

**REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE
OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**TUESDAY, 26 MAY 2026
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
DAN MCCOUBREY, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN AUDIO RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following Committee members joined him:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Dan McCoubrey, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, Chair	X		
John Cluver, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Justin Detwiler	X		
Nan Gutterman, FAIA	X		
Allison Lukachik		X	
Amy Stein, AIA, LEED AP	X		
Sam Weiner	X		

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

The following staff members were present:

Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
Heather Hendrickson, Historic Preservation Planner II
Ted Maust, Historic Preservation Planner II
Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner III
Joshua Schroeder, Historic Preservation Planner I
Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, Historic Preservation Planner II
Alex Till, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons were present:

Alex Balloon
Andy Molholt
Cloud Gehshan Design
Debra McCarty
Dilworth Paxson
Hanna Stark, Preservation Alliance
Howard Haas
James Pearlstein, Pearl Properties
Jay Farrell
Jenine Sanzari
Jessica Senker
Kathy Dowdell
Matthew Wolfe
Nancy Pontone
Paul Schwedelson

Reed Slogoff, Pearl Properties
Rich Villa, Ambit Architecture
Ross Melnick
Rustin Ohler, Harman Deutsch Ohler Architecture
Ryan Solimeo, Harman Deutsch Ohler Architecture
Stephanie Rumer, Permex Permit Expediting
Steven Peitzman
Todd Werner, Baltimore Signsmiths
Yuhua Wang
Zachary Slogoff

AGENDA

ADDRESS: 4238-40 CHESTER AVE

Proposal: Construct eight duplexes
Review Requested: Review and Comment
Owner: SHRW Clark Park LLC
Applicant: Brett Harman, Harman Deutsch Ohler Architecture
History: Undeveloped land
Individual Designation: None
District Designation: Southeast Spruce Hill Historic District, Non-contributing, 7/12/2024
Staff Contact: Alex Till, alexander.till@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to construct eight duplex houses at 4238-40 Chester Avenue in the Southeast Spruce Hill Historic District. The site is currently an open lot that is classified as non-contributing in the historic district. Therefore, the Historical Commission's jurisdiction over the undeveloped site is review-and-comment only, meaning that the Historical Commission and its advisory Architectural Committee may offer non-binding comments on the application at public meetings, but may not approve or deny it.

Each of the proposed duplexes will be four stories tall with a garage entrance on the first floor and a tall mansard roof on the fourth. They will be primarily clad with charcoal colored Hardie plank siding and composite metal panels, with a small amount of brick around each entryway. Each building will also feature a roof deck with pilot house. Mansard roofs are plentiful on other buildings in the historic district, but the proposed mansards are much taller. The new buildings will be located on the boundary of the historic district though there are views of the sides and rear from within the district.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct eight duplexes.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The new structures will be compatible with the overall size and scale of the historic district.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 26 MAY 2026

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- The new structures will not be compatible with the massing and architectural features of the historic district. The dark colored, contemporary cladding materials are incompatible, and the mansards are out of proportion with the nearby historic houses.

STAFF COMMENT: The application does not satisfy Standard 9. The mansards are too tall and the cladding materials are inappropriate. In addition, the application should include more streetscape renderings and photographs showing the proposed houses in context with the historic buildings in the historic district.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:02:38

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Till presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Architect Rustin Ohler represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Ohler corrected the staff overview and described the buildings as eight single family homes and not duplexes. He went on to describe the existing lot as a vacant parcel that was part of the College of the Sciences for quite a long time. Before that, there was an apartment building on it called the Monterey. This proposal is to subdivide the lot into four parcels, each with two single family dwellings on it. Due to the slope of the site, the buildings appear as four stories from the front but are three stories at the rear. He additionally described the bays, materials, trim, balconies, and windows.
 - Ms. Gutterman asked Mr. Ohler to respond to the comments in the staff recommendation specifically.
 - Mr. Ohler addressed the mansard height and described it as necessary as the top portion acts as the parapet for the roof decks and is designed to conceal them from view below. He went on to say that their four-story design aims to match some of the other buildings in the neighborhood but is also due to the grade on the site.
- Ms. Gutterman asked how the mass and height compare to the immediate neighboring properties.
 - Mr. Ohler responded that none of the neighboring buildings front on S. 43rd Street like the proposed ones do. Behind them on Chester Avenue, there are three-story homes with mansard roofs and front porches which are set back from the sidewalk. The buildings to the south run along a street parallel to Chester Avenue and are three-story red brick buildings.
- Mr. Detwiler asked about the ceiling heights.
 - Mr. Ohler responded that they are ten feet on the first floor, and nine feet on the upper floor.
 - Mr. Detwiler commented that in traditional houses in neighborhoods such as this, the floor heights decrease going up the building. The combination of the nine-foot-high top floor ceiling with the deck and parapet make the houses look overly tall and out of proportion. He went on to say that he understands the attempt to make a multi-story design that reflects the surrounding buildings, but the high mansard along with the raised garage level makes the buildings appear too top heavy.

