

How to Nominate an Individual Building, Structure, Site or Object to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

**A Publication of
the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia**



**PRESERVATION
ALLIANCE**

for greater philadelphia

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Revised by the Young Friends of the Preservation Alliance.

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Introduction



1016-18 South Street, Engine 11 Firehouse.
Credit: Adrian Trevisan

Protection of historic properties is important to preserving the character of Philadelphia as well as the legacies of its people and history. The Philadelphia Register of Historic Places allows for the preservation of historically significant properties nominated by anyone who wishes to safeguard an eligible building, structure, site, or object. The City of Philadelphia adopted its first historic preservation ordinance in 1955. This ordinance established the Philadelphia Historical Commission and provided it with authority to designate individual buildings of historic significance in order to protect them from demolition or adverse alteration. In 1985 and 2012, the City revised the preservation ordinance, adding the authority to designate structures, sites, objects, historic districts, and public interior spaces as well as individual buildings.

Since 1955, over 12,000 properties have been designated as historically significant and listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Approximately half of these buildings, structures, sites or objects are listed individually, while the others are located within nearly 30 historic districts approved by the Historical Commission. All types of buildings, structures, sites and objects can be designated and listed on the Philadelphia Register, provided they meet at least one of the requirements outlined in the **Criteria for Designation**. In Philadelphia, the criteria for historic designation are quite broad; architectural significance is not the only criteria for designating an historic property. Properties can be historically significant because of their relationship to people and events as well. The approximately 12,000 listings already registered include such diverse properties as houses, churches, hotels, apartment buildings, cemeteries, bridges, street surfaces, parks, stores, sculptures, and watering troughs. Each property has been listed on the Register because it possesses historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or educational value to the city, state or nation.



20-24 N. 40th Street, Hotel Powelton. Credit: Ben Leech

Although the City has designated a great many historic properties, there are still numerous historic properties that have not been included on the Philadelphia Register and are therefore not protected from demolition or adverse alteration. This includes properties of the late 19th and early 20th centuries — periods that were under-represented by nominations prepared when historic properties were first listed on the Register — and mid-20th century buildings now reaching an age when it is possible to judge their historical significance. Anyone may nominate a property, so don't hesitate to become an engaged preservationist!

Once a property has been listed on the Philadelphia Register the property cannot be demolished or the exterior altered without the approval of the Historical Commission. Individual landmarks represent significant aspects of the social, economic and architectural history of the city. It is, therefore, important to continue to identify buildings, structures, sites and objects suitable for designation and to nominate them for inclusion on the Philadelphia Register.



Walnut Lane Bridge. Credit: Aliya Turner

The Designation Process



Penn Treaty Park. Credit: Barbara Morehead

The designation process consists of seven steps, beginning with the identification of a property to be nominated and ending with the action of the Historical Commission on the Nomination. While this can be daunting on its face, this guide intends to simplify the process and make it easy to follow.

Identify a building, structure, site or object for possible nomination.

The designation process begins with the identification of a building, structure, site or object that may have historic significance and be worthy of listing on the Philadelphia Register. There are many ways to identify what may be suitable for listing on the Register, ranging from systematic research about historic events or notable architects to simply looking around your neighborhood or the places in the city that you visit. Take a walk around your neighborhood and see if there are examples of outstanding architecture, such as libraries, churches or houses. Look for interesting structures such as bridges or for historic objects. Talk to your neighbors and community leaders about the history of the neighborhood and important events that might have taken place there in the past. Look at your own home, place of worship, or a longstanding neighborhood business.



348 Green Lane. Credit: Celeste Hardester

Determine if the building, structure, site or object is already listed or is eligible.

Once having identified a building, structure, site or object that you think has historic significance the next step is to check the Philadelphia Register to see if the property is already designated. This can be done by going to the Historical Commission's website (www.phila.gov/historical) and following the instructions in the **Frequently Asked Questions** section of this handbook. If the property is not listed, the next step is to see if it meets one or more of the **Criteria for Designation** for eligibility.

Discuss the nomination with the staff of the Historical Commission.

Before beginning to prepare a nomination it is advisable to discuss the property with the staff of the Historical Commission. They will be able to give advice concerning the nomination and tell you if there is information about the property in the Historical Commission's files. The Historical Commission's office is in 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor. The staff can be contacted by phone at 215-686-7660 or via email at preservation@phila.gov.



Penn Treaty Park. Credit: Barbara Morehead

Prepare the nomination.

The next step is to prepare the nomination form and supporting documentation. This form is available on the Historical Commission's website, but is also attached to this handbook in the **Appendix**. The nomination form includes basic information about the property and requires two written sections as well as photographs of the property. To make it easier to prepare the form, this guide has been broken down section-by-section. Some sections may be easily completed (Address of Historic Resource, for example), while others will take more time and effort, including conducting research into the property's history.

Review by the staff.

Once a nomination has been submitted to the Historical Commission, it is first reviewed by the staff for correctness and completeness. The staff may ask for information to be added or revised, or it may add some information itself. When the application is considered complete, the staff schedules a meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation to review the nomination and notifies the owner that the property has been nominated and that a meeting of the Designation Committee has been scheduled. This notification must be given at least 30 days in advance of the meeting to review the nomination. The Historical Commission's jurisdiction over the property—meaning its authority to review proposals for alterations or demolition—begins from the date notice is sent to the property owner. However, it is advisable, especially if the owner is known to you, to have conversations early and often with the owner about the nomination of their property. They may be able to give you insights, historical information, or even documentation that may not be found at any repositories.

Review by the Committee on Historic Designation.

The Designation Committee is an advisory committee to the Historical Commission. It consists of members of the Commission and others who are knowledgeable about the history and architecture of the city. The Committee will hold a public meeting to consider the nomination and to determine if the property meets one or more of the criteria set forth in **Criteria for Designation**. The Committee may hear testimony from the Historical Commission staff, the person preparing the nomination, the property owner, and/or the general public as applicable. It may ask for revisions to the nomination or for additional information. It may make a recommendation to the Historical Commission for approval or denial or hold the application over for a second meeting.

Review and action by the Historical Commission.

The recommendation of the Designation Committee is usually presented to the Historical Commission at its next scheduled monthly meeting. The Historical Commission will review the nomination and the recommendation of the Designation Committee and will also hear public testimony, if any, on the nomination. It will then vote on the nomination and, if approved, the property will be listed on the Philadelphia Register. Owners of properties listed on the Register can obtain a plaque from the Historical Commission, for a nominal charge, to place on the property showing that it is listed on the Register. A property listed on the Register now has a level of protection from significant alteration or demolition, and the Commission reserves the right to review proposed changes to the property.



1016-18 South Street, Engine 11 Firehouse. Credit: Adrian Trevisan

How to Complete the Nomination Form

The nomination form (see **Appendix**) has nine numbered sections. The following is a step-by-step guide on how to fill out each section of the form and where to find the required information. Most of the information can be included in the space provided on the nomination form. However, some information may require additional pages. These should be attached with the number and title of the section at the top. For example, Section 7, “Significance,” requires a Statement of Significance to be attached to the application form; these pages should have as their heading “Section 7-Significance ” along with the page number.

Before reading the following description of how to fill out the nomination form, first look at the form in the **Appendix** to become familiar with its requirements. This handbook includes illustrative selections from actual nominations that have been approved. However, it may also be helpful to read other recent nominations before beginning a new nomination. Some recent nominations are included in the Nominations and Report Library section of the Preservation Alliance’s web site (www.preservationalliance.com) and others are located at the Historical Commission (<https://www.phila.gov/departments/philadelphia-historical-commission/recent-nominations-to-the-philadelphia-register-of-historic-places/>).

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION <small>SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)</small>	
1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with a Board of Revision of Taxes address) Street address: _____ Postal code: _____ Councilmanic District: _____	
2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE Historic Name: _____ Common Name: _____	
3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	
4. PROPERTY INFORMATION Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> fair <input type="checkbox"/> poor <input type="checkbox"/> ruins Occupancy: <input type="checkbox"/> occupied <input type="checkbox"/> vacant <input type="checkbox"/> under construction <input type="checkbox"/> unknown Current use: _____	
5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary.	
6. DESCRIPTION Please attach a description of the historic resource.	
7. SIGNIFICANCE Please attach the Statement of Significance. Period of Significance (from year to year): from _____ to _____ Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: _____ Architect, engineer, and/or designer: _____ Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____ Original owner: _____ Other significant persons: _____	
CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION: The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> (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; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or, <input type="checkbox"/> (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or <input type="checkbox"/> (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.	
8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES Please attach a bibliography.	
9. NOMINATOR Name with Title _____ Email _____ Organization _____ Date _____ Street Address _____ Telephone _____ City, State, and Postal Code _____ Nominator <input type="checkbox"/> is <input type="checkbox"/> is not the property owner.	

How to Complete a Nomination

Address of Historic Resource

See page 8

Name of Historic Resource

See page 8

Type of Historic Resource

See page 9

Property Information

See page 9

Boundary Description

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Description

See page 11

Significance

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Criteria for Designation

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Major Bibliographic References

See page 18

See also [How to Research](#)

Nominator

See page 19

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION <small>SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)</small>	
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1. Address of Historic Resource

For individual buildings, structures and sites, the address means the street address. This should include both the street name and number, and the zip code in which the property is located. Some buildings may not have clear street addresses, and the addresses of sites or objects may be hard to determine. Addresses can be checked with the City tax maps in City Hall, Room 163. The Historical Commission requires that the address conform with that used by the Office of Property Assessment and Atlas. This can be determined by going to the Atlas web site, a searchable property database (*atlas.phila.gov*) and looking under "property search."

If the address is not clear, the street intersection or similar information should be provided. The form also requires the councilmanic district. The City Council district the property is located in is also available on Atlas.

Example: 2528-32 N. 4th Street, 19133, District 7

The location of objects can be more difficult to define. If the object is located outdoors, the location can be indicated by its approximate distance from a street intersection; if the object is indoors, the location can be specified in terms of a particular room or by the distance from a clear point of reference such as the entrance to the building, and by the address of the building and its zip code.

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2. Name of Historic Resource

The nomination form asks for either or both the historic name of the property or the common name. The historic name refers to the name of the property at the time of its construction or the name most closely related to its major period or area of significance. The common name refers to the name of the property currently in use at the time of nomination. Quite often, the historic name and the common name are the same. For most private residences (other than those built for members of a recognizable family), use the street address as the common name and leave the historic name blank.

Example: Germania Turn-Verein; Knitter's Hall

Germania Turn-Verein was constructed in 1885 as a private gymnasium and meeting hall, one of several clubhouses built by German immigrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to promote physical education. After its closure, the property was used as a union hall and national headquarters for the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Works.

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3. Type of Historic Resource

Under type, check building, structure, site or object for the type of property being nominated. The definition of each of these terms is included in the **Frequently Asked Questions** section of this handbook.

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4. Property Information

The form requires three types of information about the property. Condition means the physical condition of the property—excellent to poor, or in a state of ruin. Occupancy means whether it is currently inhabited and in use, vacant or under construction. Current use means the activity currently in the building—residential, hotel, bank or other uses. To some extent, the property condition is subjective, and may not be readily apparent on initial inspection or when viewed from the street. Use your best judgement or consult a professional if warranted by the condition.

