim.

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The Committee originally considered a nomination for these six buildings on 16 December 1982. The members agreed at that time that the buildings contained architectural merit however the submitted form lacked any concrete information relating to the history and significance of the structures. Therefore, they voted to table the nomination pending a resubmitted form containing at least a proper date of construction and an architect's attribution, if possible. The nominee, one of the six owners, researched further into the history of the buildings and discovered the information related above. She rewrote and resubmitted the nomination. Based upon the new information which has emerged, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend certification of the six buildings at 2428-2438 Poplar Street, citing the architectural merits of the buildings and their connection with both the Girard Estate and John T. Windrim.

2131 Delancey Street
ca. 1862, John McCrea, developer

The building at 2131 Delancey Street stands as the end building of a row originally erected during the Civil War. A three story brick structure, it exists as a typical 1860s dwelling erected in Rittenhouse and Spring Garden to house a growing population. Delancey Street contains many buildings of this type erected during the 1850s and 1860s along the 1800, 2000 and 2100 blocks, primarily as speculative housing constructed by the builder/developer.

The Commission certified 2131 Delancey Street as part of the 2100 block of Delancey Street on 6 January 1972, acting upon a request from the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. After receiving an objection from the then owner of the building, the Commission removed the address from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. In August 1983, the present owner requested that the Commission recertify the building. Members of the Committee objected to some of the terminology used in the description and requested that it be corrected. Regardless, the Committee recommended the re-certification of 2131 Delancey Street, citing not only the building's individual architectural merit, but its place within the overall context of Delancey Street.

1921 Green Street: Green Laundramat
1948, no record of architect or developer

The present structure occupying the lot at 1921 Green Street (also known as 601-607 N. 20th Street) stands one story high with stuccoed covered brick walls and a brick cornice. A commercial structure, it replaced an earlier three story brick dwelling in 1948.

On 25 April 1974, the Commission certified the 1900 block of Green Street on the request of the Spring Garden Civic Association. Although no pictures were provided of the corner building, the Commission assumed that all buildings on Green Street were included and added this address to

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the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building's lack of architectural importance and its present appearance as an intrusion in the overall context of the 1900 block of Green Street has prompted the staff to request the Commission to decertify the building and remove it from the Philadelphia Register. The members of the Committee unanimously concurred with the staff's assessment and recommended the decertification of 1921 Green Street, also known as 601-607 N. 20th Street.

Boat House Row

1 East River Drive: Plaisted Hall
1881, Russell Thayer, architect

2 East River Drive: Fairmount Rowing Association
1904, Walter Smedley, architect

3 East River Drive, Quaker City Barge Club (now part of # 2)
1860, no architect of record discovered

4 East River Drive, Pennsylvania Barge Club (presently Schuylkill
Navy Headquarters)
1892, Louis Hickman, architect
2nd story addition, 1912, Clarence E. Schermerhorn, architect

5 East River Drive
Crescent Boat Club
1869-1871, no architect of record
Additions and alterations, 1891, Charles Balderston, architect

6 East River Drive, Bachelors Barge Club
1893-1894, Hazlehurst & Huckel, architects

7 East River Drive, University Barge Club
8 East River Drive, Philadelphia Barge Club (now part of # 7)
1870, no architect of record
Enlarged 1893, no architect of record

9 East River Drive, Malta Boat Club
1873, no architect of record
Additions 1901, G.W. & W.D. Hewitt, architects

10 East River Drive, Vesper Boat Club
1873, no architect of record
Addition and alterations, 1898, Howard Hagar, architect

11 East River Drive, College Boat Club of the University of Pennsylvania
1874-1875, no architect of record
Additions and alterations, 1920, after 1938, 1958, 1969, 1980

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12 East River Drive, West Philadelphia Rowing Club, now the Penn
Athletic Club Rowing Association
1878, no architect of record
Additions, 1968, 1979-1981

13 East River Drive, Undine Barge Club
1882-1883, Furness, Evans & Company, architects

14 East River Drive, Philadelphia Skating Club and Humane Society,
now the Philadelphia Girls' Rowing Club
1860, James C. Sidney, architect