- Mr. Cluver suggested that adding a mansard to these new houses is not the right approach because they will end up being so much taller and out of proportion compared to the historic mansard buildings on Chester Avenue. He referred to the large apartment building that is located across the street on Chester Avenue with an entablature and parapet and suggested it may be a better architectural reference.
- Mr. McCoubrey suggested that lowering the parapet section of the mansard and adding a railing for the roof decks behind the edge of the mansard may be a better solution even if the railing is visible from the street.
- Mr. McCoubrey commented that most of the front facades are taken up by a bay, so they do not really read like bays. Additionally, they step up from the street level and are designed to appear as sets of twin houses, but they are not truly twins. He observed that there is a space between the two groupings of houses which takes away from what would be a more traditional grouping of twins, and does not follow the rhythm of most of the houses in West Philadelphia.
 - Mr. Ohler responded that most of the massing is being driven by zoning requirements as is the parking and garages.
- Ms. Stein commented on the materiality of the project. She stated that the proposed houses are mostly clad with a charcoal-colored siding with a little bit of brick, but that most of the surrounding houses are predominantly masonry. She suggested the use of more brick and less siding.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that the pilot houses look taller than they need to be and recommended their heights be reduced. He suggested that if the mansards are kept, they are wrapped around all the sides of the buildings to help the buildings look like distinct houses.
 - Mr. McCoubrey commented that it is difficult to maintain a consistent mansard here as the buildings step down along the length of the project. He observed that the rears of these buildings will be highly visible because the neighboring houses on Chester Avenue are set so far back.
- Ms. Stein commented that the garages seem out of context with the rest of the neighborhood. She observed that the result is an unbroken line of garage doors along the street with no yards or landscaping in between while the rest of the neighborhood has many trees and other landscaping features set between the houses and the streets.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that it is unfortunate that parking cannot be placed at the rear of the buildings.
 - Mr. Ohler responded that this would not be allowed by zoning.
- Mr. Cluver suggested that renderings which show the neighboring buildings be added to the application materials to help provide a sense of scale and context.
- Mr. McCoubrey suggested including a historic image of the site with the original apartment building.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Kathy Dowdell, a neighbor, agreed with the Architectural Committee's comments and emphasized the feedback related to the mansards, roof decks, and garages. She encouraged the architect to look closer at other properties in the district for inspiration and suggested if the houses were reduced in size, they could fit parking in the rear.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The site at 4238-40 Chester Avenue is currently an open lot that is classified as non-contributing in the historic district. The Historical Commission has “review and comment” jurisdiction over this application.
- The proposed new houses for the site fit within the general character and scale of buildings in the district, but the proportions of the mansards are too tall and the extended first floors with garages are not in keeping with the character of the district.
- The proposed materials contain too much dark colored siding and should incorporate more brick or masonry.
- The grouping of the houses into two clusters with space between is not in keeping with other properties in the district.
- The application should be amended to include more drawings or renderings of the surrounding buildings to show context.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application partially satisfies Standard 9. The new buildings will be compatible with the overall size and scale of the historic district, but will not be compatible with the massing and architectural features of the historic district. The dark colored, contemporary cladding materials are incompatible, and the mansards are out of proportion with the nearby historic houses.

ADDRESS: 2108 SANSOM ST

Proposal: Construct rooftop addition

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: Matthew Germinaro and Kate Hanlon

Applicant: Adam Zangrilli, Zangrilli Design

History: 1870

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, Contributing, 2/8/1995

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

OVERVIEW: This in-concept application proposes constructing a rooftop addition on a two-story former carriage house that is classified as contributing to the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District.

The application includes preliminary floor plans and a section drawing showing a mansard roof treatment at the third-floor level and a partial fourth floor with a roof deck set back from the front elevation.

Renderings suggest the appearance of the building with the proposed addition but appear to have been produced using generative artificial intelligence and depict inconsistent proportions, window configurations, and the existing building's relationship to surrounding buildings. Given the discrepancies between these images, it is difficult to evaluate the overall visual impact of the proposed work.