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5. Boundary Description

This section requires both a written description of the boundary of the property and a map of the property.

Written Description

For buildings, structures and sites, this narrative description of the boundary should begin at a fixed point, and then should describe a line encompassing the entire property, using compass directions, distances in feet, and clearly identifiable features, such as streets or property lines. The nomination includes everything included within the boundary described—that is, all buildings, the site itself and any other objects, appurtenances or features on the site. Therefore, the boundary description should be precise and should only include the exact property to be nominated. For an object, a boundary description might describe the size of the object.

The Historical Commission prefers that boundaries be drawn along rear and side property lines, and along the closest curb line, instead of extending to the middle of a street. Boundaries are often based on such factors as:

- historic and/or legally recorded lot lines;
- edges of manmade features, such as highways, parking lots and fences; and
- edges of natural features, such as rivers.

Property deeds include a written description of property boundaries. If the deed can be located, as in the Germania Turn-Verein example, that boundary description can be quoted and cited in the nomination. A survey of a property conducted subsequent to its construction may also prove helpful. Additionally, the City of Philadelphia's searchable Atlas database (Atlas.phila.gov) contains digitized deed documents for certain properties.

Example:

"Situated on the west side of Fourth Street at the distance of two hundred and fifty feet southward from the southside of Huntingdon Street and the Nineteenth Ward of the City of Philadelphia, containing in front or breadth on the said Fourth Street forty feet and extending of that width in length or depth Westwardly between lines parallel and with the said Huntingdon Street ninety feet to Leighgow Street."



Satellite view of parcel

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Map

A map should be included that delineates the boundaries described in the narrative description (showing the dimensions on it). The map could be a copy of a Sanborn map, a City Planning Commission property base map, Atlas, or something similar. If no other options exist, a Google Map may be acceptable, though it is recommended to double check the boundary and parcel data with deeds or tax information, as well as to make the property boundary clearly legible in the nomination document.

The Germania Turn-Verein nomination provides additional historic maps in the appendix. These maps are not required but will help make the argument for the building's historic significance. These maps can be found online at phillygeohistory.org. Additional resources are listed in ***How to Research a Building, Structure, Site or Object***.

Example: Parcel boundary of Germania Turn-Verein, see page 3



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6. Description

The description of the property consists of a written description of the present and original physical appearance of the property. The description can be complicated to write, as it should include a full description of the building, site, structure or object, its character, architectural style, materials and condition. The description of the property is easier to follow if it is accompanied by photographs, referenced in the text, showing key aspects of the property.

If there is more than one building on a site—for example, a house with a carriage house at the rear—and all are to be included in the nomination, or if there are site features or appurtenances to be included in the nomination, each should be identified and described separately.



West elevation entrance detail of the Germania Turn-Verein. Credit: Benjamin Leech



West elevation detail of the Germania Turn-Verein. Credit: Benjamin Leech

The description in the Germania Turn-Verein nomination is an example of a concise description. The style of the site or object will inform the length of the description. For additional examples that describe sites with more ornamental styles, see the **Appendix**.

The description of a property should include the following:

- The address of the property and the section of the city in which it is located.
- The type of property.
For example, buildings: rowhouse, twin, detached or semidetached house, multi-family, commercial building. Structures: bridge, water tower. Sites: cemetery, park. Object: fountain, statue, etc.
- The location of the resource in relation to its grounds.
- Any additional description of the property.
For example: built to property line, surrounded by a yard, terraced grounds, corner lot, raised yard, near the edge of the property, etc.
- The building materials of the property.
This should include a description of the current building materials and the original building materials if the building has been altered.
- The general plan or shape of the building, site, structure or object.
For example: H-plan, rectangular, L-shaped, etc.
- The important physical elements of the property.
*Basic elements, such as the windows, doors and roof should be described. Special attention should be given to prominent features, such as a tower, decorative moldings, or special roof materials and details. It is best to describe each element individually, with photographs to document each feature. The correct architectural terms should be used to describe the building elements, for example: lintels, sills, watertable, sash, cornice. The Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture by Cyril M. Harris (Dover Press 1977) or A Field Guide to American Houses by Virginia Savage McAlester (Alfred A. Knopf, 2013) may help provide the proper architectural terms for specific features. Some helpful terms are provided in the **Glossary**.*
- The architectural style of the building.
*What Style is It? by John Poppeliers and S. Allen Chambers, Jr., (John H. Wiley & Sons/Preservation Press, 2003), contains a description of the architectural styles of buildings from all periods. The **Glossary** provides a general overview of architectural styles.*

- A clear organization, beginning with the front or primary facade and describing the first story, second story, roof, etc., then moving on to the secondary facades.

Refrain from using terms such as left, right, front, back.

Instead, use compass directions to describe the location of elements on the building. Instead of writing "the front of the building," for example, write "the north elevation." It is also often helpful to describe an architectural "feature" element (for example, a turret) or a portion of the building which differs significantly from the rest (for example, a modern addition) separately, rather than incorporate it into the discussion of each facade.

- It is often helpful to supplement the description and current photographs of the property with historic photographs or drawings showing the property in its original form or at other periods of time.

Boundary Justification

Following the description, there should be a section explaining the reasons for selecting the boundaries of the property described in the nomination. If there is more than one building on a site or other appurtenances, it is important to specify whether all the buildings and appurtenances are included in the nomination and to be sure that all buildings or other elements included in the nomination are described. The justification can be as simple as "the boundary as described follows the property lines found on the original deed" or it can be more complicated. If you are leaving out a portion of the property or excluding an outbuilding, you should explain why in this section

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION <small>SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)</small>	
1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with a Board of Revision of Taxes address) Street address: _____ Postal code: _____ Councilmanic District: _____	
2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE Historic Name: _____ Common Name: _____	
3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	
4. PROPERTY INFORMATION Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> fair <input type="checkbox"/> poor <input type="checkbox"/> ruins Occupancy: <input type="checkbox"/> occupied <input type="checkbox"/> vacant <input type="checkbox"/> under construction <input type="checkbox"/> unknown Current use: _____	
5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary.	
6. DESCRIPTION Please attach a description of the historic resource.	
7. SIGNIFICANCE Please attach the Statement of Significance. Period of Significance (from year to year): from _____ to _____ Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: _____ Architect, engineer, and/or designer: _____ Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____ Original owner: _____ Other significant persons: _____	

7. Significance

The significance section is the most important component of the nomination. It consists of three parts: basic information about the building listed on the form, a checklist of the criteria for designation that apply to the property also on the form, and a written statement of significance to be attached.

Period of Significance

This means the period(s) of time in which the property achieved the significance for which it meets the criteria for listing on the Philadelphia Register. The period of significance can be the time when a property was constructed, the period of time during which a significant person was associated with it, the time span during which a certain cultural group was associated with an area, or some other period associated with the property. If a property achieved significance during several periods of times, mark each period.

Example: For the Germania Turn-Verein, the period of significance is 1885 to 1955.

Date(s) of Construction

Indicate the dates or years when the property was constructed and/or altered, or during which important events occurred that are related to the significance of the property or area. "Circa" or "between" dates are acceptable here, as long as evidentiary data can help to clarify them.

Architect, Engineer, and/or Designer

Indicate the name of the architect, engineer or architectural or engineering firm responsible for the original design of the property. If the property has been altered and the architect or engineer responsible for the alternation is known, list that also. An excellent source for information about Philadelphia architects is the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings website: www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/index.cfm.

For objects, indicate the name of the sculptor, artist or creator of the object, if known. Many vernacular buildings may not have an architect, engineer, or designer attributed to them; in that case, write "vernacular" – a term used to describe any architectural style that is unique to a region or period, often used for domestic structures that are not designed by a particular architect.

Builder, Contractor, and/ or Artisan

Indicate the name of the builder or contractor, if known. This information is often difficult to find, but may also be included in the information on the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings website.

Original Owner

Indicate the name of the original owner, if known.

Other Significant Persons

Other significant persons associated with the property should be listed, including persons significant in history that lived or worked at the property.

Example

625 S. Delhi Street is significant because (a) William and Letitia Still - important African American abolitionists and leaders once lived in this house and (b) the house was a station on the Underground Railroad.

Criteria for Designation

The form lists the criteria for designation. Check each box for which the property meets the criteria for significance. As many areas of significance should be checked as are relevant to the property and can be described in the statement of significance that follows. Only check a criteria if it is explicitly supported in the statement of significance. More are better, but only one is required for consideration. For the criteria listed in the Germania Turn-Verein nomination, see pages 7 and 8.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:	
The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):	
<input type="checkbox"/>	(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; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
<input type="checkbox"/>	(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.
8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES Please attach a bibliography.	
9. NOMINATOR	
Name with Title _____	Email _____
Organization _____	Date _____
Street Address _____	Telephone _____
City, State, and Postal Code _____	
Nominator <input type="checkbox"/> is <input type="checkbox"/> is not the property owner.	
PHC USE ONLY	
Date of Receipt: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Correct-Complete	<input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect-Incomplete
Date of Notice Issuance: _____	Date: _____
Property Owner at Time of Notice	
Name: _____	
Address: _____	
City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____	
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____	
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____	
Date of Final Action: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Designated	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejected
3/16/07	

Statement of Significance

The second part of this section of the form is a statement of significance for the building, structure, site, or object. The statement of significance is the most important part of the nomination. It describes how the property meets the criteria for historic designation and why it is important for the property to be listed on the Philadelphia Register. This section should identify clearly each of the criteria that the property meets (as listed on the form and in **Criteria for Designation**) with a good description of why and how the property meets each criteria selected. The Germania Turn-Verein nomination provides a clear statement of significance and then individually addresses each applicable criterion. In addressing each individual criteria, the nomination should include relevant images to illustrate the building's historic significance.

The statement of significance should include a description of the history of the property and information related to each of the criteria. Depending on the criteria chosen, information about historical figures associated with the property or other ancillary histories may be helpful. Because of the importance of this section of the nomination, it may be appropriate to seek assistance in the writing of the statement of significance from an historical society in your area or from the Historical Commission staff, the Preservation Alliance, or from architects, historians or other professionals familiar with the architecture and history of Philadelphia. Often, assistance can be obtained from graduate students at historic preservation programs in Philadelphia area universities.

It is also useful to include with the statement of significance copies of historic photographs, drawings, newspaper articles or other documents that testify to the significance of the building, structure, site or object being nominated.

As with the description, organization is important and each section should be intended to demonstrate a clear argument for selected criteria. You are not preparing a narrative so much as an argument for historic significance.

Criteria for Designation of an Individual Building, Site, Object or Interior

A building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object, or district may be designated 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; or
- b. Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or
- c. Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
- d. Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or
- e. Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or
- f. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or
- g. Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or
- h. Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or
- 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.

Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code

Selecting Criteria When Nominating A Building, Structure, Site or Object to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

Selecting your criteria is one of the most important steps in preparing a nomination, particularly as it relates to the Statement of Significance. In order to be formally designated, a building or object only needs to meet one of the ten possible criteria for designation, though it's often preferable to cite more than one.