15 East River Drive, Sedgeley Club
1902, Arthur H. Brockie, architect

Boat House Row contains examples of architectural styles prevalent during the late 19th century. However, its appearance has not completely retained its Victorian character. The construction of two new boathouses in the early 20th century and changes and additions to many of the others occurring into the 1980s have substantially altered the overall appearance of Boat House Row. The Row had its beginnings in the 1850s but none of the first generation (before 1860) of boathouses have survived. They consisted primarily of small frame and brick shelters to house the boats. Simple, unpretentious and utilitarian, the City ordered their demolition in the late 1850s after obtaining control of the Lemon Hill Mansion and Estate.

The City Councils allowed the erection of three stone boathouses and the stone Skating Club building in 1860. The three actually constructed occupied the present sites of # 2 & 3, 6, and 14. The two boathouse (# 2 & 3, and 6) exhibited variations on the Gothic Revival style; the Skating Club (#14) used an Italianate. By 1868, three brick houses also existed on the sites of the present # 4 & 5, 7 & 8, and 9 & 10. After the creation of the Fairmount Park Commission in 1867, the Commissioners required the replacement of the brick structures for ornamental stone buildings. By 1873, this had been accomplished and by 1883, the stone houses at # 1, 11, 12, and 13 had appeared, extending the Row eastward towards the Water Works and filling the gap between the Philadelphia Barge Club at # 10 and the Skating Club at # 14. Most of the houses erected in the 1870s and early 1880s exhibited the ornamental Victorian Gothic style associated primarily with the Centennial and considered proper for park buildings. (The University and Philadelphia Barge Clubs used a Second Empire style for their boathouse at # 7 and 8).

Frank Furness' design for the Undine Barge Club at # 13 in 1882 started a movement away from the ornamental Victorian Gothic and into more eclectic and richer styles. In the 1890s and early 1900s, the boat clubs began either replacing their old boathouses or altering them with additions and modifications. The architects hired used a variety of styles including

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modified Eastlake (# 4 and additions to # 10), Shingle (# 7 & 8) and Mediterranean-influenced styles (# 6).

After the turn of the century, two clubs used variations on the Colonial and Georgian Revival styles. The Sedgeley Club hired Arthur H. Brockie to design a house using elements from both the Colonial Revival and Shingle styles. The Fairmount Rowing Association's house designed by Walter Smedley, an excellent example of the Georgian Revival, replaced the earlier stone house at # 2 in 1904.

Tudor and half-timbered styles also became popular with Plaisted Hall (# 1), the Pennsylvania Barge Club (# 4, 1912) and the Malta Barge Club (# 9, 1901) containing sections of their buildings in this style.

No new boathouses have appeared since 1904. Alterations and some additions have accounted for most of the work occurring on these houses throughout the 20th century. Recently, especially during the last decade, the growth of women's rowing has prompted new additions to several boathouses in order to provide suitable and separate locker and shower facilities.

Today, the fifteen boathouses standing along the east bank of the Schuylkill River north of the Fairmount Water Works exhibit the wide variety of styles employed during the second (1860-1870), third (1870-1885) and fourth (1885-1905) generations of boathouse construction. Additions have unfortunately changed the appearance of quite a few. However, the original buildings for the most part can still be discerned under the enlargements.

The significance of Boat House Row rests on many levels. Their physical presence serves as a constant reminder that Philadelphians have used the Schuylkill River for more than just a source of water supply: that the recreational uses, including rowing and skating, have interested the citizens for much of the city's history. The boat and barge clubs and the Skating Club all exist to service these recreational needs of Philadelphians. The boat and barge clubs, and their parent organization, the Schuylkill Navy, have achieved a notable history of their own, spreading Philadelphia's name throughout the world to many events and capturing many trophies to bring back to embellish the several clubhouses. Finally, the architectural variety of the boathouses and the various individuals and firms associated with their designs elevate these structures a notch above the average late 19th and early 20th century utilitarian building.

