

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

**19 AUGUST 2020, 9:30 A.M.
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:33 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		
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.	X		
Douglas Mooney	X		

* Owing to public health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 virus, all Committee members, staff, and public attendees participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

- Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner I
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons attended the online meeting:

- Kevin Block
- Aaron Ruxbin
- Oscar Beisert
- Patrick Grossi
- Pat Wisniewski
- Marla Kay
- Dana Fedeli
- Michael Fichman
- Aaron Cohen
- Nicholas Royston
- Dexter Gresh
- Max Ochester
- Peter Humphreys

David Ivory
Ash Kernan
Dan Fisher
Nino Tinari, Esq.
George Poulin
Ximena Conde
Aaron Levinson
Nancy Pontone
David O'Neil
Matthew Smith
Steven Peitzman
Mark Brack
Arthur Stoppe
Hunter Ye
Kelly Wiles
Susan Wetherill
John Pettit
Kim Vernick
Gary Vernick
Eugene Naydovich
Starr Herr-Cardillo
German Yakubov
Gideon Fink Shapiro
Harrison Haas
Jim Duffin
Howard Haas
Sara Schwartz
Michael Mattioni
Mike Tarsia
Eugene Desyatnik
Kathy Dowdell
Debra McCarthy
John Vettese
L'Oreal McCollum
Paul Steinke
Ben Leech
Sarah Adamo
Rush Ramone
R Wilhelm
Alex Balloon
Josh Sevin
Barbara Ochester
Jack McCarthy
Keith Cramer
William Ochester

CONTINUANCE REQUESTS

ADDRESS: 1826 CHESTNUT ST

Name of Resource: Aldine Theatre

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Sam's Place Realty Associates LP

Nominator: Kevin Block, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1826 Chestnut Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Aldine Theatre, constructed in 1921, is significant under Criteria for Designation A, E, and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination argues that the theatre has significant character, interest, or value as one of the last remaining first-run movie palaces in Philadelphia. Under Criterion E, the nomination explains that the Aldine was the work of prominent local builders William Steele & Sons. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the Aldine represents the commercial development of Chestnut Street in the prestigious Rittenhouse Square neighborhood after the turn of the twentieth century.

Following the submission of the nomination and notification to the property owner, the nominator uncovered additional information not presented in the nomination, which is posted on the Historical Commission's website as additional information.

The Committee on Historic Designation previously reviewed a nomination for the property in March 1986 and recommended against designation owing to the loss of architectural integrity of the interior and the front doors. The Historical Commission adopted the recommendation of the Committee at its April 1986 meeting and declined to designate the property. The staff notes that the interior of the property is not under consideration, and that the Historical Commission routinely designates properties that have alterations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1826 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, E, and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:05:15

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Harrison Haas and Adam Goodman represented the property owner.
- Patrick Grossi represented the nomination and did not oppose the continuance request.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Haas explained that, although notice was sent around 30 days ago, his client only became aware of the nomination a few days prior when his architect reached out and informed them of the nomination. The owner would like more time to review the nomination and consider the implications of designation.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- It typically supports continuance requests proffered by property owners.
- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the review of the nomination of 1826 Chestnut Street and remand it to the October 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

ITEM: 1826 Chestnut St					
MOTION: Continue and remand to October 2020 CHD meeting					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Lavery					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 3701-15 CHESTNUT ST

Name of Resource: International House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: International House

Nominator: University City Historical Society & Docomomo US/Greater Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3701-15 Chestnut Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, E, H, and J. The nomination argues that the property satisfies Criterion A for its association with the International House organization, the oldest institution of its kind in the United States to support international students. Under Criterion D, the nomination contends that the building is a significant example of Brutalist architecture. Under Criterion E, the nomination argues that the architecture firm of Bower & Fradley influenced the architectural development of Philadelphia, contributing designs to the city from the 1960s to the present day. Under Criterion H, the nomination contends that the International House building occupies a unique location in the heart of University City and, together with Criterion J, stands as one of the first high-rises in the neighborhood that was constructed as part of the West Philadelphia Corporation and Redevelopment Authority's efforts for urban renewal.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3701-15 Chestnut Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J, but not E and H. The influence of Bower & Fradley is limited. For a very large building, it has a limited impact on the streetscape. Owing to its setback and mid-block location, it cannot be considered an

established and familiar visual feature like City Hall or the Art Museum.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:11:00

RECUSAL:

- Ms. Cooperman recused, owing to her position on the board of Docomomo.