For some buildings, the criteria may be obvious and self-selecting. If you are nominating a building primarily for its architectural merits, Criteria C, D, and E may all be relevant.

If the nomination candidate is more architecturally modest or vernacular in form, with significance more heavily rooted in social or cultural history, Criteria A, B, or J may be the more appropriate selections.

Other Criteria, like G and H, are less commonly cited and typically reserved for sites and properties that clearly meet those descriptions. Criterion I is specific to archaeological potential.

Whatever you select, it is important that the Statement of Significance makes a clear and coherent argument for those specific criteria. Don't feel compelled to cite multiple criteria if your Statement does not directly address them.

Think of the criteria as your thesis statement (i.e. this building/site/object demonstrates X). It's the job, then, of the Statement of Significance to prove that statement. You should likewise organize your Statement around your selected criteria and make it clear which criterion a given section or set of paragraphs is speaking to.

When in doubt, opt for Criterion J. It is a broad criterion that can speak to multiple types of buildings and local histories. Criterion A is similarly worded, though typically reserved for properties with broad national significance and/or clearly demonstrated citywide significance (i.e. City Hall, Union League, etc.).

For guidance on the above don't hesitate to reach out to Historical Commission and/or Preservation Alliance staff.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION: The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> (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; or <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or <input type="checkbox"/> (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or <input type="checkbox"/> (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or <input type="checkbox"/> (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or <input type="checkbox"/> (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.	
8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES Please attach a bibliography.	
9. NOMINATOR Name with Title _____ Email _____ Organization _____ Date _____ Street Address _____ Telephone _____ City, State, and Postal Code _____ Nominator <input type="checkbox"/> is <input type="checkbox"/> is not the property owner.	
PHC USE ONLY Date of Receipt: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Correct-Complete <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect-Incomplete Date: _____ Date of Notice Issuance: _____ Property Owner at Time of Notice Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____ Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____ Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____ Date of Final Action: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Designated <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	

Major Bibliographic References

This section should list references used to document and support assertions made in the statement of significance. If the nomination includes quotations, they should be cited, either within the text or in footnotes. The following are examples of correct bibliographic form. For further information, consult The Chicago Manual of Style.

(Book) Gallery, John Andrew, ed.
Philadelphia Architecture, A Guide to the City, 2nd Edition.
 Philadelphia, PA: Foundation for Architecture, 1994.

(Article) Roach, Hanner Benner.
The Planting of Philadelphia, A Seventeenth Century Real Estate Development. The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 92, January 1968.

Bibliographic references should indicate whether the property is included in any historic or cultural resource survey. There have been many historical, architectural, archaeological and engineering surveys of properties and neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Such surveys include National Register districts, individual listings on the National Register, surveys by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or the City of Philadelphia. Many surveys can be found online, including:

The National Register of Historic Places
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/research/nris.htm>

The Historic American Buildings Survey
 The Historic American Engineering Record
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer/>

Philadelphia Architects and Buildings
<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/index.cfm>

Pennsylvania's State Historic and Archaeological Resource Exchange (PA-SHARE)
<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/PA-SHARE/Pages/default.aspx>

If the property is included in a survey the following information about the survey should be listed:

- Title of the survey, such as the National Register of Historic Places, the Historic Resources Survey of Pennsylvania by the Bureau for Historic Preservation, the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record.
- Date of the survey, especially the date of listing on the National Register, if applicable.
- Repository or place where the survey can be found: The State Historic Preservation Office, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; the Philadelphia Historical Commission, Philadelphia, PA., etc.

Additional information on resources and archives for conducting research can be found in *How to Research a Building, Structure, Site or Object*.

9. Nominator

This section requires the name and contact information of the person(s) or organization that prepared the nomination. It also includes two boxes to check indicating whether the nominator is or is not the owner of the property.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:
The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):
☐ (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; or,
☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
☐ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
☐ (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.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR
Name with Title _____ Email _____
Organization _____ Date _____
Street Address _____ Telephone _____
City, State, and Postal Code _____
Nominator ☐ is ☐ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY
Date of Receipt: _____
☐ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: _____
Date of Notice Issuance: _____
Property Owner at Time of Notice
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____
Date of Final Action: _____
☐ Designated ☐ Rejected 3/16/07

Photography



Digital photography makes it easy to provide complete photographic documentation of the building, structure, site or object as part of the nomination. For nominations of buildings, structures, sites or objects the Historical Commission requires photographs that document each facade of a building visible from a public street or right of way - as well as close-up photographs of special architectural details or features from a public street or right of way - and different views of structures, sites and objects sufficient to give a complete understanding of the appearance of the historic resource being nominated. Photographs should show the general character of the site and any other features of the site being included in the nomination. The facade photographs should include an unobstructed view of the entire facade from sidewalk to roof. The photographs should be shot from relatively straight-ahead so that the details of the building are clear. Each print should be identified with the following information as a caption within the text.



- the name of the property;
- the address of the building, structure, site, or object, including the street and building number;
- a description of the subject of the photograph: for example, "south elevation" or "window detail, north elevation;" and
- the date on which the photograph was taken.

The best conditions for photography are bright, overcast days. Sunny days can easily cause too many shadows, which detract from the documentation aspect of the photography. Whenever possible take photographs at a time of the year when the trees are bare. Leaves can obscure details of buildings and defeat the purpose of documentation.

The following are examples of good and poor quality photographs.

If photographing an unobstructed view is a challenge, annotating the photograph for further clarity is acceptable. In the examples above, the nominator contextualized the location of the top photo by annotating the bottom photo.

348 Green Lane, credit: Celeste Hardester

The photograph below is a bad photo because it does not provide a clear view of the Germania Turn-Verein's facade. The photo on the left is a good photo that clearly illustrates one of the building's facades.

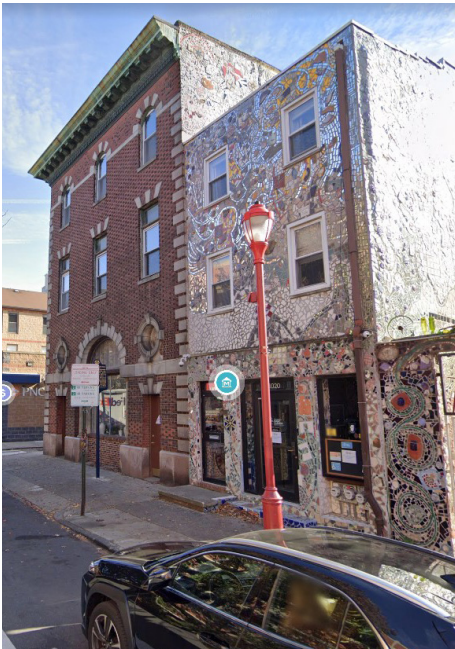


Germania Turn-Verein. Credit: Ben Leech



Germania Turn-Verein. Credit: GoogleMaps

The photograph on the left is a bad photo because it is not clear what is the subject of the photo. The photo below is a good photo. It is clear that the subject is the Engine 11 Firehouse and illustrates its facades.



Engine 11 Firehouse. Credit: GoogleMaps



Engine 11 Firehouse. Credit: Adrian Trevisan

Example

The following pages are the complete nomination form for the Germania Turn-Verein. Accepted by the Historical Commission, this example illustrates a well researched and succinctly written nomination that expertly uses images to support its argument for listing on Philadelphia's Register of Historic Places.

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: 2528-32 N. 4th Street

Postal code: 19133 Councilmanic District: 7th

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Germania Turn-Verein; Knitters' Hall

Current/Common Name: True Light Pentecostal Church

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☒ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: Church

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1885 to 1955

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1885

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: _____

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____

Original owner: Germania Turn-Verein

Other significant persons: _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☒ (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; or,
- ☒ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☒ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (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.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach

9. NOMINATOR

Organization Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia Date March 3, 2020

bentleech@gmail.com;

Name with Title Benjamin Leech, consultant Email patrick@preservationalliance.com

Street Address 1608 Walnut Street, Suite 1702 Telephone 215-546-1146

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19103

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 3 March 2020

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 15 May 2020

Date of Notice Issuance: 15 May 2020

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: True Light Pentecostal Church

Address: PO Box 60818

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19133

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 17 June 2020

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/3/18

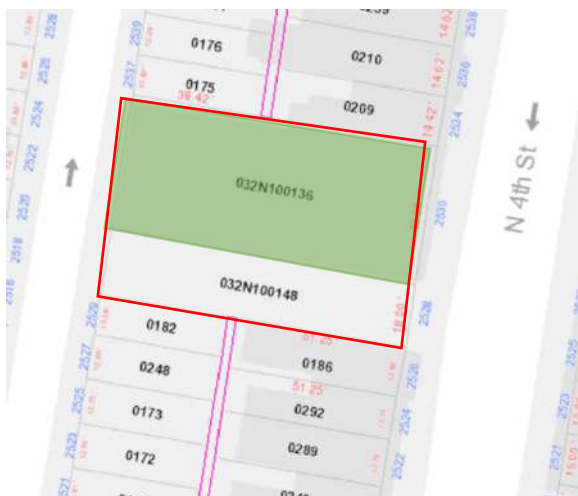
5. Boundary Description





This nomination proposes to designate a portion of the property currently known as 2528-32 N. 4th Street (OPA Account #777372000), which includes two deeded parcels, 2528 N. 4th Street (Registry Plan Number 32N-100-148), and 2530-32 N. 4th Street (Registry Plan Number 32N-100-136). The nomination limits the proposed designation to 2530-32 N. 4th Street, and excludes the vacant lot at 2528 N. 4th Street, which was not historically associated with the original parcel.

The following boundaries reflect the historic dimensions of 2530-32 N. 4th Street, Germania Turn Verein (depicted in green below):

Situate on the west side of Fourth Street at the distance of two hundred and fifty feet southward from the south side of Huntingdon Street in the Nineteenth Ward of the City of Philadelphia, containing in front or breadth on the said Fourth Street forty feet and extending of that width in length or depth Westwardly between lines parallel with the said Huntingdon Street ninety feet to Leithgow Street.



-  Property boundary for 2528-32 N. 4th Street
-  Boundary of proposed nomination

2528-32 N. 4th Street is outlined in red; 2530-32 N. 4th Street is highlighted in green.

6. Physical Description

The former Germania Turn-Verein, or Turner's Hall, is a three-story, stucco-clad masonry structure occupying the full width and depth of a 40-foot by 90-foot midblock parcel fronting North 4th Street in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. The building's primary elevation faces east onto 4th Street with a rear elevation facing west onto Leithgow Street. A low-pitched gable roof sits behind an elaborate gabled parapet crowning the front elevation, which is designed in an eclectic Queen Anne style incorporating Italianate and German *Rundbogenstil* elements [Fig. 1]. The rear (west) and side (north and south) elevations are unadorned facades with minimal fenestration [Figs. 2-3]. The building shares part of its north party wall with an adjacent two-story rowhouse. The building was constructed c.1885 as a gymnasium and meeting hall for the Germania Turn-Verein. The architect is unknown.