The first recorded regatta on the Schuylkill occurred in 1833 or 1835. The excitement generated by this race sparked the formation of many rowing clubs, many of them short-lived. However, the surviving clubs soon recognized a need for an organization to control the sport and, most likely, to prevent the sport from becoming a victim of shady practices and fixed races. The formation of the Schuylkill Navy in 1858 resulted. The success of the Navy and other similar organizations throughout the country eventually contributed heavily to the extinction of the professional rower. Today, the Schuylkill Navy exists as the oldest amateur governing body in the United States, having just celebrated its 125th anniversary.

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The growth of the sport over the years has brought Philadelphia fame as a major center for rowing, a fact recognized not only by the formation of the Schuylkill Navy but by the emergence and location of other governing bodies in Philadelphia (i.e. the Philadelphia Scholastic Rowing Association, the Middle States Regatta Association, and the Dad Vail Rowing Association). In addition, the Navy shares its quarters at # 4 Boat House Row with the United States Rowing Association, the national governing body for rowing in this country (founded 1873 as the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen).

The members of the Committee considered all 15 of the boat houses both as a unit and individually. Mr Myers requested that the form be amended, adding a statement regarding the fixation of the lights outlining the main structural elements of the various houses. These lights added in 1979 have not been extended to outline the additions made since that time. Mrs. Klein also amended the form stating that the land rather than the property was owned by the Fairmount Park Commission and the buildings owned by the various boat clubs. There was additional discussion regarding the original nature of # 1 East River Drive, Plaisted Hall. The members requested that the staff attempt to locate and procure a turn of the century photograph of this building. They also requested that several blanks, including that regarding the boathouses' accessibility, be completed.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14 East River Drive have appeared on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places for approximately 10-15 years. No record regarding prior Commission certification has been located. The Committee unanimously recommended, by separate votes, the ratification of these 13 boathouses.

1 and # 15 East River Drive have not received any prior Commission recognition. By separate votes, the Committee unanimously recommended the certification of these two structures.

1849 N. Broad Street: Grace Baptist Temple
1889-1891, Thomas P. Lonsdale, architect

The Grace Baptist Temple possesses significance both as an architectural landmark and as the Philadelphia forum for the Reverend Russell H. Conwell, one of the most influential Baptist ministers at the turn of the century. In addition, it also played an important role in the neighborhood, functioning as a church, town hall, community center and meeting hall for the area. Finally, it served as mid-wife to Temple College, later to become Temple University.

Designed in a Richardsonian Romanesque style, the sheer massiveness of this two story stone church establishes its presence along North Broad Street. Thomas P. Lonsdale, the architect, was one among many throughout the country who followed the lead of Henry Hobson Richardson in the application of this style. Lonsdale designed a number of churches and residences throughout the city, however, his full career and impact upon Philadelphia's architecture

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have yet to be assessed. Certainly, the Grace Baptist Temple, and its companion building, the original Temple College building, helped his career as an architect whose clientele comprised many of the nouveau riche.

Russell H. Conwell came to the Grace Baptist Church in 1882, when the fledgling church was only 12 years old and financially unstable. Through the force of his personality and drive, he placed the church on a sound financial footing and elevated it to a position as one of the influential pulpits in the city. Well known for his "Acres of Diamonds" speech, he has been the subject of several biographies, including one compiled just recently as part of the ongoing centennial celebrations of Temple University. He founded Temple College in 1884 as an urban college which would provide a higher education for those students with limited means. Temple College received a charter in 1888 and became Temple University in 1907.

The members of the Committee recommended by a 5 - 0 vote that certification be extended to 1849 N. Broad Street, the Grace Baptist Temple. Mr. Levy abstained, citing an involvement with the building by his architectural firm.

1640-1666 Callowhill Street: The Harrington Machine Shop
1903, Roydhouse, Arey & Company, builders

The Harrington Machine Shop is a well-preserved five story, flat-roof, industrial building at the southeast corner of 17th and Callowhill Streets. It is the former quarters of one of America's two oldest hoist manufacturers that retain their original corporate identities. The building also exists as the only known extant hoist manufactory in Philadelphia.