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Farnham presented the continuance request to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Josh Sevin represented the property owner.
- George Poulin represented the nomination and did not oppose the continuance request.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Farnham explained that notice of the nomination was sent quite a while ago and that the review had been continued in the past. He noted that the property is in the process of being sold by International House Philadelphia to another party. In June, he continued, the buyer requested that the nomination appear on this agenda and on the September Historical Commission agenda. Because of that request, Mr. Farnham added, he assumed the sale had been finalized and that the buyer was now the title holder of the property. He stated that the staff informed the buyer of today's meeting, with the assumption that the buyer was the property owner, but failed to notify International House Philadelphia, which still holds title to the property. He clarified that International House was not aware of this meeting until two days ago and has requested a continuance to the October meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation, noting that the buyer also supports the request. Mr. Farnham remarked that he discussed the matter with Leonard Reuter, the Historical Commission's attorney, who stated that it was his opinion that this matter must be continued owing to the failure to notify the appropriate parties of the review and that the continuance would ensure their due process rights.
- Mr. Reuter agreed with Mr. Farnham and advised the Committee that this continuance must be granted owing to the notice issues. He added that Mr. Farnham reached out to all interested parties and that there was no opposition to the continuance.
- Mr. Sevin stated that Messrs. Farnham and Reuter explained the situation, adding that as the property owner, he received no direct notice. He added that he only received indirect notice of the request on Sunday.
- Mr. Poulin stated that on behalf of the nominator, the University City Historical Society, he has no objection to the requested continuance. He added that this is the first he is learning of the notification issue.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- It typically supports continuance requests proffered by property owners.
- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the review of the nomination of 3701-15 Chestnut Street and remand it to the October 2020 meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

ITEM: 3701-15 Chestnut St MOTION: Continue and remand to October 2020 CHD meeting MOVED BY: Milroy SECONDED BY: Lavery					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair				X	
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	5			1	

ADDRESS: 1617 WALNUT ST

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Rosenberg Family Partners

Nominator: Staff of the Historical Commission

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1617 Walnut Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criterion for Designation D. Under Criterion D, the nomination argues that the Seeburger & Rabenold-designed building conveys the aesthetics of the Italian Renaissance Revival style through its classical temple form, verticality, and classical detailing. While the ground-story commercial space has been altered several times, most recently in 2011, the modifications have remained sensitive to the building's original detailing and classical style.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1617 Walnut Street satisfies Criterion for Designation D.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:18:25

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Gary Vernick and Kim Vernick represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Vernick asked if the Committee had received his supplemental information.
 - The Committee confirmed that the supplemental information including photographs was included with the nomination provided by the staff.
- Mr. Vernick explained the history of the site, noting that his father-in-law operated a fur store out of the building beginning in the 1950s until the mid-1990s. He argued

that the Moravian Street elevation holds no architectural significance and further claimed that the front façade is not historic. He then contended that much of the front façade was altered to its current appearance in 2009 and 2010, noting that the building is largely clad in stucco. He argued that many of the carved elements on the façade were created 10 years ago using molded stucco that was then painted, and that the symmetrical storefront was also a recent alteration. Mr. Vernick contended that the storefront looked like a classic Western Union office and has not had a semblance of its original appearance in many decades. He noted the changes to the façade over time, including the alterations to the storefront, the in-kind replacement of the decorative urns, the replacement of the second-story windows, and reiterated that several elements were cast in stucco. He claimed that the building's design was never Italian Renaissance until 10 years ago. In terms of historic preservation, he continued, a building needs to retain integrity, and he opined that the design of this building is new. He argued that the building at 1617 Walnut Street is pretty, but it is not historic, nor is it even a replica of a historic building. He called it a "historic fraud." Mr. Vernick recounted the alterations to the building through the photographs he provided to the Committee. He then asked that the building not be designated.