The 4th Street elevation is three bays wide, with a central entryway flanked by symmetrical side bays. The tall two-story raised entrance is currently accessed by a contemporary concrete stoop and ramp. A double-leaf doorway with replacement door units is crowned by a tall casement transom framed by an elaborate arched pressed metal hood. The hood is carried on engaged Ionic colonettes resting on projecting brackets. An assortment of rosettes, scrolls, and stylized foliage decorate the hood and its supporting brackets. Two tall, two-story segmental arch windows flank the doorway. The bottom thirds of each window have been infilled with stucco, but the upper portions retain the majority of their original stacked double-hung wood sashes, turned mullion columns, and rosette-studded lintels. These windows also feature pressed-metal hoods with prominent keystones.

The upper floor features three round-arched window bays, each featuring a pair of double-hung windows set below blank lunettes and framed by engaged Corinthian colonettes. Between and above these windows, four massive corbelled brick piers rise from a foliated impost band, each pier topped with a pressed metal finial cap. A bracketed cornice stretches between the piers, with a central gabled parapet set between the two inner piers. Each pier is capped by a pressed metal finial.



Figure 1: East (Fourth Street) elevation



Figure 2: West elevation entrance detail



Figure 3: West elevation detail



Figure 4: South (side) and west (front) elevations (Cyclomedia/Philadelphia Atlas)



Figure 5: : East (Leithgow Street) and south (side) elevations (Cyclomedia/Philadelphia Atlas)



Figure 6: East (Leithgow Street) and north (side) elevations (Cyclomedia/Philadelphia Atlas)

7. Significance

The former Germania Turn-Verein, or Turner's Hall, was constructed in 1885 as a private gymnasium and meeting hall serving Kensington's once sizable working-class German-American community. It is a rare surviving local example of a building type that proliferated across the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when German immigrant followers of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) established hundreds of Turner associations ("turner" is the German word for gymnast) to promote physical education, German culture, and progressive politics. The Germania Turn-Verein was one of at least seven such Turner associations active in Philadelphia at the height of the movement, but one of only two whose clubhouse still stands.

In 1918, the hall was acquired by the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers (AFFFHW), one of the most progressive and influential industrial unions of its era. Thereafter known as Knitters' Hall, the building served as both a local union hall and the union's national headquarters at a time when Kensington was the nation's largest producer of full-fashioned hosiery and the AFFFHW was at the vanguard of the American labor movement. The building played a central role in some of the most consequential labor actions in Philadelphia's history, including the 1930 Aberle Mill Strike in which violent unrest claimed the life of union member Carl Mackley, whose funeral drew a reported 60,000 sympathizers to a mass demonstration in nearby McPherson Square.

As both an architecturally distinctive example of a surviving neighborhood turnverein hall and as a site of profound historical significance to the labor movement of the early twentieth century, the former Germania Turn-Verein merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. It satisfies the following criteria for historic designation as set forth in the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance §14-1004 (1):

- 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;

and

J: Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

The Turner Movement and German-American Identity

The roots of the Turner movement trace back to the Napoleonic Wars of the early 19th century, when a series of Prussian military defeats led the charismatic German educator and political activist Friedrich Ludwig Jahn to begin promoting physical fitness as a means of bolstering pan-German patriotism and resistance to the French occupation of Prussia. Now widely recognized as the father of modern gymnastics, Jahn established the first *turnplatz*, or open-air gymnasium, in Berlin in 1811. Here, young men gathered for organized exercise on Jahn's specially-devised balance beams, pommel horses, parallel bars, and other now-standard gymnastic equipment. In early 1813, Jahn helped organize the Lützow Free Corps, a volunteer militia that proved instrumental in the Prussian Army's eventual victory over Napoleon. A number of Jahn's "Turners" enlisted in the force, and their success led to the proliferation of Turner associations, or *turnverein*, across Prussia and the nascent German Confederation. The Turner movement remained politically active and closely associated with



Figure 7: Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852), founder of the Turner movement (Wikipedia Commons)



Figure 8: Berlin Turnplatz, 1817 (<https://www.dhm.de/lemo/bestand/objekt/der-turnplatz-in-der-hasenheide-in-berlin-1817.html>)

pan-German nationalism and the anti-clerical Free Thinker movement in the run-up to the Revolution of 1848, whose ultimate failure sent many Turners into exile in the United States. These so-called “Forty-Eighters” quickly established *turnvereins* in cities across America, including Cincinnati (1848), New York City (1848), Philadelphia (1849), Baltimore (1849), and Brooklyn (1850).¹ By 1855, seventy-four American Turner societies boasted approximately 4,500 members.²

As in their native land, German-American Turner associations continued to promote physical education as a vehicle for German identity and progressive politics under the motto “a sound mind in a sound body.”³ Turners were vocal supporters of abolition and opponents of temperance, proclaiming in a 1855 national platform that “slavery... [is] unworthy of a republic

¹ Metzner, Henry. *A Brief History of the American Turnerbund*. Pittsburgh: National Executive Committee of the American Turnerbund, 1924, p. 8.

² Pumroy, Eric L. and Rampelmann, Katja. *Research Guide to the American Turner Movement*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996, p. xviii.

³ “Roxborough Turners Records,” https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/mss/finding_aid_3056_roxborough.pdf

and not in accord with the principles of freedom” and that “prohibition laws [are] undemocratic in theory and not feasible in practice.”⁴ Turners served as bodyguards at President Lincoln’s inauguration in 1861 and funeral in 1865; upon the outbreak of the Civil War, an estimated 6,000 Turners enlisted in the Union Army.⁵ Many *turnverein* also had strong ties to the labor movement and socialism, though some associations were more radical than others.⁶ Over time, the radicalism of the founding “Forty-Eighters” was somewhat tempered through assimilation and expansion; while some clubs remained hotbeds of political agitation (particularly in the industrial Midwest), others sought a more neutral, apolitical identity. One cause drew particular interest for clubs across the political spectrum, however: the introduction of physical education into the public school system. Turner associations across the country took the lead in lobbying their state and local governments to develop physical education curriculum and raised funds for the necessary equipment, and Turners served as program directors and instructors in many school districts.⁷

By the turn of the 20th Century, German Americans “were perhaps the best-organized, most visible, and most respected group of newcomers in the United States,” notes historian Russell Kazal.⁸ In addition to their raw numbers (Germans were the nation’s most populous “foreign stock” by the 1910s), German immigrant communities were characterized by a strong *verein* culture that supported a prodigious number of civic associations in addition to the Turners; shooting clubs (*schützenverein*), singing societies (*maennerchor*), German-language theaters and libraries, and mutual benefit associations were among the many civic institutions found in German-American communities across America. Often these clubs erected purpose-built headquarters, and *turnverein* halls in particular-- given their need for high ceilings and large open spaces-- were particularly suited to grand architectural expression. While no one style predominated, consciously Germanic identifiers (*rundbogenstil* windows, German-language

⁴ Metzner, p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁶ Wagner, Ralf. “Turner Societies and the Socialist Tradition,” *German Workers’ Culture in the United States, 1850 to 1920*. Hartmut Keil, ed. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988, pp. 226-7.

⁷ Pumroy and Rampelmann, p. xxiii.

⁸ Kazal, Russell A. *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German-American Identity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006, p. 2.

inscriptions, etc.) were common. “In many cities and large towns of the East and Midwest it is still possible to find the grand, Germanic-style public buildings that the Turners built a century ago to serve as their meeting halls,” note historians Eric L. Pumroy and Katja Rampelmann. “Many.... have a size and former elegance that testify to the prosperity and prominence the Turner societies once enjoyed.”⁹ At the height of the movement in the 1890s, more than 300 American Turner associations boasted a combined membership of 40,000.¹⁰

A number of factors contributed to the movement’s subsequent decline; anti-German hysteria of the First and Second World Wars, the strictures of Prohibition, and general assimilation pressures all took a toll. As Pumroy and Rampelmann observe, “The decline of the Turners parallels the disappearance of the prosperous, self-confident German-American community that played such an important part in American urban life from the mid-nineteenth century through World War I, but which is now almost completely forgotten.”¹¹

Turners in Philadelphia

Philadelphia was an early and prominent center of Turner activities in America, and the movement’s subsequent growth and evolution in the city closely mirrored the trajectory of the

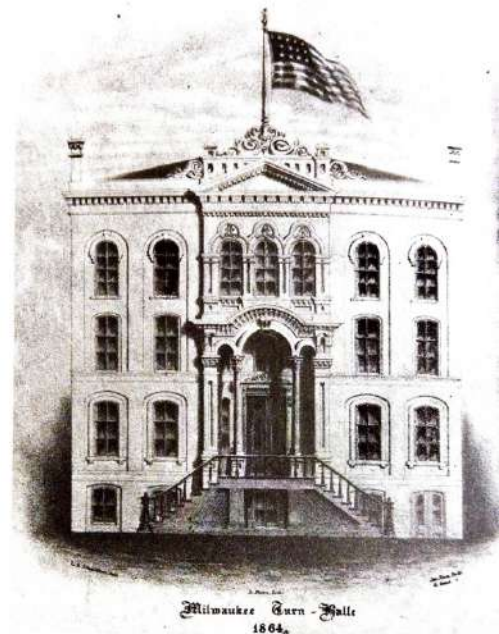


Figure 9: Milwaukee Turn-Halle, 1864
(Milwaukee County Historical Society)



Figure 10: Chicago Vorwaertz Turner Hall,
1896 (John Morris/Chicago Patterns)

⁹ Pumroy and Rampelmann, p. ix.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. ix.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. x.

movement nationwide. Philadelphia's first *turnverein*, the Philadelphia Turngemeinde, was founded by exiled "Forty-Eighters" in 1849, and the city hosted the first national Turnfest, an Olympic-like competition and festival, in 1851. A second national Turnfest held on Lemon Hill in 1854 was marred by nativist riots, an event which helped galvanize support for the movement within the German-American community and among allied progressives.¹²

Initially meeting in rented quarters and open-air exercise grounds, the Philadelphia Turngemeinde established its first *turnhalle* at 444 N. 3rd Street in 1858.¹³ After the Civil War, during which 120 Turngemeinde members served the Union Army in their own dedicated battalion, the movement's continued growth led to a formation of smaller *turnverein* clubs in neighborhoods across the city, including Kensington, Southwark, West Philadelphia, Brewerytown, and Roxborough-Manayunk. The Philadelphia Turngemeinde moved into a new purpose-built headquarters at 435 N. 6th Street in 1888, and again into a larger quarters on the northeast corner of Broad Street and Columbia Avenue in 1911. By 1925 an estimated 2,800 Philadelphians were members of a Turner association (including 2,400 in the central Turngemeinde).¹⁴

Germania Turn-Verein

Founded on March 22, 1866 by former members of the Philadelphia Turngemeinde, the Germania Turnverein was one of Philadelphia's earliest and most active neighborhood Turner associations in the immediate post-Civil War period. The club was officially incorporated in 1871 (an act which typically postdated an association's actual formation by a number of years) and initially met near 3rd and Noble Streets in Northern Liberties.¹⁵ In 1875 the club moved to 2245 Leithgow Street in Kensington, and nine years later purchased an undeveloped plot of land

¹² Metzner, pp. 9-12.

¹³ Finding Aid, Philadelphia Turngemeinde collection, German Society of Pennsylvania http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/pacscl/detail.html?id=PACSCL_GSP_MsColl22

¹⁴ Pumroy and Rampelmann, p. 224.