In 2018, the Historical Commission approved a rooftop addition to this property proposed by a previous owner, which included a third floor set back 11 feet, 3 inches. A roof deck and pilot house on top of the addition were to be set back an additional 12 feet, 6¼ inches. That

application went through various iterations with the aim of minimizing the visibility before being approved by the Historical Commission.

The Historical Commission has approved small additions and roof decks on a number of former carriage houses in this historic district. Generally, approved rooftop additions or decks have been set back from the primary façade to mitigate visibility. In one exception at 2110 Chancellor St, where the size of the lot precluded a setback, the additional third floor was designed in a contemporary style to differentiate it from the historic building.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct third floor, partial fourth floor, roof deck and pergola.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 3: Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*
 - The use of a mansard roof may create a false sense of historical development that does not reflect the true history of the building.
- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The section drawing suggests the height of the proposed third floor is in scale with the existing buildings, but the quality of the other images makes this compatibility difficult to fully evaluate.
- *Roofs Guideline | Recommended: Designing rooftop additions, elevator or stair towers, decks or terraces, dormers, or skylights when required by a new or continuing use so that they are inconspicuous and minimally visible on the site and from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining historic features.*
 - The third floor of the addition as proposed would be highly visible and, depending on the setback of the fourth-floor elements, they may also be visible from Sansom Street. A visibility study should be included with a future application for final approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standards 3 and 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:24:35

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Maust presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- No one represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. Detwiler emphasized that the submitted images need to be accurate. He expressed skepticism about the proportion and scale shown, which suggests the use of artificial intelligence applications. He expressed openness to the scale of the proposed overbuild, describing it as sufficiently differentiated from the historic building. He noted the tall neighboring building and suggested that an overbuild here would not appear out of scale.

- Mr. McCoubrey argued that the overbuild would be significantly visible from the intersection of Sansom Street and S. Van Pelt Street. He expressed concern that it would lead to overbuilds on the neighboring buildings.
 - Mr. Detwiler pointed out that the Historical Commission receives many applications for overbuilds and this one is in an appropriate scale, based on the proportions shown in the various submitted images. He noted that for final approval, the Architectural Committee would require much more documentation of the proposal.
- Mr. Cluver expressed concern about the impact on the adjacent buildings, which currently read as roughly symmetrical in scale and in the style of the windows. He asked for clarification of how the run of buildings is broken across parcels.
 - Mr. Maust responded that the building immediately to the east of the subject property is a contemporary linking building, which is considered non-contributing to the historic district, but is part of a parcel with the subsequent building and collectively addressed as 2110-12 Sansom Street.
- Mr. Cluver commented that the trellis shown on several of the renderings exaggerates the lack of a setback of the roof deck, which does not meet the Standards.
 - Mr. Detwiler agreed.
- Ms. Stein commented that she might be in support of the massing of the mansard, but the detailing shown on the renderings draws too much attention to the dormers and detracts from the historic façade. She suggested that it should be simplified.
 - Mr. Detwiler commented that the inconsistent renderings make it very hard to judge what the detailing of the mansard roof would be or what plane the windows would occupy.
- Mr. Cluver referred to the addition approved by the Historical Commission in 2018 and said that he found the setbacks of that proposal to be preferable.
 - Mr. McCoubrey agreed. He echoed the staff recommendation, speculating that the mansard roof would create a false history, given that adding one to a carriage house would be very unusual. He expressed a preference for a more contemporary addition set back from the front façade, though it might not need to be as large a setback as the 2018 proposal. If the Historical Commission were to approve a mansard roof, he suggested that its detailing should be more contemporary to differentiate it from the historic structure.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The massing of the proposed addition may be compatible with the surrounding context, or the inclusion of a setback would better meet preservation standards.
- Any roof deck or roof accessory, such as a trellis or pergola, should be set back from the front elevation.
- If a mansard roof is selected, it should be more contemporary in design to be differentiated from the historic structure and avoid a false sense of history.
- The submitted images are inconsistent which makes it difficult to evaluate the proposal.
- Accurate elevation and section plans and details about materials are necessary for final approval.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- As proposed, the application fails to satisfy Standard 3 as the mansard roof may create a false sense of historical development.
- The application fails to satisfy Standard 9 as it is not sufficiently differentiated from the historic resource and the lack of documentation makes it difficult to assess its compatibility with the historic resource and historic district in terms of massing, features, and materials.
- The application fails to satisfy the Roofs Guideline as the addition and the roof deck on it would not be inconspicuous from the public right-of-way.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted 6 to 0 to recommend denial, pursuant to Standards 3 and 9 and the Roofs Guideline.