- Ms. Milroy stated that buildings are not frozen in time and are living, changing structures. She commented that in reading the Vernicks' account and in reviewing the photographs they submitted, she found a compelling story of how this building has evolved over time to meet the changing needs the owners and tenants. She suggested that those changes add to the interest of this building, noting that the building has retained its scale within the city block. She then stated that as a result of the Vernicks' recent renovation, the design further reinforces the Renaissance style.
- Mr. Cohen thanked the Vernicks for contributing so much of the early history, including the photographs the staff provided to them of the original storefront. He commented that he wished the information had been part of the nomination. He called the nomination "thin" in terms of identifying a style and then presenting only the monumental examples of the style in the fifteenth century as the basis for its significance. He asked that it be contextualized within commercial examples of the 1920s. He then questioned why the architect would choose to draw on a "thin" Renaissance vocabulary. He applauded the staff in making the nomination and stated that it is a building well worthy of inclusion on the register, but reiterated that the nomination should be richer. He stated that the 1920s photographs included in the Vernicks' submission show the building in its context when it was originally designed, and he noted that the architect designed the second-story spaces to be just as appealing as the first-story spaces. Mr. Cohen reemphasized the thinness of the nomination's discussion on twentieth-century commercial Renaissance structures with retail storefronts, though he stated that he is in full support of the property's inclusion on the register based on its merits. He then commented that the rear elevation facing Moravian Street is remarkable.
 - Ms. Cooperman defended the staff's efforts, noting that there is not always sufficient time available to compile a nomination.
- Mr. Lavery thanked the owners for the documentation and their recent sensitive alteration of the storefront. He stated that he believed that one of the reasons the alteration was so sensitive is that the owners and designers were inspired by the original second story and replicated the design. He elaborated that Frank Seeburger, one of the building's original architects, came out of the office of Horace Trumbauer, and the Trumbauer firm was one of the masters of classical styles, as evidenced through the Union League and Widener building. He commented that this building stands as a nice, small example of that classical revival, adding that he supports the

nomination. He then agreed with Mr. Cohen that the examples presented in the nomination of fifteenth-century Renaissance structures were thin and that he would have preferred to see an urban example from Florence or Venice, if that had been possible.

- Ms. Cooperman agreed with the other Committee members about the context of period commercial architecture and the use of various classical motifs. She stated that the building is very much of the period and forcefully reflects the commercial mode.
- Ms. Milroy asked whether, given the documentation the Vernicks have supplied, it has any impact on the period of significance, which is currently defined as 1921.
 - Ms. Cooperman responded that the 2009 refitting of the first-story façade is sympathetic, but argued that it is not of the same period. She stated that her opinion is that the period of significance should not extend that late, particularly since it may restrict future alterations to the storefront. She argued that the Committee would not want to create an unintended consequence in which other sympathetic changes are limited.
 - Ms. Barucco agreed.
 - Mr. Cohen also agreed and added that the 1920 photograph shows that the building is an elevated temple, suggesting that the second story is architecturally more important and is more dignified than most second stories.
 - Ms. Cooperman agreed that the elevated temple floating above the ground story is unusually striking.
- Mr. Laverty stated that the fact that this building was commissioned by a real estate developer is telling, though he argued that it would also be fitting had it been owned by a furrier from the start. He noted that it is a high-market and required a high-end design.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Oscar Beisert of the Keeping Society thanked the staff for nominating the building and stated that it is an important part of the historic fabric that comprises Walnut Street. He also noted that it is not the only two-story structure in the immediate vicinity. He then argued that storefronts are commonly altered over time and contended that the upper story has survived largely intact.
- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia supported the nomination. He noted that his office is located directly across from the property, so it is a building he sees nearly every day. He stated that he admires the building, adding that it easily satisfies the criterion for which it was nominated and reflects the Italian Renaissance Revival style. He contended that the building stands as a survivor of Walnut Street's transition from residential to commercial in the early twentieth century. He noted that it maintains some residential scale and characteristics, though it was constructed as an office building and not a residence. He called it a handsome part of the prewar historic character of the 1600 block of Walnut Street.
- Dana Fedeli agreed with Messrs. Beisert and Steinke, adding that she appreciates the industrial nature of the Moravian Street façade. She supported the nomination and thanked the staff for nominating the property.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building was designed in 1921 in the Renaissance Revival style by the architecture firm of Seeburger & Rabenold.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The building stands as an early twentieth-century commercial representation of the Italian Renaissance style, satisfying Criterion D.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1617 Walnut Street satisfies Criterion for Designation D.