¹⁵ "A German Anniversary," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 23, 1889, p. 2; "State Legislature," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Jan. 26, 1871, p. 8;

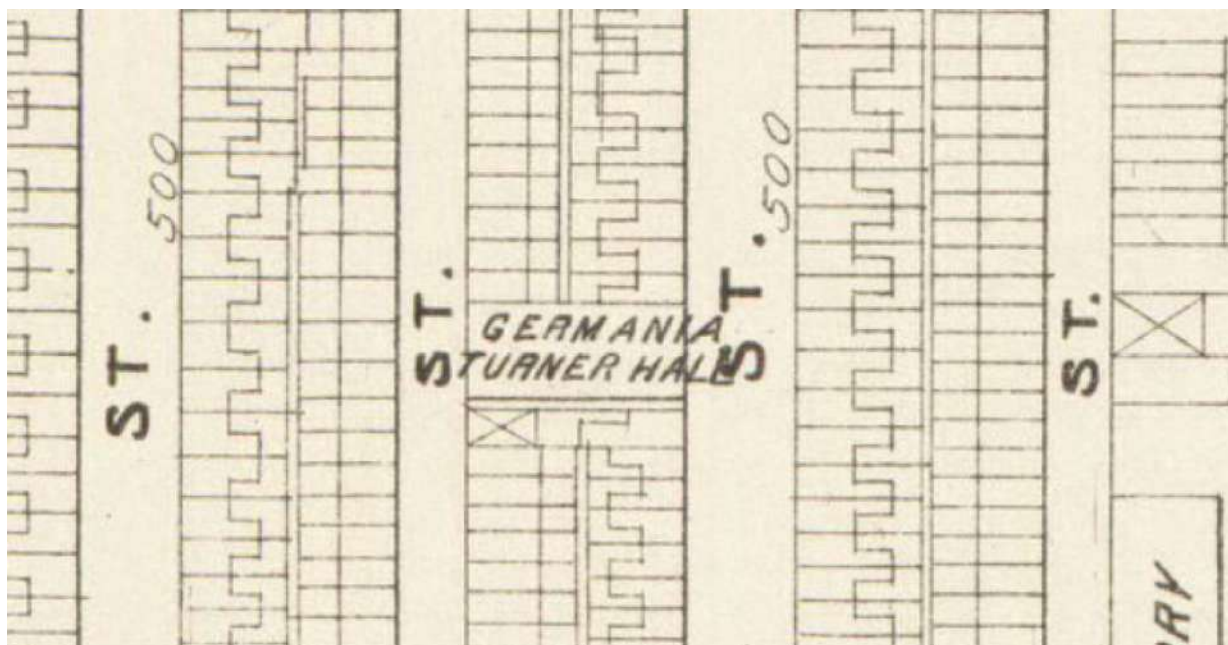


Figure 11: Baist's Property Atlas of the City and County of Philadelphia, 1885. Plan 27 (detail)

nearby at 2530 N. 4th Street for the construction of their first purpose-built *turnhalle*.¹⁶ The subject of this nomination, the building was completed in 1885 [Fig. 11] and designed by an unknown architect in an imposing, ornate Queen Anne style.

Located on an otherwise residential block of two-story rowhouses, the building's scale and architectural character stood out from its neighbors, with a dramatic corbelled brick cornice, monumental round-arched upper-floor windows, and a formal raised entrance and oversized ground-floor windows that lent the structure an unmistakable civic stature. Typical for Turner halls of the era, the building featured a large, high-ceilinged gymnasium and meeting hall, ancillary offices, meeting rooms, and a library.

By 1890 the association claimed 450 members and operated a gymnastics school for young men and women.¹⁷ Club members were regular participants in area competitions, exhibitions, and parades, and an auxiliary bicycle club, the Germania Turner Cyclers, was formed in 1895.¹⁸ In addition to hosting public lectures and various social events, the hall also briefly served as the

¹⁶ Deed Book DHL 4, p. 71, John Heine to the Germania Turn Verein, Dec. 31, 1875; Deed Book JOD 228, p. 59, Julius Herre to the Germania Turn Verein, Aug. 4, 1884.

¹⁷ "A German Anniversary," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 23, 1889, p. 2

¹⁸ "Bicycle News," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 23, 1895, p. 4.



Figure 12: Germania Turn-Verein membership card, 1906 (Library Company of Philadelphia)

headquarters of a local chapter of the *Liga für persönliche Freiheit* (League for Personal Freedom), a turn-of-the-century anarchist association.¹⁹

The Germania Turn-Verein remained active through the 1910s but appears to have suffered from shrinking membership and financial difficulties by the early 20th century. In 1905, the association briefly lost ownership of the building after being sued by a woman who broke her leg attending a Lady Order of Foresters dance at the hall. The woman, Mrs. J.T. Donohue, purchased the building at sheriff's sale after the club failed to pay her \$2,000 settlement, but ownership reverted back to the turnverein shortly thereafter.²⁰ The building was again lost at sheriff's sale, this time permanently, in 1917, when it was sold to the estate of John M. Schwehm to satisfy outstanding debts.²¹ The club's relationship to Schwehm, a wealthy Germantown textile mill owner who died in 1916, is unknown; the Germania Turn-Verein appears to have permanently disbanded after the sale.

¹⁹ Pumroy and Rampelmann, p. 223.

²⁰ "May Own Property Where She was Hurt," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Feb. 7, 1905, p. 14.

²¹ Deed Book JMH 265, p. 321, Julius C. Levi et al vs the Germania Turn Verein, Nov. 12, 1917.

The building survives today as one of only two known Turner halls still standing in Philadelphia. At least six other halls from late 19th and early 20th centuries have been lost to demolition, including three former Philadelphia Turngemeinde halls (444 N. 3rd Street, 429-35 N. 6th Street, and 1705 N. Broad Street [Fig. 13]), the Southwark Turnverein (1127-33 Wharton Street [Fig. 14]), the Columbia Turnverein (1309-13 N. 28th Street), and the West Philadelphia Turn- und Schul-Verein (7134 Elmwood Avenue). The other known surviving Turner hall, constructed by the Germania Turnverein of Roxborough and Manayunk in 1878, is a modest two-story building at 418 Leverington Avenue. Now known as the Roxborough Turners, the club is the last surviving Turner association in Philadelphia and still occupies its historic clubhouse [Fig. 15].²²



Figure 13: Philadelphia Turngemeinde, Ballinger & Perrot, 1911 (demolished). www.phillyandstuff.blogspot.com

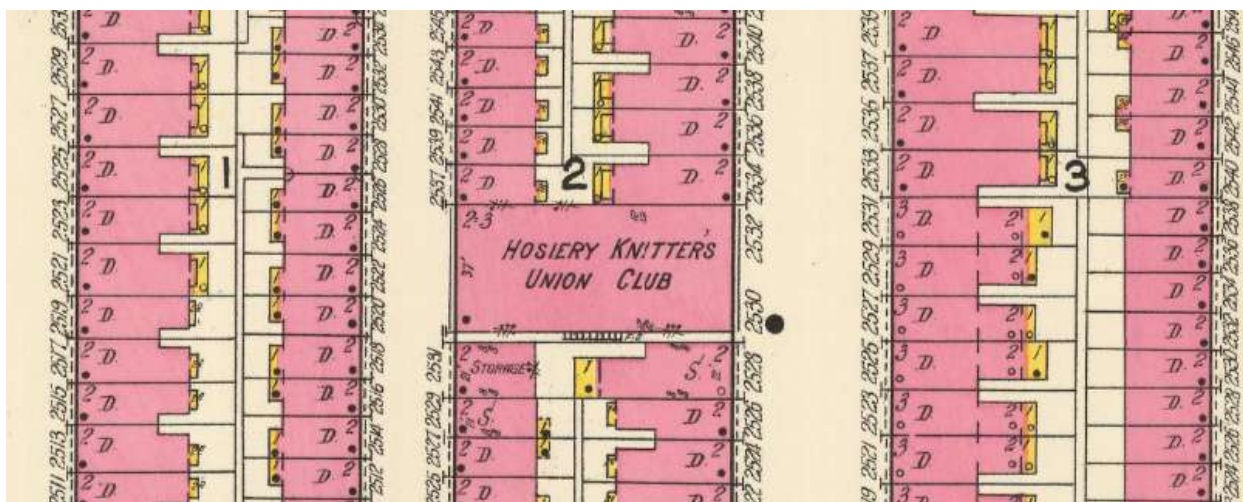


Figure 14: Southwark Turnverein, William Decker, 1893 (demolished). www.phillyhistory.org



Figure 15: Germania Turnverein of Roxborough and Manayunk, 1878, architect unknown. Cyclomedia/Philadelphia Atlas

²² Finding Aid, Roxborough Turner Records, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/mss/finding_aid_3056_roxborough.pdf



AFFFHW represented more than 9,000 workers locally and 14,000 nationally, with Knitters Hall playing a central role in some of the most consequential labor actions of the era.²⁵

Kensington's first full-fashioned hosiery mills were established in the late 1880s and employed primarily English- and German-born knitters who learned the trade in their native countries.²⁶ Early unionization efforts were sporadic and largely ineffectual until 1909, when approximately 50 workers banded together to form the United Textile Workers Local 706, later known as the Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers Union of Philadelphia and Vicinity, in an attempt to raise wages (which then averaged about \$18 a week) and reduce the standard work-week from 60 to 54 hours. The fledgling union joined in the 1910 general strike called by Philadelphia's streetcar workers, and later organized walkouts in the Peerless (1910) and Minura (1913) hosiery mills over wage cuts. Also in 1913, union members from Philadelphia and four other cities (Fort Wayne, Indiana; Dover, Delaware; Langhorne, Pennsylvania, and Brooklyn, New York) met at the Kensington Labor Lyceum to form the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers, the industry's first national labor coalition.²⁷ Policy disagreements soon led to a schism; in 1915 the



Figure 17: Full-fashioned hosiery. *Fortune*, January 1932

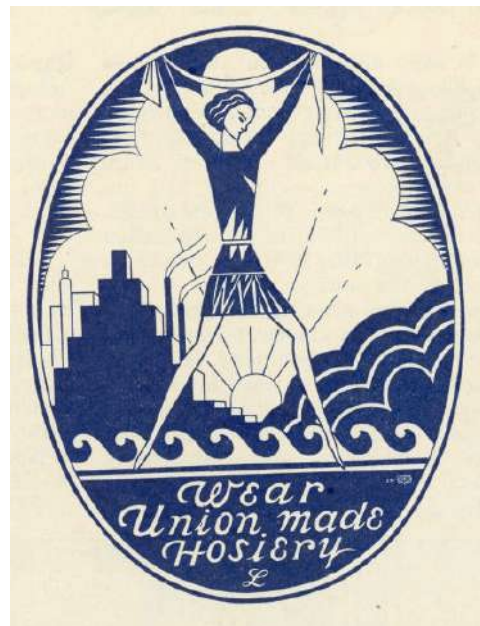


Figure 18: AFFFHW union logo, c. 1930. Wisconsin Historical Society

²⁵ Palmer, Gladys L. *Union Tactics and Economic Change: A Case Study of Three Philadelphia Unions*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932, pp. 109, 124.