ITEM: 2108 Sansom St					
MOTION: Denial					
MOVED BY: Cluver					
SECONDED BY: Gutterman					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner	X				
Total	6				1

ADDRESS: 6701-19 N BROAD ST

Proposal: Install signage

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Broad Street Professional Building, LP

Applicant: Stephanie Rumer, Permex Permit Expediting

History: 1923; Oak Lane Trust Company Bank; Ralph B. Bencker, architect; addition, 1926

Individual Designation: 12/13/2024

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Dan Shachar-Krasnoff, daniel.shachar-krasnoff@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application for the Divine Light Behavioral Health Center proposes installing raceway mounted channel letter signs on the east and west facades of the historic building at 6701-19 N. Broad Street. The letters include internal LED lighting. The company's red and blue logo is proposed where clocks were originally located on three sides above the entry and in the middle of the east and west facades. The clocks were not extant at the time of designation. The wedge-shaped building was constructed in 1923 for the Oak Lane Trust Company Bank with an addition in 1926.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Install illuminated channel signs.

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STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The application does not specify how the fasteners anchoring the signs will be installed in the façade. Installing metal fasteners in the stone façade could lead to spalling, cracking, and other damage.
 - The scale of the signs, which is very large, is incongruent with the historic facades.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 39:00

PRESENTERS:

- Mr. Shachar-Krasnoff presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Permit expeditor Stephanie Rumer and sign contractor Todd Werner represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. McCoubrey asked about the location of entrances into the building.
 - Ms. Rumer responded that entrances are located at the front point of the wedge-shaped building, and at the north end of the west side.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked about the existing awnings over the entrances.
 - Mr. Werner replied that the existing awning brackets will be recovered reflecting the Divine Light Behavioral Health Center's occupancy.
- Ms. Stein observed that signs usually denote entrances to buildings, while the proposed signs in this application are for motorists.
- Ms. Stein referenced the pin lettering shown in a historic photograph from the time of construction of the bank. She opined that pin letters were appropriate in this case.
- Mr. Weiner suggested installation of long vertical banners instead of the horizontal letter signs.
 - Mr. Werner responded that banners are less durable than mounted letters. He stated that each sign would have a single raceway with only a few bolts, limiting the project's invasiveness.
- Mr. Weiner asked about the electricity for lighting the signs.
 - Mr. Werner responded that one hole would be drilled into the building for each word of the sign to provide power.
- Mr. Cluver noted that the application calls for five holes into the facade per word.
 - Mr. Werner noted that openings for all intrusions would be 1/4" in diameter, hidden behind the raceways and three penetrations per sign, not five.
- Mr. Detwiler expressed support for the puzzle piece logos where clocks were originally installed. He continued that it would be preferable to install new awnings at locations where the existing awnings are located.
- Ms. Gutterman expressed concern that the intrusions would be wider than the mortar joints and would be irreparable.
 - Mr. Werner responded that he was unsure if the intrusions would be wider or narrower than the mortar joints.

- Ms. Gutterman commented that the signs are disproportionately large compared to the scale of the building. She recommended the use of banners, canopies, and logos to identify the business rather than the signage as proposed.
- Mr. Werner asked if the proposal would be more acceptable if the signs were not illuminated.
 - Ms. Gutterman responded that the proposed signs are out of character with the building.
- Mr. McCoubrey suggested banners on free-standing poles as a potential solution.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked if the application had gone through the zoning process.
 - Ms. Rumer responded that it has not been submitted for zoning review yet, and that they wanted to get Historical Commission approval first.
- Mr. Cluver recommended that the applicant includes awning covering drawings in the application for review by the Historical Commission.
- Mr. Weiner encouraged the applicant to consider removing the shrubbery at the front of the building and placing a sign at that location.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The application proposes installing internally illuminated raceway-mounted channel letter signs on the historic building at 6701-19 N. Broad Street.
- The signs would extend along most of the building's east and west facades.
- The existing entrance awnings are to be recovered as part of the proposal.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The proposed signs are too large and occupy too much of the east and west facades, failing to satisfy Standard 9.
- Installing fasteners in the stone façade could lead to spalling, cracking, and other damage.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