ITEM: 1617 Walnut St					
MOTION: Designate, D					
MOVED BY: Cohen					
SECONDED BY: Milroy					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 3412 HAVERFORD AVE

Name of Resource: Frame Twin

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Mary E. Drummond

Nominator: University City Historical Society

Staff Contact: Megan Cross Schmitt, megan.schmitt@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3412 Haverford Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criterion for Designation J, in part because it is representative of “the historical heritage of the neighborhood’s initial period of development, as well as the economic and social history” of the community’s founders. The nomination also contends that “the subject property is representative of the early development of the Mantua neighborhood, as well as a once common house type that has largely vanished from the built environment of West Philadelphia.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3412 Haverford Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J. The staff, however, recommends against naming the resource for its associated developer, Julia A.A. Blodget Britton.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:52:05

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Michael Mattioni and architectural historian Gideon Fink Shapiro represented the property owner.

- George Poulin and Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Mattioni asked if 3412 and 3414 Haverford Avenue could be heard at the same time.
 - Ms. Cooperman responded that since they were two separate properties they would be heard separately.
- Mr. Mattioni explained that he had the same testimony for both properties.
 - Ms. Cooperman suggested that he could abbreviate his testimony for 3414 Haverford Avenue when it was time to review that property.
- Mr. Mattioni explained that he was there to request that 3412 Haverford Avenue not be placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He recognized the effort of the nominator in preparing the nomination but pointed out that it discusses wood-frame houses in Mantua and also Fishtown and Northern Liberties.
- Mr. Mattioni stated that the subject property differed greatly from many of the examples that were used in the nomination to support significance. He reiterated that the nomination provides information about the history of wood frame houses in Fishtown and Northern Liberties but not Mantua.
- Mr. Shapiro stated his qualifications.
- Mr. Shapiro provided background about Mantua Township in 1850-53, the period of significance that was identified by the nominator. Mr. Shapiro argued that the most critical period of Mantua's development occurred after the 1860s when the commuter trains expanded into the area. He also stated that it was his opinion that row houses, not wood-framed houses, were the predominate type of housing of Mantua.
- Mr. Shapiro described the modifications that he saw had happened to the property, and commented that these modifications needed to be considered when evaluating the properties for designation.
- Mr. Shapiro said that he did not believe that the properties at 3412 and 3414 Haverford Avenue were exemplary of Mantua's development.
- Mr. Mattioni asked Mr. Shapiro if he believed that the subject property was a particular exemplar of a specific architectural style.
 - Mr. Shapiro said though the property had some vaguely Greek Revival-style features, it was not a good exemplar of that style.
- Mr. Mattioni asked Mr. Shapiro if he agreed with the statement made on page 11 of the nomination that wood-frame houses were a common and familiar house type in West Philadelphia.
 - Mr. Shapiro responded that this statement was narrowly true, arguing that wood-frame houses did not define Mantua's housing type. He stated that the social and cultural heritage of Mantua did not crystalize until after the period of significance argued by the nominator. Mr. Shapiro argued that row homes were likely more exemplary of the neighborhood's working and middle-class culture than wood-frame houses.
- Mr. Mattioni asked Mr. Shapiro if the four frame dwellings in Laniganville shown in Figure 11 was typical of the early built environment of Mantua.
 - Mr. Shapiro responded that it was not, pointing out that Laniganville was a different neighborhood that developed differently from Mantua.
- Mr. Mattioni asked Mr. Shapiro if the images shown in figures 15 and 17 of the nomination were representative of the subject property.