The Harrington Company began in 1867 with the formation of Harrington & Haskins, a machine tools firm. Edwin Harrington (1825-1891) had started a similar business in Worchester, Massachusetts about 1854 and moved to Philadelphia to take advantage of the local market. The name of the company changed several times, in 1869 to Edwin Harrington & Company, in 1883 to Edwin Harrington, Son & Company, in 1893 to Edwin Harrington, Son & Company, Incorporated, and in 1923 to the Harrington Company. In 1968 it became part of Howard Shingle Company, and since 1978, an independence subsidiary of the Albee Corporation.

Edwin Harrington, Son & Company was not only an early hoist manufacturer, but led the industry at one time. At the time of the construction of this building, over 30,000 Harrington hoists were in use around the country. Because of the company's innovation in their design, hoists became the mainstay of the company.

The Harrington Machine Shop enjoys excellent architectural integrity. Only the sash has been altered, a change reversible because the original sash remains stored on the premises. The interior steel-frame construction reflects the state of the art for industrial buildings at the turn of the century. Although its construction does not place it in the vanguard of architectural engineering, it does make it an up-to-date building for its time.

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Despite the importance of the Harrington Company in manufacturing and the fact that the building has been entered onto the National Register of Historic Places, the Committee found no redeeming architectural merit with the building and recommended unanimously that the building at 1640-1666 Callowhill Street not be certified.

1515 Christian Street: The Julian F. Abele Residence
1869-1870, John B. Brown & Silas H. Emery, builders

The three story building at 1515 Christian Street rests its significance solely on its association with Julian Francis Abele (1881-1950), Philadelphia's first major black architect. Undistinguished architecturally, a house constructed to house the fast growing population of the city in the post Civil War years, this dwelling served as Abele's residence from 1916 to his death in 1950.

Abele became the first black graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Architecture in 1902. After traveling through France, he entered the office of Horace Trumbauer in 1906 and succeeded Frank Seeburger as chief designer of the firm in 1909. As chief designer, Abele made many key decisions regarding the shape and substance of the buildings for which Trumbauer received commissions. Owing to his race, he received little credit and many clients who hired Trumbauer never realized that Abele actually designed the buildings. Such monumental buildings in this city as the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Chateau Crillon, the Benjamin Franklin Hotel and the Philadelphia Museum of Art benefitted from the application of Abele's talents. The Museum of Art recently (27 March 1982) recognized Abele's role in its construction although the Museum building's design and construction actually derived from the collaboration and compromise of many architects including Zantzinger & Borie, who were associated architects with Trumbauer on the project, and Howell Lewis Shay of Trumbauer's office, who devised the final design scheme. Abele remained with Trumbauer until the latter's retirement and continued the firm with William O. Frank under the title "The Office of Horace Trumbauer".

The Committee first made the amendment to the nomination's statement of significance of changing the block marked "architect's residence" to "black history". Mrs. Klein asked the staff to obtain more photographs of the building. The Committee then recommended unanimously that the house be certified on account of its association with Julian F. Abele, a noted black architect. The members of the Committee agreed with a recommendation that a copy of the form be forwarded to James Dallett at the University of Pennsylvania. Since the meeting of the Certification Committee, the staff realized that a photographic error had taken place and the building described in the form was not 1515 Christian Street but 1515 Catharine Street. A photograph of the Christian Street building will be available at the January, 1984 meeting of the Commission.

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323 Cypress Street

Mid-19th century; Alterations & additions, 1928, Antonio De Risio, contractor

A two story brick dwelling, the building at 323 Cypress Street dates to at least 1861, if not before. It originally was a stable for 326 Spruce Street and converted to a dwelling around the turn of the century. The present appearance dates from the 1928 alterations. The nominee for the building included no statement of significance, other than stating that the loss of the building would leave the north side of Cypress Street "a succession of back walls, driveways and garages."

The Committee requested that the form be amended in two places. First the earliest map consulted was in 1861 not 1851 as recited on the nomination. Second, they requested the correction of some of the terminology used in the architectural description. After the amendments were noted, the members voted unanimously to recommend that 323 Cypress Street not be certified owing to a lack of any significance.