ITEM: 6701-19 N Broad St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Cluver SECONDED BY: Gutterman					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner	X				
Total	6				1

ADDRESS: 3331 POWELTON AVE

Proposal: Legalize window replacement and masonry work

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Yuhua Wang and Andrew Jefferson Xiao

Applicant: Yuhua Wang

History: 1883

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Powelton Village Historic District, Contributing, 11/10/2022

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes legalizing windows installed and masonry work completed without the Historical Commission's approval or a building permit at 3331 Powelton Avenue. This residential property is located at the corner of Powelton Avenue and N. 34th Street. Owing to its location, the front and side facades are visible from the public right-of-way. Most existing windows were non-historic, but some may have dated to original construction.

In June 2025, the staff was notified of exterior work on the property, specifically the removal of multiple window sashes and masonry infill on the third floor. The staff communicated with the owner and advised them that future window replacement or exterior masonry work would require the Historical Commission's approval. Several months later, despite this guidance, the Commission's staff observed that new vinyl windows had been installed throughout the building and the original wood brickmolds were removed for installation of the new windows. Third-floor rear windows were built down, and smaller windows were installed. Since the third-floor windows' plank frames had been removed, it also appears that a steel lintel may have been installed.

The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a violation for the unpermitted work on 2 May 2026. Soon thereafter, the applicant was made aware of the violations on the property, prompting this request for legalization. The property is licensed for eight rental units. Owing to the fact that the building has more than two units, a building permit is always required to replace windows regardless of whether it is designated as historic or not. In this instance, because the property is designated as historic, a building permit and the Historical Commission's approval is always required to replace windows.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Legalize windows installed and masonry completed without a permit or approval.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
 - The new vinyl windows do not match the old windows in design and the brickmolds are missing. Brick infill, pointing and steel lintel installation on the third-floor windows was poorly done and does not appear compatible with historic building. This application fails to satisfy Standard 6.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 6.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:59:05

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Mehley presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Property owner Yuhua Wang represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Wang explained that when she purchased the property, she was attracted to the historical brick structure but now recognizes that the building's renovation has presented numerous challenges owing to its poor condition. She said that some window glass was broken at the time of purchase. Ms. Wang continued that although she knew the house was historically designated, she had heard from other people that if new windows matched the size and look of the existing windows, this would be acceptable. Ms. Wang summarized additional problems with the property including water infiltration and structural issues. She acknowledged the conversation with Ms. Mehley in 2025 but commented that she and her contractor did not receive follow-up emails about the window replacement requirements. She pointed out that the new replacements matched the configuration and size of the windows in the building at the time of purchase.
- Mr. Cluver asked about the photographs included with Ms. Wang's cover letter and if these were showing the condition of the property prior to work being done.
 - Ms. Wang replied that the pipe shown in the photograph was broken and during the process of fixing it, it was determined that the basement slab also needed to be fixed. She said that in fall 2025 the project completely stopped and that in September or October they received a notice of violation for the missing windows and openings. Ms. Wang said that they replaced the windows in response to this violation from the Department of Licenses and Inspections. She also mentioned that the property had a stop work order, so for six to seven months she could not access the property. Ms. Wang added that raising the third-floor windows on the back wall was a way to stop the water infiltration. She acknowledged that the third-floor window openings are now smaller and the windows installed did not match the ones they replaced.
- Mr. Weiner asked if the original brickmolds were retained.
 - Ms. Mehley replied that all historic brickmolds were removed during the recent window replacement. She pointed out that a few original windows in the rear bay were also removed.
- Mr. Cluver summarized the three issues that the Architectural Committee must consider with this application. He noted that the first issue was that the new windows replaced mostly non-original windows, therefore he felt there was more latitude in terms of what goes back in. Mr. Cluver continued that the second issue to consider was the removal of the brickmold and original bay windows, which were considered distinctive features and should have been replaced in-kind. He said the third issue was the third-floor windows that had been built down. Mr. Cluver said there should be some middle ground for resolving this alteration because he does want to be responsible for insisting something go back to its original condition when it may be causing long-term harm to the building.