- Mr. Shapiro responded that they were not. He said that he did not believe that the subject property related to the exemplars provided throughout the nomination.
- Mr. Shapiro commented that he did not agree with the nomination's claim that the subject property represented the first generation of the Mantua neighborhood. He argued that that the first generation of development in the area occurred before the period of significance but the most significant period of construction occurred afterwards.
- Mr. Mattioni asked Mr. Shapiro if the subject property was evocative of Mantua's economic and social history.
 - Mr. Shapiro said no, and that Mantua's economic and social history was better reflected in the two-story brick row houses of the neighborhood. He explained that he did not believe that the subject property represented anything larger about Mantua's history as the nomination tried to claim.
- Mr. Shapiro said that he did not believe that the subject property was exemplary of Mantua's cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage. He stated that he believed that the Committee on Historic Designation should recommend against designation of the property.
- Ms. Cooperman informed Mr. Mattioni that they would consider the testimony they just heard about 3412 Haverford Avenue as applicable to 3414 Haverford Avenue as well.
- George Poulin spoke on behalf of the University City Historical Society. He argued that these were some of the last remaining wood-frame houses in the area. Mr. Poulin said that despite some alterations, the overall massing, setbacks, and fenestration communicate that these houses are from another time.
- Mr. Poulin said that there were not currently any buildings in the neighborhood of Mantua that were listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. He questioned why this was the case, noting that nearby Powelton Village had many designated buildings.
- Mr. Beisert stated that he stood by his arguments in the nomination. He reminded the Committee on Historic Designation that the building was being nominated under Criterion for Designation J, and no argument was being made for its architectural style.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Debra McCarthy spoke in support of designation.
- Steven Peitzman spoke in support of designation.
- Paul Steinke of the Preservation Alliance spoke in support of designation.
- Mark Brack spoke in support of designation.
- Dana Fedeli spoke in support of designation.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building at 3412 Haverford Avenue was constructed ca. 1850-1853.
- The house should not be named for the owner of the property at the time of construction, Julia A.A. Blodget Britton.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Wood frame houses such as the subject property represent working-class Philadelphians, further contributing to its significance under Criterion for Designation J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3412 Haverford Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J, and that the name of the resource should be changed to “Frame Twin.”

ITEM: 3412 Haverford Ave MOTION: Designate, J; Resource name to be “Frame Twin” 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 Laverty	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 3414 HAVERFORD AVE

Name of Resource: Frame Twin

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: LINA Holdings LLC

Nominator: University City Historical Society

Staff Contact: Megan Cross Schmitt, megan.schmitt@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 3414 Haverford Avenue and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criterion for Designation J, in part because it is representative of “the historical heritage of the neighborhood’s initial period of development, as well as the economic and social history” of the community’s founders. The nomination also contends that “the subject property is representative of the early development of the Mantua neighborhood, as well as a once common house type that has largely vanished from the built environment of West Philadelphia.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3414 Haverford Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J. The staff, however, recommends against naming the resource for its associated developer, Julia A.A. Blodget Britton.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:41:15

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Schmitt presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.