1001-1025 Filbert Street: The Harrison Building
1893-1894, Cope & Stewardson, architects

The Harrison Building stands six storied tall and occupies the eastern part of the block bounded by Filbert, 10th, Cuthbert and 11th Streets. The principal elevations of the building face Filbert and 10th Streets. Few alterations have occurred to the building: the most glaring is a 1950s modification occupying several storefronts along the Filbert Street elevation.

The building represents a rare survivor of the large-scale wholesale and retail commercial development which from 1890 to 1910 replaced older residential and industrial properties east of Broad Street. The Harrison Building is also the only surviving example of a commercial design produced by Cope & Stewardson, a firm renown for having introduced the Collegiate Gothic style to America. It derives further significance from its visual allusion to both the investment concerns of famed industrialist C. C. Harrison and the strong patron/architect alliance which Cope & Stewardson enjoyed with the Harrison family. It thus adds considerable dimension to the history of architecture, both locally and nationally.

Charles Custis Harrison (1844-1929), in whose family the property remained from 1892 to 1968, was a third generation native Philadelphian and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania who after 1862 built up the Franklin Sugar Refinery into one of the largest of its kind in Pennsylvania. Harrison and his family sold out in 1889 to American Sugar and C. C. Harrison became more involved with real estate speculation and education. He served as Provost of the University of Pennsylvania from 1894 to 1911, overseeing the great "Era of Expansion" of the University's campus and commissioning Cope & Stewardson first to work on the new Spruce Street dormitories. Over the ensuing years, the firm received seventeen additional commissions from the University, including the Law School, the Engineering Building, the Towne Scientific School and the University Museum. The latter was a joint venture with Wilson Eyre and Frank Miles Day & Brother.

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The Harrison family's involvement with Cope & Stewardson extended beyond the University campus. Charles Harrison also commissioned them to design the Harrison Buildings at 1001 Market Street and 1001 Filbert Street, both in 1893. Alfred Harrison, Charles' brother, commissioned the firm to design the Harrison Building on 15th Street, below Market Street in 1894, a twin residence at 1631-1633 Locust Street in 1899 and a stable on Rittenhouse Street in 1902. In addition, the Harrison family probably sponsored the addition of the Lady Chapel at St. Mark's Church, another work of Cope & Stewardson's.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend certification of 1001-1025 Filbert Street, the Harrison Building.

4510 Frankford Avenue: The Frankford Lyceum
1840-1842; altered and enlarged 1898.

The present building at 4510 Frankford Avenue stands three stories high with a rusticated stone facade. However, this appearance dates only to the 1898 enlargements of the building. The original building, a 2½ story brick hall, has been masked by the later alterations.

The Frankford Lyceum was established in 1836 as a literary association for the acquirement and promotion of knowledge. Its early years showed great promise and the association applied for and received a charter in 1840 as the "Frankford Lyceum of Science for the Acquirement and Diffusion of Useful Knowledge". Two years later, the members celebrated the opening of their new building which quickly became a landmark and center in the Borough of Frankford. It served as the principal assembly room in Frankford until the completion of the Odd Fellows' Hall in 1855. Even after this date, smaller groups found the Lyceum's surroundings better suited for their needs than those of the larger hall.

Although the building remained a landmark in the community, the Lyceum association gradually died out and several attempts at reorganization failed. Finally, in 1866, the Frankford Mutual Fire Insurance Company purchased the building and used part of it for their offices. (Isaac E. Shallcross, the City's District Surveyor, used one of the back rooms as his office.) By 1898, the need for a large building, and one of current architectural construction, prompted the fire insurance company to move the old building to the back of the lot and construct a new building in front of it.

The members of the Committee felt that the building might contain enough architectural and historical significance to warrant certification. However, they asked that a new form be submitted with a more detailed description of the buildings and a rewritten statement of significance. Also, since no current photograph of the full facade was submitted with the form, the members could not adequately judge the present merits of this building. Consequently, they agreed to table the nomination of 4510 Frankford Avenue, the Frankford Lyceum.