- Mr. McCoubrey pointed out that the third issue may be a roof drainage downspout problem rather than a window issue. Mr. Cluver and Mr. McCoubrey contended that insufficient roof flashings may also be part of the problem.
 - Ms. Wang asked Mr. Cluver what material could be used for the replacement brickmold. She expressed her intent to match the original brickmold. Ms. Wang contended that the original brickmold was in poor condition before they removed it.
- Mr. Weiner stated that Ms. Wang likely received bad advice and guidance from her contractor.
- Mr. Detwiler said that the replacement vinyl windows in the bay were a poor match to the original windows. He observed that the new windows were a better match to the storm windows rather than the historic wood windows.
- Mr. Weiner pointed out that it was important not to confuse the size of the window opening with the size of the glazing. He stated they are two different things, and that the glazing should be more of the concern in this situation. Mr. Weiner said it appeared that the contractors spent a lot of time building frames to install the new windows into and that this was not the correct approach for this property.
 - Mr. McCoubrey added that some of the window heads appear to have been dropped down from their original locations.
- Ms. Gutterman said the front windows may have originally contained arched windows. She asked Ms. Mehley if she could provide more information. Mr. Cluver asked what the condition of the arch was at the time of designation.
 - Ms. Mehley confirmed that the 3331 Powelton Avenue was constructed as part of a matching row. She said a historic photograph showed the original front windows were double-hung arched windows with single light sashes. Ms. Mehley stated that the property was designated in 2022, and at the time of designation the windows were primarily vinyl. She added that the front replacement windows did not have an arch in 2022 at the time of designation.
- Mr. McCoubrey said that even though the windows were vinyl at the time of designation, the replacement windows should be more historically appropriate than what was installed. He stated that the Architectural Committee's obligation is to determine if the completed work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. He said the work performed does not meet the Standards.
- Ms. Gutterman pointed out that the windows installed would not have been approved if they had been presented to the Historical Commission in advance of installation. She explained that the Architectural Committee does not have the jurisdiction to approve work that does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, but the Commissioners could vote otherwise.
- Mr. Detwiler commented that the Architectural Committee sympathizes with the maintenance and construction issues raised by the owner and appreciates what had been done to make it right, but the windows needed to be replaced in the correct way with certain details and materials.
- Ms. Gutterman pointed out that the contractor could have used plywood to seal the opening rather than purchasing incorrect windows.
- Mr. McCoubrey asked that the applicant provide the window specifications and installation drawing for review by the Historical Commission.
- Ms. Stein recommended that Ms. Wang consider certain concessions, such as proposing to replicate the character-defining Queen Anne windows in the bay. Ms. Stein opined that this may be an effective approach with the Historical Commission

as it may be more amenable to Ms. Wang's situation if specific solutions were offered to resolve the violation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Debra McCarty commented in opposition to the application. She stated that she had reported the unpermitted work to the Department of Licenses and Inspections. She commented on the inappropriate window material, and urged the Architectural Committee not to use the condition of the property as an excuse to violate rules and regulations.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- Most of the windows were replaced with vinyl windows prior to historic designation in 2022, but original brickmolds were still extant along with several Queen Anne windows. The historic brickmolds and bay windows were removed by the applicant during the recent window replacement activity.
- The build down of the third-floor rear window openings may not resolve the water infiltration issue from the roof. It is possible the cause is unrelated to the window size and location.
- The vinyl replacement windows are smaller than the original windows and do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in terms of details and material.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application fails to satisfy Standard 6, as the new vinyl windows do not match the old windows in design and the original brickmolds were removed. Brick infill, pointing and steel lintel installation on the third-floor windows was poorly done and does not appear compatible with historic building.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 6.

ITEM: 3331 Powelton Ave					
MOTION: Denial					
MOVED BY: Cluver					
SECONDED BY: Gutterman					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner	X				
Total	6				1