²⁶ Rogin, Lawrence. *Making History in Hosiery: The Story of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers*. Philadelphia: American Federation of Hosiery Workers, p. 4.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.



TEXTILE WORKERS JUDGE LIMPIN' LIM'RICKS. These textile workers met at Knitters' Hall, Fourth street below Huntingdon, to make today's award in the lim'rick contest. In the picture, from left to right, are (front row) Gustave Geiges, president Full Fashioned Hosiery Knitters' Local Union 706, and Frank McKosky, vice president United Textile Workers of America; (middle row) Lillie Tripp, Elma Cifelli, Mabel Young and Mabel McEntee; (back row) Mary Jayes, Kathryn McClay, Anna V. Torrance and Louise Fahrback

Figure 19: Textile workers gathered at Knitters' Hall, Evening Public Ledger, Jan. 20, 1921

national AFFFHL voted to withdraw from the United Textile Workers, while Local 706 voted to exit the AFFFHL and maintain its affiliation with the UTW. The two organizations maintained a loose alliance but operated independently until 1922, when the AFFFHL rejoined the UTW and Local 706 rejoined the AFFFHL.

Local 706, at this time operating independently from the AFFFHL, purchased the former Germania Turn-Verein hall in the spring of 1918. After its interiors were gutted by a massive fire in February 1920, the building was renovated and reopened as Knitters' Hall by early 1921.²⁸

²⁸ "Turner's Hall is Burned," *Evening Public Ledger*, Feb. 3, 1920, p. 1; "Textile Workers Award \$100 to City Transit Clerk," *Evening Public Ledger*, Jan. 20, 1921, p. 2.

The timing was fortuitous, as 1921 proved to be a momentous year for Kensington's hosiery workers and Philadelphia's labor movement. That year a mill owners' lockout put more than a thousand hosiery workers out of work, and the union responded with a general strike that became, according to historian Sharon McConnell-Sidorick, "one of the longest and, for union members, most emotionally wrenching strikes in the neighborhood's history."²⁹ At issue was a manufacturers' drive to "double up" production by forcing workers to operate two machines at once, a practice which had long been a point of contention in the industry. The resulting stalemate left all but two of Kensington's mills shuttered or barely operational. As the strike stretched into the summer and fall, Knitters' Hall was a locus of activity and important gathering place for workers' meetings, food drives, and morale-boosting dances, concerts and movie screenings.³⁰ The strikers ultimately prevailed in late 1921 after a majority of mill owners withdrew their demands; union membership and enthusiasm thereafter soared. Their victory also led to the formal reunification of Local 706 with the national AFFFHL, which then established its national headquarters and regional Branch 1 offices in Knitters' Hall.³¹

With the Jazz Age now in full swing, exponential industry expansion thrust the AFFFHL and Kensington's mill workers into the vanguard of the American labor movement. A number of interconnected trends contributed to the union's growing strength in the 1920s. First, the union began organizing young female workers in prodigious numbers. "On the whole the spirit of the girls is more lively and more enduring than that of the men," noted one industry analyst at the time. "The hosiery workers say quite frankly that the girls carry their strikes."³² Second, union leaders grew more sophisticated in their strategies and tactics, adding a full-time director of research and communications in 1926, publishing the nationally-distributed *Hosiery Worker* out of Knitters' Hall, and coordinating extensive pro-union advertising campaigns. Third, as manufacturers expanded beyond Philadelphia into the less union-friendly Philadelphia suburbs and American South, the union raised its national profile by aggressively "following the machines" into a series of contentious and often violent organizing drives beyond Philadelphia.³³

²⁹ McConnell-Sidorick, Sharon. *Silk Stockings and Socialism: Philadelphia's Radical Hosiery Workers from the Jazz Age to the New Deal*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017, p. 41.

³⁰ Rogin, p. 12; McConnell-Sidorick, p. 46.

³¹ Palmer, p. 106.

³² Ibid., p. 109.

³³ Rogin, p. 14.



Figure 20: Union meeting at Knitters' Hall, c. 1931. Fortune, January 1932.

Fourth, the union developed an increasingly progressive social justice platform that addressed issues far beyond industry-specific wages and working conditions, organizing classes in labor history at Knitters' Hall and helping lead efforts to establish viable leftist third parties in local and national politics. While ultimately unsuccessful at the ballot box, these efforts later bore fruit in the progressive policies of President Roosevelt's New Deal.³⁴

In 1930, the AFFFHW and Knitters' Hall were again thrust into the national spotlight when the union organized a strike against the H.C. Aberle and Company hosiery mill to protest wage cuts and anti-union policies. On the evening of March 6, clashes between striking workers and non-union "scabs" turned violent when a group of armed strikebreakers opened fire on a group of strike supporters, killing 22-year-old union member Carl Mackley and wounding two others. Mackley's death sent shockwaves across the city and galvanized support for the strikers. On March 8, Mackley's body was laid in state at Knitters' Hall; thousands of mourners formed a line that stretched four blocks to Lehigh Avenue and 6th Street to pay their respects. The next day, a public funeral at nearby McPherson Square drew 65,000 Philadelphians to what is widely considered the largest labor demonstration in the city's history [Fig. 21], where the assembled crowds swore an oath to the labor movement which stated, in part, "I hereby solemnly promise that I will continue the struggle against low wages, poverty and oppression.... If necessary, we

³⁴ McConnell-Sidorick, p. 137ff.



Figure 21: Carl Mackley funeral, McPherson Square, 1930. *Fortune*, January 1932.

too will lay down our lives in order that all those who toil may be delivered from industrial enslavement by the un-American, avaricious industrial despots.”³⁵

Mackley’s death and the resulting mass demonstrations swung public opinion firmly behind the union, which ultimately prevailed in the Aberle strike. Unfortunately, however, Mackley would not be Kensington’s last union martyr. Tensions again reached fever pitch during the Cambria Silk Hosiery Mill strike of 1933, called by the union to protest “sweatshop conditions” at the non-union mill. Supporters of the strike included Cornelia Bryce Pinchot, the outspoken and progressive wife of then-governor Gifford Pinchot, who visited Knitters’ Hall to receive an honorary AFFFHW membership (and who had aspired for a union card “ever since I was a little girl,” she told the *New York Times* after the visit).³⁶ After mill owners were granted a court injunction prohibiting picket lines, further raising the ire of the strikers, demonstrations became more confrontational. For weeks, police escorted strikebreakers and arrested picketers. On August 31st, demonstrations turned violent when a group of armed strikebreakers fired into a crowd of protestors, killing union members Clem H. Norwood and Frank Milnor and wounding two women. A memorial for the slain workers drew 20,000 mourners to Knitters’ Hall [Fig. 22].

³⁵ Palmer, p. 163.

³⁶ “Mrs. Pinchot Becomes Hosiery Union Member,” *New York Times*, Aug. 22, 1933, p. 3.



Figure 22: Demonstration in front of Knitters' Hall, Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 2, 1933.

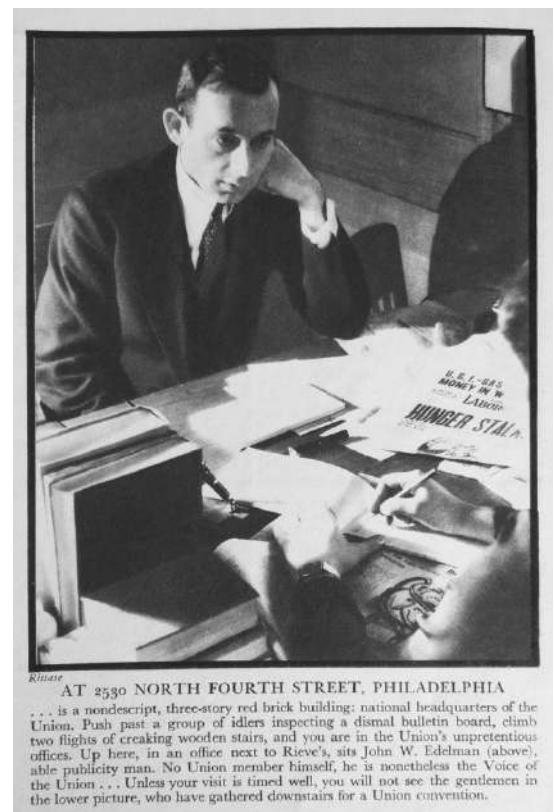
In late 1933, the union expanded to include seamless hosiery workers and was renamed the American Federation of Hosiery Workers (AFHW). After the merger, the national headquarters were relocated first to 2721 N. 5th Street (1934-1937) and later to 2319 N. Broad Street (1937-1965), but Knitters Hall remained active as a Local 706 union hall and the regional headquarters for the union's powerful Branch 1. The building contained the offices of several notable labor leaders during its tenures as national and regional headquarters, including Emil Rieve, Alexander McKeown, John Edelman, Anna Geisinger, and William Leader, among others.

Rieve, a Polish-born former factory worker and union organizer from Milwaukee, was elected the AFFFHW's first full-time president in 1929 and orchestrated its exponential growth in the 1930s. After resigning in 1939 to head the newly-formed Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA), Rieve also played a pivotal role in the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), serving as its first vice-president and playing a lead role in its merger with

the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1955. Upon his death in 1975, the *New York Times* described him as “one of labor’s most potent statesmen.”³⁷

Alexander McKeown, who succeeded Rieve as union president in 1939, was head of Branch 1/Local 706 from 1927 to 1934. Born and raised in Kensington, McKeown began working in hosiery mills at the age of 13 and was one of the hosiery union local’s founding members. He also ran for mayor of Philadelphia in 1931 on the Labor Party ticket, a Socialist third party with an office in Knitters’ Hall.³⁸

John W. Edelman served as the union’s director of research and public relations from 1926 to 1937. Born in America but raised on a socialist commune in England after the death of his architect father John H. Edelmann (a close friend and mentor to Louis Sullivan), Edelman was a gifted journalist and strategist who edited the union’s bi-weekly *Hosiery Worker* and directed national advertising campaigns promoting union-made hosiery [Fig. 18]. He was also instrumental in planning the union’s acclaimed Carl Mackley Houses, a groundbreaking experiment in workers’ housing designed by Oskar Stonorov and Alfred Kastner



Figures 22-23: *Fortune*, January 1932.

³⁷ Saxon, Wolfgang. “Emil Rieve, Unionist, Dies; Headed Textile Workers.” *New York Times*, Jan. 26, 1975, p. 48.

³⁸ “Alexander M’Keown of Hosiery Workers,” *New York Times*, July 12, 1961, p. 31; McConnell-Sidorick, p. 49.