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5028 & 5030 Griscom Street
ca. 1897-1900, J. Winfield Swope, architect

A 2½ story brick twin, these two structures exhibit many characteristics of the typical Philadelphia house of the early twentieth century. A ground floor porch, a second floor metal bay window, a metal cornice and a third floor mansard roof pierced by large gabled wall-dormers are but some of the elements which one might find in similar developments in neighborhoods as diverse as Tioga, Roxborough, Germantown and West Philadelphia.

Frankford contained a large number of Swope's during the turn of the century, many of them involved in the building trades. The Swope family owned 5028 Griscom Street until 1919 and 5030 Griscom Street until 1907. The building sits within a small area of Frankford to the immediate west of Frankford Avenue which was developed during the late 19th century and which contains some of the only Victorian residential architecture in Frankford still existing.

The members of the Committee viewed both houses in the overall context of Philadelphia, recognizing that they are not unique when considering all of the city's varied architecture. As stated above, other houses similar to it do stand within other neighborhoods of Philadelphia. However, before rejecting it outright, they asked the staff to visit the area at its convenience and evaluate the houses in the immediate neighborhood to ascertain whether the house did contain elements unique to the architectural heritage of Frankford. They also requested that more photographs be obtained of the area. Subsequently a motion to table found unanimous agreement among the members of the Committee.

2024 Locust Street: Jane E. Welton House
1892-1893, Willis G. Hale, architect, B.K. Ketcham's Sons, contractors

2024 Locust Street stands as a four story brick dwelling which has undergone several alterations in its appearance and character. Its appearance has been altered by the addition of the fourth story mansard in 1909 from the designs of Ewing & Endebrook, architects and contractors. Its character as a one family dwelling when built does not exist today. The building has been used as a school and presently houses a commercial wigmaking firm on the first two floors and apartments above.

The house's chief significance rests with its identification as a design by Willis G. Hale, an architect whose eclectic designs during the later years of the 19th century helped change the appearance of Philadelphia. His chief clients were P.A.B. Widener and William Elkins. He designed the former's palatial mansion at the corner of Broad and Girard Avenues (recently demolished) and numerous rowhouses throughout North Philadelphia as speculative housing for the pair. Much of his commercial architecture has been either demolished or irreparably altered. The Keystone National Bank Building at the southwest corner of Chestnut and Juniper Streets probably exists as the only largely unaltered commercial design of Hale's. This house at 2024 Locust Street re-

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presents one of his only known designs in the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood.

The members of the Committee had numerous complaints with the submitted nomination for this building. In Part # 7, Description, the block unaltered/ altered should be changed to altered because of the 1909 addition described above. A question was also raised as to the connection between Jane E. Welton and the house since the form did not elaborate upon this relationship. (Jane Welton commissioned Hale to design the house as her residence.) Finally the Committee unanimously tabled the nomination and requested that Mr. Moak rewrite and resubmit the nomination at a future meeting.

1922 Spruce Street: Francis W. Kennedy House
1889-1890, Frank Miles Day, architect

The Kennedy House stands as a late nineteenth century townhouse, four stories high, in a creative eclectic style combining elements of the medieval and early Renaissance architecture found throughout Europe. The design of the building closely resembles that of a commercial design by Day for the Commonwealth Title Insurance & Trust Company proposed during this same period but rejected by the company. The building has been altered a number of times, principally on the interior where the original one family dwelling arrangement gave way to apartments and offices. The exterior has also been modified several times, principally in the removal of much of the facade's projecting stone detailing and the glazing in the upper oriel.