ADDRESS: 1910 CHESTNUT ST

Proposal: Remove marquee; install storefront

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: 19R Chestnut Partners LP

Applicant: Reed Slogoff, Chestnut Square Associates LP

History: 1928; Boyd Theater, Sameric Theater; Hoffman & Henon, architects

Individual Designation: 8/9/2008

District Designation: None

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

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to remove the theater marquee and vestibule walls, and add a storefront system at the headhouse of the Boyd Theater at 1910 Chestnut Street. The Boyd Theater was an Art Deco movie palace constructed in 1928. The Historical Commission first designated the Boyd Theater in April 1987. In response, the property owner appealed the designation and submitted a financial hardship application proposing complete demolition. The Historical Commission denied the hardship application, owing to incompleteness. The appeal of the designation wound its way through the courts and, eventually, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court vacated the designation in July 1991. The Supreme Court reconsidered the case in November 1993 and upheld the vacating of the designation. The Boyd Theater was nominated a second time in August 2001; the Historical Commission rejected the nomination in April 2002, refusing to designate the theater. The theater ceased showing movies in 2002. The Department of Licenses and Inspections issued a demolition permit for the theater in June 2002, but the demolition was not undertaken. The Preservation Alliance nominated the theater a third time in May 2008; the Historical Commission designated it in August 2008. The owner of the theater submitted a financial hardship application proposing to demolish the theater in September 2013. In March 2014, the Historical Commission found that the Boyd Theater could not be used for any purpose for which it is or may be reasonably adapted and approved its demolition. After the demolition was approved, the property was sold to the current owner, who demolished the auditorium section of the theater but retained the headhouse or entranceway section on Chestnut Street. In June 2015, the Historical Commission approved a redevelopment project for the site that included the construction of a tower along Sansom Street, where the auditorium had been located, and the rehabilitation of the theater headhouse along Chestnut Street including the reconstruction of the 1950s-era theater marquee and installation of a glass storefront system at the open outer lobby. The work to the Boyd Theater headhouse was eventually undertaken for a sports bar called Bankroll, which opened in 2023, but then closed after just five months of operation. The space has been vacant since that time. The application proposes to remove the theater marquee, which is not original. The marquee structure dates to a 1950s replacement; the cladding and lighting was installed in 2018. Stone panels to match the façade would be added to cover the scars where the marquee attaches to the façade. The application also proposes adding a storefront system at the plane of the front façade and installing light fixtures. The vestibule walls, which would then be interior, would be removed. The application asserts that the vacant commercial space cannot be leased in its current form and that the removal of the marquee and vestibule walls, and installation of the storefront, will make the space more desirable to potential tenants.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Remove marquee and vestibule walls; install storefront.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 26 MAY 2026

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PRESERVATION@PHILA.GOV

PHILADELPHIA'S PRINCIPAL PUBLIC STEWARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The removal of the 1950s-era marquee and vestibule walls does not comply with a strict reading of Standard 9, but allowing for these alterations will help to ensure that the important historic building is repurposed and self-sustaining.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the vestibule walls are documented prior to removal, with the staff to review details including stone panel samples.

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 01:35:10

RECUSAL:

- Leonard Reuter announced that he will likely need to recuse owing to his representation of the Preservation Alliance in 2013 and 2014, when he was in private practice, related to litigation surrounding the demolition approval.

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Chantry presented the application to the Architectural Committee.
- Property owner Reed Slogoff and architect Rich Villa represented the application.

DISCUSSION:

- Mr. McCoubrey stated that the removal of the marquee is a significant change, and that a marquee of any kind would be preferable to what is shown in the applicant's rendering. He opined that the building without its marquee no longer reads as a movie theater.
- Mr. Cluver commented that the request to remove the marquee because it is interfering with advertising is odd, because advertising is the job of the marquee. He noted that applicants are typically looking to add signage, not remove it. He observed that the rendering is missing any form of signage whatsoever for a new tenant, and that any application that involves removing the marquee should include information on how new signage will be added.
- Ms. Gutterman questioned the removal of the marquee when it would be ideal signage for a new tenant.
 - Mr. Slogoff responded that it does not work that way. He noted that his company has years of experience with this property, and it is simply not marketable. He stated that the marquee changes the entire experience, and more than 120 prospective tenants have provided commentary that the marquee as signage is not of value to them.
- Ms. Gutterman asked if a new tenant would want to put signage on the front of the building.
 - Mr. Slogoff responded that they would, and it would be governed by the zoning code.
 - Ms. Gutterman stated that it would also be governed by the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission.
- Mr. Detwiler observed that this is one of several applications reviewed by the Architectural Committee in recent years that is seeking permission to alter a historically designated building for a potential tenant, but with no specific tenant or plan in place. He stated that the Architectural Committee is governed by the

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, which speaks to character-defining features of a building. He referred to the marquee as character-defining, and said that the Committee is being asked to evaluate the stripping of the building of its character-defining feature without a tenant-specific proposal for new signage.