- Attorney Michael Mattioni and architectural historian Gideon Fink Shapiro represented the property owner.
- George Poulin and Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Mattioni and Mr. Shapiro's previous testimony regarding 3412 Haverford Avenue was applied to 3414 Haverford Avenue.
- Mr. Shapiro clarified that he did not have anything further to add to the discussion for this property. He reiterated that he was recommending against listing 3414 Haverford Avenue on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.
- Mr. Beisert explained the reason he named the subject properties after the developer.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The building at 3412 Haverford Avenue was constructed ca. 1850-1853.
- The house should not be named for the owner of the property at the time of construction, Julia A.A. Blodget Britton.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- Wood frame houses such as the subject property represent working-class Philadelphians, further contributing to its significance under Criterion for Designation J.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 3414 Haverford Avenue satisfies Criterion for Designation J, and that the name of the resource should be changed to "Frame Twin."

ITEM: 3414 Haverford Ave					
MOTION: Designate, J; Resource name to be "Frame Twin"					
MOVED BY: Barruco					
SECONDED BY: Milroy					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADDRESS: 210-12 N 12TH ST

Name of Resource: Sigma Sound Studios

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: 210 N 12th St Investment, 212 N 12th St Investment

Nominator: Benjamin Leech, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

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

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 210-12 N. 12th Street as historic and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Sigma Sound Studios satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J. Under Criterion A, the nomination contends that the property has significant character, interest, and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, and Nation, as the home to Sigma Sound Studios, one of the most influential recording studios in America in the late twentieth century, and the birthplace of “The Sound of Philadelphia” or “Philly Soul,” a popular musical genre that fused soul, gospel, rhythm and blues, jazz, funk, and classical music. Additionally under Criterion A, the property is significant for its association with persons significant in the past, including both local and international music producers and recording artists. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the property exemplifies the cultural, economic, social and historical heritage of the community, standing as a remnant of the neighborhood’s once-abundant stock of film exchanges, record labels, and other entertainment industry service buildings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 210-12 N. 12th Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A and J.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:44:55

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Attorney Nino Tinari represented the property owner.
- Patrick Grossi and Ben Leech represented the nomination.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Cooperman asked if the property owner or a representative of the property owner is in attendance.
 - Mr. Farnham responded that the staff has not had contact with the property owner, other than mailing the notice letters.
- Mr. Grossi summarized the significance of Sigma Sound Studios, and thanked those who had supported and assisted with research of the nomination.
- Mr. Leech summarized his experience researching the nomination, and the significance of Sigma Sound Studios.
- During the public comment period, Mr. Tinari announced that he was in attendance to represent the property owner. He stated that he had mailed a letter on 10 August 2020 to Mr. Farnham, informing Mr. Farnham of his client’s opposition to the nomination. He stated that, in addition to the letter, preparation for today’s hearing would require Mr. Tinari and his client to have additional time. He stated that he was attempting to communicate a request that the matter be continued until he has an opportunity to put together a defense regarding the proposal to designate the property as historic. He commented that the property was zoned for a condominium structure in 2019, and the historic marker is across the street. He summarized that

he needs time to present a valid and proper response, and that he is requesting a continuance to a future meeting so that he may present testimony on behalf of the property owner.