The house is both a remarkable document of social history marking a family's commercial and social rise, and an important landmark of architectural design. In this latter regard, it is a pivotal accomplishment in the early career of one of America's most prominent architects during a period as yet little understood. The house's first owner, Francis W. Kennedy, had been president of the Spring Garden National Bank for five years when he commissioned Frank Miles Day in late 1888 to design his townhouse. Day had spent had recently returned from Europe and opened his own architectural office in the city, garnering almost instant respect with his winning design for the Philadelphia Art Club Building. Undoubtedly, this fame drew Kennedy and like clients to his office and Day continued a rather profitable business until his death in 1918. Kennedy's family had organized the Spring Garden Bank around 1870 and Francis Kennedy lived in the Spring Garden area during most of the 1870s and 1880s before contemplating the move into the more fashionable Rittenhouse Square. Unfortunately for him, he did not enjoy either the house or the neighborhood for very long for he was convicted and sentenced to Eastern State Penitentiary for embezzlement crimes..

Mr. Myers asked that the submitted form be amended in Part #7, Description, to reflect that the actual condition of the facade is in a deteriorated, not excellent, condition. He also objected to the term, Pompeian brick, stating that Roman brick properly describes the brick type used for the building; that no such term as Pompeian brick actually exists in architectural dictionaries. A check with the Commission's library proved him correct and

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the Committee agreed to the amendments. In Section # 3, Classification, the proper block to be checked should have been Work in Progress, not Occupied. After noting all of these changes, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend certification of 1922 Spruce Street, the Francis W. Kennedy House.

5820 Germantown Avenue: The Young Women's Christian Association Building 1914, Louis H. Rush (of Harris & Rush), architect; Addition, 1919, Lawrence V. Boyd, architect

The three and four story brick building housing the Germantown YWCA occupies the three lots at 5820, 5822 and 5824 Germantown Avenue, and borders Vernon Park on the latter's north boundary. The architect's original design called for a three story brick building set back from the building line of Germantown Avenue, and in fact this was the original configuration of the building. This configuration lasted until 1919 when interest in the organization's activities, prompted largely by the just completed war in Europe, led the YWCA to enlarge the building, adding a fourth story and extending the original three story front to the building line. Interestingly, Boyd's design for the front addition duplicated the original Rush facade. In all probability, the YWCA requested that this work be done in that manner.

The significance of the YWCA of Germantown is twofold. First the building itself has historical architectural significance. Louis H. Rush had practiced architecture in Philadelphia and Baltimore since 1903 and continued in practice until 1932. Many YWCA and YMCA commissions were awarded to him during his career. L.V. Boyd was one of the prolific upper class residential architects of the turn of the century, with examples of his work throughout Philadelphia and the suburban areas. He started his career in the office of Frank Miles Day and formed a partnership with his brother, David K. Boyd, which lasted from 1893-1898. After 1898, he operated his own architectural practice, relying heavily upon the upper and upper middle classes for commissions.

The second area of significance is the YWCA itself. It has played a central role in social service in the greater Germantown community for more than one hundred years. Founded in 1870 as the first YWCA in the city, it established a nurses agency in 1879, an employment agency in 1881, free baths in 1883, and a maternity assistance agency in 1889. It offered educational programs which developed into formal courses leading to diplomas. The growth of the organization was remarkable, with a branch opened in the Falls of Schuylkill neighborhood in 1905, and membership reaching over 6,000 during the years of World War I. During the twentieth century, it has led the fight for national and state legislation to improve the working conditions of women, fought hard against racial injustice, and become a leader in the national cause on the behalf of older people. The leadership of the YWCA of Germantown in social and humanitarian causes - in education, in health care, in women's work conditions in industry, business and the

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professions, in race relations, in caring for the aged - dovetails nicely with its "firsts" - in date of establishment in the Philadelphia area, in size of membership, in professionalization of its staff and in desegregation of its facilities - to give it substantial historical significance.

This nomination, a late entry received a day before the meeting, was considered by the Committee at this time. Mr. Mooney read parts of the nomination to the other members, who then recommended unanimously that the Commission certify 5820-5824 Germantown Avenue, the YWCA of Germantown. The Committee did request more photographs of the building including interior shots, if possible. The members also requested that copies of the nomination be forwarded to them.

1608 Walnut Street: Sun Oil Building
1928-1930, Tilden, Register & Pepper, architects

The office building at 1608-1610 Walnut Street occupies the full depth of the block between Walnut and Chancellor Streets. It was begun in 1928 by developer Joseph Greenberg as a simple 16 story speculative office building. During its design, the Sun Oil Company, headed by J. Howard Pew, became the principal tenant, and three additional stories were added to house their offices, giving the building its present 19 story height.