- Mr. Detwiler asked about the proposed changes to the vestibule area. He questioned the design, given that it only adds a few additional feet of depth to the interior.
 - Mr. Slogoff confirmed that the flooring is proposed for removal. He explained that the recessed vestibule is currently very dark, being overshadowed by the marquee, and has become an area where unhoused and other people congregate because it is removed from the sidewalk. He stated that it cannot be solved with lighting, it is already a difficult market for retailers, and the feedback he has received is that this is an extremely different condition than what is typical for retailers to be able to operate successfully, which is why the space has not been leased.
- Mr. Weiner agreed that a marquee is an important feature, but questioned if the feature has already been lost given that the original long vertical sign was removed long ago, and the existing marquee is a cartoonish version of the historic design. He stated that he agrees with the staff's recommendation of approval for the removal of the existing marquee. He commented that Pearl Properties has done many great projects in Center City and he expects that whatever goes into this space will be of the same quality.
 - Ms. Gutterman questioned if the existing marquee only looks cartoonish because of the Bankroll graphics and not because of its size or shape.
- Mr. Detwiler asked for clarification on the date of the existing marquee.
 - Ms. Chantry responded that the marquee structure itself dates to the 1950s, and the cladding and lighting date to 2018.
- Ms. Gutterman suggested altering the graphics of the marquee rather than removing it entirely.
- Mr. McCoubrey suggesting altering the marquee to make it a little less imposing.
- Ms. Gutterman expressed frustration at being asked to review an application for a "what-if" scenario of being able to then lease the space once the historic fabric has been removed.
- Mr. McCoubrey suggested that the new storefront could be shifted to be behind the historic brackets rather than in front of them.
 - Mr. Villa clarified that the brackets will not be removed, but confirmed that the proposal is to place the storefront on the street side of the brackets.
 - Ms. Gutterman responded that this changes the entire understanding of the building as a movie theater, by removing the marquee and moving the storefront out to the street. She stated that she understands the need for security and future signage, but without knowing who the tenant is and therefore what that would look like, she cannot support this application.
- Mr. Cluver stated that the marquee is so character-defining and its removal would completely change the nature of the building. He stated that the storefront, however, is more of a gray area. He noted that the current location of the storefront is already a compromised location, given that the entrance doors were historically set back even further from the street. He stated that the request to bring the storefront out to the sidewalk is less of a stretch in terms of approval compared to the removal of the marquee.

- Ms. Gutterman argued that the issue is not just bringing the storefront out to the sidewalk, but also the removal of the finishes that remain from the theater.
- Mr. Cluver responded that it could be part of a discussion related to an approval for moving the storefront out.
- Mr. Detwiler stated that this building has suffered a thousand cuts and what survives is a compromise. He stated that the flooring, low masonry curves, and windows are historic, and he does not understand how six feet of depth is going to lease a building.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Matthew Wolfe commented that the marquee offers a marketing advantage. He opposed the application.
- Ross Melnick, co-founder of Cinema Treasures and professor of film media studies, commented in opposition to the application. He commented that the marquee can be seen from multiple corners and positions on the street, which provides prominence for tenant signage.
- Kathy Dowdell commented that the nomination calls out both the marquee and inset entrance as character-defining features of the building, which is what the Committee should focus its review on. She urged the Committee to recommend denial of the application.
- Howard Haas, representing Friends of the Boyd, commented in opposition to the application. He referred to several nearby former theaters where current retail tenants are utilizing marquees for signage. He noted that many Friends of the Boyd supporters emailed letters of opposition to the Commission staff, which were made available to the Committee and the public.
- Hanna Stark, representing the Preservation Alliance, commented in opposition to the application. She stated that the 2015 redevelopment approval specifically included restoration of the marquee and the Commission made it clear that the vestibule remained under its jurisdiction despite the addition of the storefront. She commented that the proposal does not meet Standard 9 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Architectural Committee found that:

- The building at 1910 Chestnut Street has always had a marquee, which is a character-defining feature of a movie theater. The current marquee structure dates to a 1950s replacement; the cladding and lighting were installed in 2018.
- The vestibule walls proposed for removal are original to the theater entrance.
- Any new retail tenant would require new signage.

The Architectural Committee concluded that:

- The application fails to satisfy Standard 9. The removal of the 1950s-era marquee and the installation of a storefront at the sidewalk destroys historic materials that characterize the property.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Architectural Committee voted 5 to 1 to recommend denial, pursuant to Standard 9.

ITEM: 1910 Chestnut St MOTION: Denial MOVED BY: Gutterman SECONDED BY: Cluver					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Dan McCoubrey	X				
John Cluver	X				
Justin Detwiler	X				
Nan Gutterman	X				
Allison Lukachik					X
Amy Stein	X				
Sam Weiner		X			
Total	5	1			1

ADJOURNMENT

START TIME OF DISCUSSION IN ZOOM RECORDING: 02:11:42

ACTION: The Architectural Committee adjourned at 11:19 a.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.