- Ms. Cooperman responded that the Committee had already begun its review of the nomination and therefore could not consider a continuance request. He noted that the Committee is an advisory body, and provides a recommendation to the Historical Commission. She stated that Mr. Tinari can request a continuance at the Commission meeting, to allow time to prepare materials and present those to the Commission at a later date. She stated that continuances are routinely granted by the Commission. She suggested that Mr. Tinari contact the staff for more information.
- Mr. Reuter asked Mr. Tinari if he had previously stated that he had made a request to continue the matter and had sent that request to the Commission.
- Mr. Tinari responded that he mailed a letter to Mr. Farnham at the Historical Commission office located at 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor.
- Mr. Reuter asked Mr. Tinari if he understood that City offices have been closed since 18 March 2020.
- Mr. Tinari responded that his understanding is that mail is still being received.
- Mr. Reuter asked Mr. Tinari if he has a copy of the request that he could either share on Zoom or by email. He stated that he is concerned if a continuance request was made, but was not received by the Commission owing to City offices being closed. He stated that this matter may likely get remanded back to the Committee, should Mr. Tinari produce additional materials and make a continuance request to the Commission. He stated that while it may be the practice of the Committee to not grant continuances once the review of a matter has started, he is personally unaware of any rule or regulation which would prohibit the Committee from deciding to continue its review of the matter, to allow the property owner to produce a response.
- Mr. Farnham apologized to Mr. Tinari for not receiving his mail. He explained that the staff is occasionally visiting the office and checking mail, but not since the 10 August 2020 date that Mr. Tinari mailed the letter. He noted that the notice letter did suggest that property owners communicate with the Commission staff via email. He concurred with Mr. Reuter that there is nothing that prohibits the Committee from taking additional public comment and then making a recommendation that the Commission continue and remand the review of the nomination; however, the Committee and its Chair decide how to run the meetings.
- Ms. Barucco suggested recommending in support of the continuance to give Mr. Tinari an opportunity to present his defense of his position. She stated that it would be the fair thing to do, given the unusual circumstances of the time and the confusion surrounding mail pickup.
 - The Committee members agreed.
- Mr. Grossi opposed the continuance request. He commented that he has not heard anything from Mr. Tinari thus far that is material to the nomination or the historic significance of Sigma Sound Studios. He commented that concerns related to past development proposals are better handled by the Commission, as those issues are beyond the purview of this Committee. He suggested that unless there is some substantive challenge to the historic significance of Sigma Sound Studios and the claims made in the nomination, there is no reason why the Committee needs to continue the review of the nomination. He noted that a continuance would likely be granted by the Commission and that he would have no objection to it at that time.

- Ms. Cooperman asked Mr. Tinari if he anticipates preparing testimony and information that addresses the Criteria for Designation, which is the purview of the Committee, or whether he anticipates providing information on other subjects. She reiterated that issues related to zoning, financial matters, and other related matters are not within the purview of the Committee.
 - Mr. Tinari responded that he will address the nomination and will not go beyond that or include zoning matters or other matters that are not within the purview of the Committee.
- Ms. Cooperman stated that the Committee must allow Mr. Tinari the opportunity to present a counterargument.
- Ms. Barucco asked that Mr. Tinari be provided a deadline to submit additional materials.
 - Mr. Reuter observed that the Rules and Regulations provide guidance regarding submission deadlines.
- Mr. Reuter commented that the continuance itself is a recommendation to the Commission, and that the property remains under the jurisdiction of the Commission during the continuance period. He stated that the Commission will consider the continuance request at its 11 September 2020 meeting, where these concerns can be raised again. He noted that there is a zoning permit for this property but zoning permits do not affect potential designations.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Aaron Levinson supported the nomination and discussed the significance of Sigma Sound Studios.
- Jack McCarthy supported the nomination and discussed the significance of Sigma Sound Studios.
- Max Ochester supported the nomination and discussed the historic context of Sigma Sound Studios.
- Oscar Beisert supported the nomination and thanked the nominators and contributors.
- Aaron Levinson opposed the request for a continuance, and commented that he sees no reasonable counterargument that can be made against the historic significance of this building.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- It typically supports continuance requests proffered by property owners.
- The property would remain under the Historical Commission's jurisdiction during the continuance period.
- Its scheduled September 2020 meeting may be canceled, and therefore the next meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation may be the scheduled October 2020 meeting.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the Historical Commission continue the review of the nomination of 210-12 N 12th Street and remand it to the next meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation.

ITEM: 210-12 N 12th St.

MOTION: Continue and remand to next CHD meeting

MOVED BY: Lavery

SECONDED BY: Barucco

VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Lavery	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Douglas Mooney	X				
Total	6				

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee on Historic Designation adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Minutes of the Committee on Historic Designation 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.

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.