Figure 24: Carl Mackley Houses, c. 1934. Temple University Special Collections Resource Center

and constructed by the AFFFHW at the height of the Great Depression. Developed in partnership with President Roosevelt’s Public Works Administration, the 284-unit apartment complex in Juniata Park opened in 1935 as the nation’s first federally-funded public housing project [Fig. 24]. Later in his career, Edelman helped found the National Council of Senior Citizens and was one of the main authors of the original Medicare program.³⁹

Anna Geisinger, a Kensington hosiery mill worker, was elected AFFFHW’s first female field organizer in 1928. In the 1930s she headed Branch 1’s “Committee of 80,” which organized major membership drives and strikes across Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Midwest, and the South. She also chaired a women’s division that hosted a popular series of Knitters’ Hall lectures and events. Described by the *Hosiery Worker* as “an excellent speaker, with excellent judgment and decision-making skills, and a credit to both men and women in the organization,” Geisinger was a regular headliner at union demonstrations and rallies across the country. Her work with the

³⁹ Edelman, John W. *Labor Lobbyist: The Autobiography of John W. Edelman*. Joseph Carter, editor. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1974, pp. 3, 49; Radford, Gail. *Modern Housing for America: Policy Struggles in the New Deal Era*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, p. 111ff.; “John W. Edelman, Former Head of Senior Citizens Unit, Dies,” *New York Times*, Dec. 28, 1971, p. 33



Figure 25: Demonstrations outside Apex Hosiery Company plant at 5th and Luzerne Streets, 1937. George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection, Temple University Special Collections Resource Center

women's committee led to the union's endorsement of equal pay, access to birth control, and other feminist causes long before they achieved mainstream support.⁴⁰

In 1934, William Leader succeeded Alexander McKeown as head of Branch 1/Local 706. Leader is best remembered for his role in the Apex Hosiery Mill strike of 1937, in which 250 union workers staged a dramatic seven-week sit-in at what was then the largest non-union hosiery factory in Philadelphia. Accompanied by demonstrations that drew upwards of 15,000 supporters to the occupied plant, the strikers prevailed in forcing Apex to recognize union demands for representation [Fig. 25]. But in response, Apex sued the union and its leaders for lost income and property damages that resulted from the strike. The case, known as *Apex Hosiery Co. v. Leader*, resulted in a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in favor of Leader and the AFHW, establishing union exemption from the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

⁴⁰ McConnell-Sidorick, p. 92ff.

Deindustrialization and Decline

The Apex Strike was an unequivocal symbolic victory for the hosiery union and the working-class population of Kensington, which overwhelmingly supported the strikers. But by the late 1930s, both the union and the Kensington textile industry were in a period of steep decline. Compounding the general struggles of the Great Depression, changing fashions and the introduction of nylon were rendering silk hosiery factories obsolete, companies were relocating en masse to the American South, and factional infighting within the union were all contributing to the industry's slow but irrevocable demise. Between 1935 and 1941, Philadelphia lost over 10,000 hosiery jobs, and by 1954 the last hosiery factory in the city (ironically, the Apex mill) shut down.⁴¹ The following year, the AFHL closed Local #706 and sold Knitters Hall.⁴²

Between 1955 and 1965, the building was owned by the Northside Lithuanian Republican Alliance, a fraternal organization and social club founded in 1909. Little is known about the club or its activities in the building, though in 1963 it was listed as the headquarters of the Aqua String Band, a Mummer's brigade association.⁴³ In 1965 it was purchased by the Rock of Horeb Pentecostal Church, and it has remained in use as a church into the present. The building has been owned since 2017 by the True Light Pentecostal Church.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Elsh, David. "Deindustrialization," *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*.
<https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/deindustrialization/#24971>

⁴² Deed Book CAB 123 p. 312, George Braig et. al to Northside Lithuanian Republican Club, Sept. 20, 1955.

⁴³ Deed #438585, Northside Lithuanian Republican Club of Philadelphia to Rock of Horeb Pentecostal Church, April 30, 1965; "Scheffer to Head City String Bands," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 15, 1963, p. 33.

⁴⁴ Deed #53288773, Rock of Horeb Pentecostal Church, Inc. to True Light Pentecostal Church, Inc., Oct. 25, 2017.

Conclusion

The former Germania Turn-Verein, later Knitters' Hall, is a significant architectural and cultural resource that merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Satisfying Criterion A, the building possesses significant character, interest and value through its close associations with the Turner movement and, later, the labor movement, both of which contributed to the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of Philadelphia. As Knitters' Hall, the building played a central role in some of Philadelphia's most important strikes and labor demonstrations, including the mass demonstration following union-member Carl Mackley's death in 1930, thereby satisfying Criterion B. Satisfying Criterion C, the building is a rare surviving example of a once-prevalent building type and reflects the architectural characteristics of both the Queen Anne and *rundbogenstil* styles. Finally, the building exemplifies the importance of hosiery manufacturing and the labor movement to the cultural, political, economic, and social history of Kensington, satisfying Criterion J.

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How to Research a Building, Structure, Site or Object

The following is a list of sources of information about historic properties in Philadelphia to assist in writing a nomination. Eligible buildings, structures, sites, or objects may not have historic photos, maps, plans, or other information readily available; this does not mean they cannot be researched. Sometimes, unlikely sources of information - phone books, city directories, newspaper clippings - may contain tidbits of information that relate to the history or character of a place and help to flesh out a nomination's Statement of Significance.

Websites

Many Philadelphia institutions and organizations have websites that provide information about historic properties. A good place to start is the Philadelphia Architecture and Buildings website, created by the Athenaeum of Philadelphia: *philadelphiabuildings.org*

Information on Philadelphia's National Historic Landmarks and sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places can be found at: *www.arch.state.pa.us*

The web site of the City of Philadelphia Archives contains thousands of historic photographs of Philadelphia buildings: *phillyhistory.org*

Pennsylvania's Historical & Museum Commission offers a subscription-based database that provides access to their cultural resource data: *https://www.phmc.pa.gov/PA-SHARE/Pages/default.aspx*

Institutions

A variety of Philadelphia institutions hold archives and records that may be helpful in researching properties. These include:

Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania
220 S. 34th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-898-8232
https://www.design.upenn.edu/architectural-archives/

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia
219 S. 6th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215-925-2688
philaathenaeum.org

Association for Public Art
1528 Walnut Street, Suite 1000
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-546-7550
associationforpublicart.org

Free Library of Philadelphia
1901 Vine Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
freelibrary.org

The Free Library of Philadelphia has compiled a helpful research guide, [How to Research the History of a House](#), and made it available online: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/faq/guides/HouseHistory.pdf>

Philadelphia City Archives & Department of Records
548 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215-685-9401
archives.info@phila.gov
<https://www.phila.gov/departments/department-of-records/city-archives/>

Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-686-7660
www.phila.gov/historical/

Urban Archives, Temple University
Charles Library
1900 N. 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122
215-204-8257
<https://library.temple.edu/collections/urban-archives>

Historical Societies

Bridesburg Historical Society
2801 Brill Street
Philadelphia, PA 19137
215-744-1674

Chestnut Hill Conservancy
8708 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118
215-247-9329
chconservancy.org

Frankford Historical Society
1507 Orthodox Street
Philadelphia, PA 19124
215-743-6030
thehistoricalsocietyoffrankford.org/

Historic Germantown
5501 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-844-1683
germantownhistory.org

Historical Society of Pennsylvania
1300 Locust Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-732-6200
portal.hsp.org

Historical Society of Tacony
4817 Longshore Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19135
215-338-2575

Roxborough Manayunk Wissahickon Historical Society
Archives located at the Roxborough Branch of the Philadelphia Free Library

University City Historical Society
P.O. Box 31927
Philadelphia, PA 19104
info@uchs.net
www.uchs.net

City Directories & Phonebooks

Phone books and their predecessors, city directories, can be invaluable tools in determining who lived at a residence or where businesses were located. The Free Library of Philadelphia, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia City Archives have directories (some of which are on microfilm) in their collections and most directories between the 1790s and 1920s have been scanned and can be searched online. Some online directory databases are below:

- Internet Archive (accessed through *Philageohistory.org*)
- *Ancestry.com* (subscription)
- *Fold3.com* (subscription)

Deeds

Deeds indicate the owner of a property at a given point in history and in some cases can provide crucial information about what buildings and structures existed and when. Deeds recorded after 1955 are maintained by Department of Records, while historic deeds can be found at the Philadelphia City Archives. Deeds can also be viewed online for a fee at the sites below:

- 1974 to the present (<https://epay.phila-records.com/phillyepay/web/login.jsp>)
- Before 1974 (<https://phila-records.com/historic-records/web/>)

Maps and Atlases

City maps and atlases can be helpful in determining the date of a building as well as providing information about its original condition. Atlases cover a large swath of the city between 1857 and 1955. Land ownership atlases will provide information regarding a building's footprint, the number of stories, dimensions of the property, house number and some street information. Fire insurance atlases, such as the E. Hexamer and Sanborn atlases, offer more details than city maps.

Atlases and maps may be found at the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia City Archives.

In recent years many maps have been digitized and are now accessible online for free and are now accessible for free on a number of websites, including those of the Free Library of Philadelphia (<https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/collection/maps>) and the Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network (philageohistory.org).

Newspapers

Historic newspapers can be a valuable resource when researching a property. Many historical societies or libraries may have historic newspapers (or microfilmed versions) in their collections. In more recent years, some historic newspapers have been scanned and articles can be found through keyword searches. Some online newspaper databases are below:

Newspapers.com (subscription)
ChroniclingAmerica
GenealogyBank (subscription)
Google Newspaper Archive

Building Permits

Building permits may be found for any structure constructed after July 1889. An index of permits for the years 1906-1966 is located at the Central Clerical Section of the Department of Licenses and Inspections in the Municipal Services Building at 15th and John F. Kennedy Boulevard. The actual permits are located in the Philadelphia City Archives at 548 Spring Garden Street.

Architectural Plans

Unfortunately, most architectural plans do not survive beyond the construction of a building or structure. However, some plans do manage to survive and the most likely places to find them are the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Walnut Lane Bridge. Credit: Aliya Turner

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can nominate a property to the Philadelphia Register?

Anyone may nominate a property to be listed on the Philadelphia Register—the property owner, an interested private citizen, a community group, or a non-profit organization.

What types of properties can be nominated to the Philadelphia Register?

The historic preservation ordinance defines “properties” as buildings, structures, sites or objects. The definition of each of these, as contained in Section 14-1002 of the Philadelphia Code, is as follows:

- A building (a) is a structure, its site and appurtenances created to shelter any form of human activity. *Section 14-1002(2)*
- A structure (b) is a work made up of interdependent and interrelated parts in a definite pattern of organization constructed by man and affixed to real property. *Section 14-1002 (13)*
- A site (c) is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity or a building or structure whether standing, ruined or vanished, where the location itself maintains historical, cultural or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure. *Section 14-1002(12)*
- An object (d) is a material thing of functional, aesthetic, cultural, historic or scientific value that may be, by nature or design, movable yet related to a specific setting or Environment. *Section 14-1002 (10)*
- A historic district is a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of buildings, structures, sites, or objects united by past events, plan, or physical development. A district may comprise an individual site or individual elements separated geographically but linked by association, plan, design, or history. *Section 14-203(97)(a)*
- A public interior portion of a building or structure that is, or was designed to be, customarily open or accessible to the public, including by invitation. A public interior portion does not include an interior portion of a building or structure that was designed to be customarily open or accessible to the public, which interior portion has been significantly altered physically such that a substantial portion of the features reflecting design for public use no longer remain. Terminating use of an interior portion of a building or structure by the public shall not in and of itself constitute conversion of the design of such interior portion. A public interior portion does not include the interior portions of a building which was designed to be and still is used exclusively as one or more private residences. *Section 14-203(252)/14-1002(11)*

How do I know if a building, structure, site or object is already on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places?