Designed in an Art Deco style, the Sun Oil Building is an important skyscraper design that marks a transition from the Art Deco of the 1920s towards the modernist vocabulary of the 1930s and 1940s. This sophisticated metamorphosis was the creation of Philadelphia architects Tilden, Register and Pepper, who with Ritter and Shay, established the nature of the regional Art Deco styles. Of equal importance was the role of the building as the corporate headquarters of the Sun Oil Company, one of the giants of the American petroleum industry. Its location here, with Atlantic and Gulf, has made this city one of the national centers for the industry.

It is as architecture that the Sun Oil tower is most important, because it possesses two architecturally innovative facades - one on Walnut Street exhibiting the Art Deco style, and the other on Chancellor Street, which demonstrates one of the earliest solutions of applying the newer International Style to the tall building and thus predating the PSFS Building by two or more years. The firm, Tilden, Register & Pepper, all descendants of old Philadelphia families, formed their office in 1917 and originally served the gentry with country houses. During the 1920s, they began to receive more commissions for commercial structures of which 1608 and 1616 Walnut Street represent two of their finest examples. They also received an important commission in the 1930s when the U.S. Post Office contracted them to design the new 30th Street Post Office Building along Market and 30th Streets.

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Other than a request for more photographs, the members of the Committee found no fault with the submitted form and voted unanimously to recommend certification of 1608 Walnut Street on the basis of its architectural merits.

1329 N. 23rd Street
1870-1871, Thomas Wallace, developer

1329 N. 23rd Street stands as a 2½ story brick structure erected as part of a row of residences. It possesses little architecture merit and no historical significance. The entire row stand as examples of the speculative rowhouse development of the late 1860s and early 1870s which occurred following the close of the Civil War. The architectural style of the houses belongs in the transition period between the common Greek/Federal Revival townhouses with the large Italianate wooden bracketed cornice of the antebellum period and the Second Empire style just beginning to fully flower. Unfortunately, alterations and demolitions have radically changed the appearance of the row; the houses at 1327 and 1329 are the only two which still retain much of their original character.

The Committee found that the building possessed little, if any, significance which would be grounds for considering the building for possible certification and recommended unanimously that 1329 N. 23rd Street not be certified.

There being no further business before the Committee, a motion was made and approved that the meeting adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Siemiontkowski,
Architectural Historian

Jefferson M. Moak
Executive Secretary to the Chairman

** also present: Richard Tyler, Historian
Patricia Siemiontkowski, Architectural Historian

MEMORANDUM

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

TO : Members of the Committee on Certification

DATE 1 December 1983

FROM : Jefferson M. Moak, Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: The seventeenth meeting of the Committee on Certification

The seventeenth meeting of the Committee on Certification will take place on Thursday, 8 December 1983, at 2:30 P.M. in Room 1313 City Hall Annex. The following items will appear on the agenda:

Old Business

- ✓ 2428-38 Poplar Street
- ✓ 2131 Delancey Street
- ✓ 1921 Green Street, a.k.a. 601-607 N. 20th Street
- Boat House Row, # 2 - 14 East River Drive (HABS)

New Business

- Boat House Row, # 1 & 15 East River Drive (# 15- HABS)
- 1849 N. Broad Street: Grace Baptist Temple
- 1640-1666 Callowhill Street: Harrington Machine Shop (NR; 6 May 1983)
- 1515 Christiana Street: Julian F. Abele Residence
- 323 Cypress Street
- 1001 Filbert Street: Harrison Building (HABS: NR; 29 July 1983)
- 4510 Frankford Avenue: Frankford Lyceum
- 5028 Griscom Street
- 5030 Griscom Street
- 2024 Locust Street: Jane E. Welton House
- 1922 Spruce Street: Francis W. Kennedy House
- 1608 Walnut Street: Sun Oil Building (NR; 25 August 1983)
- up ← 1329 N. 23rd Street