The web site of the Philadelphia Historical Commission contains a searchable database of all properties listed on the Philadelphia Register. To determine if a building is already listed on the Register, the Historical Commission of Philadelphia maintains a list online, <https://www.phila.gov/documents/philadelphia-register-of-historic-places/>, which can be searched using a web browser's search function.

If the address is listed, that means that the property is included on the Philadelphia Register. Since properties are always being added to the Register, it is wise to double check with the staff of the Historical Commission when a property does not appear to be listed.

Is consent of the property owner required?

Consent of the property owner is not required for the Historical Commission to include a property on the Philadelphia Register. When a building, structure, site, object, or public interior is nominated for listing on the Register, the Historical Commission is required to give the property owner written notice that the property has been nominated and that public meetings are scheduled to review the nomination. This provides the property owner with the opportunity to comment on the designation, indicate support or opposition, or suggest modifications to the nomination.

What buildings, structures, sites or objects are suitable for designation and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register?

All types of buildings, structures, sites and objects can be designated and listed on the Philadelphia Register, provided they meet at least one of the criteria for designation listed in Section 14-1004 (1) of the Philadelphia Codes (see **Criteria for Designation**)

In Philadelphia, the criteria for historic designation are quite broad; architectural significance is not the only criteria for designating an historic property. Properties can be historically significant because of their relationship to people and events important in the history of the city or the nation. Many properties will meet several of the criteria for designation in **Criteria for Designation**; however, it is necessary only to meet one. For example, in 2004 the Historical Commission listed Marian Anderson's home - a rather plain South Philadelphia rowhouse - on the Philadelphia Register because of the association of the property with Ms. Anderson, an internationally prominent concert artist and important figure in the civil rights movement in the United States.

Nor is age the determining factor in whether a building is suitable for designation. While it is necessary for a historic property to be over 50 years of age to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, no such requirement exists in Philadelphia's preservation ordinance. However, a period of time should have elapsed in order to be confident that a property is historically significant. Among properties recently listed on the Philadelphia Register are the Richards Medical Research Laboratory, designed by Louis I. Kahn in 1960, and Guild House, designed by Robert Venturi in 1964—both listed on the Register in 2004. Each building is considered to be an outstanding example of 20th-century American architecture, and each was designed by an architect considered to be among the world's leading architects of the 20th century.

How long does it take for a nomination to be approved?

Once a nomination is submitted to the Historical Commission it typically takes at least three to four months for the nomination to be acted upon. The nomination must first be reviewed by the staff to determine that the application is correct and complete. If the application is complete a meeting of the Committee on Historic Designation is scheduled and notice of the nomination and the Committee meeting is sent to the property owner at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. After the Designation Committee offers a recommendation, which can sometimes take more than one meeting, that recommendation is transmitted to the Historical Commission for its review and action, usually within one to two months after the Committee reaches a decision.

What are the implications of listing on the Philadelphia Register for property owners?

Once a property has been listed on the Philadelphia Register the property cannot be demolished or the exterior (and interior, if designated) altered without the approval of the Historical Commission. Property owners are required to submit to the Historical Commission for review and approval any work on the exterior of the property that requires a building permit (or would alter its appearance). This includes such items as a new roof, porch repair, roof deck, brick pointing; additions to a designated building or construction of a new building on a designated site; site features such as fences, walls, walks, drives and major landscape features. In the case of objects, review by the Commission is required if the object is to be altered, demolished or moved. (The Preservation Alliance's guide, *How to Navigate the Historical Review Process*, describes the implications for property owners and the review process in detail. It is available at http://www.preservationalliance.com/publications/CitizensGuide_updated.pdf)

The vast majority of reviews are conducted by staff and do not require Committee review. No scope of work is required upon designation, only future changes which require a building permit.

Glossary

Art Deco

A style of decorative art developed originally in the 1920s with a revival in the 1960s, marked chiefly by geometric motifs, curvilinear forms, sharply defined outlines, often bold colors, and the use of synthetic materials, as plastics.

Baroque

Of or relating to a style of architecture and art originating in Italy in the early 17th century and variously prevalent in Europe and the New World for a century and a half, characterized by free and sculptural use of the classical orders and ornament, by forms in elevation and plan suggesting movement, and by dramatic effect in which architecture, painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts often worked to combined effect.

Classical

Characterized by grandeur of scale, simplicity of geometric forms, Greek—especially Doric (see order)—or Roman detail, dramatic use of columns, and a preference for blank walls.

Federal (1780-1820)

Typically uses plain surfaces with attenuated detail, usually isolated in panels, tablets, and friezes. It also had a flatter, smoother façade and rarely used pilasters. It was most influenced by the interpretation of ancient Roman architecture.

Georgian (1700-1780)

Identified by its symmetrical composition and formal, classical details, was the most prevalent style in the English colonies throughout the 18th century.

Gothic/Gothic Revival (1840-1880)

Characterized by the use of the pointed arch and the ribbed vault, by the use of fine woodwork and stonework, by a progressive lightening of structure, and by the use of such features as flying buttresses, ornamental gables, crockets, and foils.

Greek Revival (1825-1860)

The Greek concern with simplicity, proportion, perspective, and harmony in their buildings.

Italianate (1840-1885)

Noting or pertaining to a mid-Victorian American style remotely based on Romanesque vernacular residential and castle architecture of the Italian countryside, but sometimes containing Renaissance and Baroque elements.

Moderne

Of or noting a style of decorative art and architecture of the 1930s and 1940s that was influenced by streamlined industrial design of airplanes, ships, and cars: usually considered to be a later development of art deco.

Modernist (1920-1965)

Emphasized function, simplicity, and rationality, and created new forms of expression with a new aesthetic.

Post Modern Style

The Post Modern style arose as a reaction to the austere style of modernism. Typical characteristics of post modern structures includes references to historical, often fragmented elements, and emphasis placed on the facade.

Queen Anne (1880-1910)

Noting or pertaining to the style of architecture, furnishings, and decoration prevailing in England in the early 18th century, characterized by simplicity and refinement of forms, with increasing attention to French and Italian models.

Renaissance

Noting or pertaining to the group of architectural styles existing in Italy in the 15th and 16th centuries as adaptations of ancient Roman architectural details or compositional forms to contemporary uses, characterized at first by the free and inventive use of isolated details, later by the more imitative use of whole orders and compositional arrangements, with great attention to the formulation of compositional rules after the precepts of Vitruvius and the precedents of existing ruins, and at all periods by an emphasis on symmetry, exact mathematical relationships between parts, and a general effect of simplicity and repose.

Rococo

A style of architecture and decoration, originating in France about 1720, evolved from Baroque types and distinguished by its elegant refinement in using different materials for a delicate overall effect and by its ornament of shellwork, foliage, etc.

Romanesque

Noting or pertaining to the style of architecture prevailing in western or southern Europe from the 9th through the 12th centuries, characterized by heavy masonry construction with narrow openings, features such as the round arch, the groin vault, and the barrel vault, and the introduction or development of the vaulting rib, the vaulting shaft, and central and western towers for churches.

Richardsonian Romanesque (1880-1900)

Named after architect Henry Hobson Richardson. It was inspired by the ancient Romans (1066 – 1200), but it was Richardson's personal interpretation and adaptation that accounts for the originality and importance of the work. Through particular configuration of proportion, massing, and masonry, the visual weight of his buildings anchored them to earth. Richardson's designs stressed unique and unusual, sculpted shapes.

Second Empire (1855-1885)

Also called the French Second Empire style or mansard style. It can be traced to France, specifically to the reign of Napoleon III, 1852-1870. As public architecture, the mansard style was meant to exude character and a sense of permanence.

Tudor

Characterized by their steeply pitched gable roofs, playfully elaborate masonry chimneys (often with chimney pots), embellished doorways, groupings of windows, and decorative half-timbering.

Vernacular

Structures are often described as vernacular to indicate that it exhibits a style that is local to that particular region and often times uses local materials. Vernacular architecture excludes monumental or high style buildings that have been designed by a particular architect or builder.

Victorian

Noting or pertaining to the architecture, furnishings, and decoration of English-speaking countries between c1840 and c1900, characterized by rapid changes of style as a consequence of aesthetic and philosophical controversy, technological innovations, and changes of fashion, by the frequent presence of ostentatious ornament, and by an overall trend from classicism at the start to romanticism and eclecticism at the middle of the period and thence to classicism again, with attempts at stylistic innovation occurring from time to time.

Sources:

Archdaily.com

Dictionary.com

Study.com

Wentworthstudio.com

Ancienthistoryencyclopedia.com

Virginia Savage McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014)

Definitions

Aisle: a longitudinal division of an interior area, as in a church, separated from the main area by an arcade

Arch: the curved head of an ironing

Atrium: a main foyer area, usually found in an ancient Roman home

Balcony: a raised and elevated platform projecting outward from a wall

Basilica: an early medieval church characterized by a plan including a nave, two or four side aisles, a semicircular apse, a narthex, and often other features, as a short transept, a number of small semicircular apses terminating the aisles, or an atrium.

Buttress: an external support found on the outside of a building

Column: ionic, Doric, Corinthian, Tuscan & composite

Cupola: a dome which covers a circular area

Eave: lower edge of a roof which hangs over the doorway

Facade: the front of a building, which is often decorated

Jamb: the side piece of a doorframe

Keystone: a wedge- shaped piece that holds the surrounding pieces of an arch in place

Lintel: a horizontal wooden structure above a doorway

Mantel: a structure framing a fireplace, which can be decorative



Penn Treaty Park. Credit: Barbara Morehead

Minaret: a slender tower attached to a mosque, used for a call to prayer

Motif: a repetitive design in paint or on wallpaper

Obelisk: a tapering, four-sided shaft of stone, usually monolithic and having a pyramidal apex

Oculus: a round opening at the top of a dome

Portico: an area covered with a roof and surround by columns

Spire: a tall, pointed upper part of a roof

Terrace: an paved area usually for outdoor living

Vault: an arched structure that forms a ceiling over a hallway

Source: dictionary.com

Appendix

In addition to the example included in this guide, the following accepted nomination forms are also excellent models for crafting a nomination. The list of examples is also representative of the variety of structures, sites, objects and interiors that can be listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. These nominations can be located via the Philadelphia Historical Commission's website.

Commercial building

20-24 N. 40th Street, Powelton Cafe

Object

Dream Garden, Sixth Street lobby of the Curtis Building, 124-128 Sixth Street

Religious Building

2036-40 Cecil B Moore Avenue, McDowell Memorial Presbyterian Church

1601 S. 13th Street, St. John's Baptist Church

Residential Building

625 S. Delhi Street, William and Letitia Still house

348 Green Lane, Lepton Terrace

1517 W. Girard Avenue, the Pyramid Club

Site

4111-23 Chestnut Street, African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground

Structure

Walnut Lane Bridge, spanning the Wissahickon Creek between Park Line Drive and Henry Avenue