Department of Planning & Development Philadelphia Historical Commission

> City of Philadelphia

Timeline to Date

• December 2012: Bunting House demolished, spurring action

• September 28, 2017: Councilman Jones introduced Ridge Avenue demolition moratorium legislation

- October and November 2017: Historical Commission developed initial list of 317 potentially historic properties
- November 21, 2017: City Planning Commission supported moratorium and initial list at public meeting
- November 22, 2017: City Planning Commission informed Mayor of support in writing
- December 5, 2017: City Council held public hearing on moratorium and incorporated initial list
- December 8, 2017: Historical Commission discussed designation plan at public meeting
- December 14, 2017: City Council passed demolition moratorium
- December 20, 2017: Mayor Kenney signed moratorium into law
- January to June 2018: Historical Commission developed historic district plan, reducing list from 317 to 188
- July 9, 2018: Historical Commission notified property owners of plan

<image>



Timeline Philadelphia Historical Commission

Timeline Going Forward

- July 9: Historical Commission issued notice
 - Sent written notice to all properties and property owner in proposed district
 - Posted notice in newspaper and in district
 - Posted nomination with inventory on website: www.phila.gov/historical
- July 18: Community meeting in Roxborough (today)
- September 12: Committee on Historic Designation meeting
 - Open to the public
 - Anyone may give oral and/or written testimony
 - Committee will formulate a non-binding recommendation to Historical Commission
- October 12: Historical Commission meeting
 - Open to the public
 - Anyone may give oral and/or written testimony
 - Historical Commission will review Committee recommendation
 - Historical Commission will decide by majority vote whether to designate district

Designation Process Philadelphia Historical Commission

Historical Commission – A Brief History

- The Philadelphia Historical Commission is a city government agency
- Established in 1955, first in nation with broad designation powers
- 13-member body appointed by Mayor, meets monthly
- Implements historic preservation ordinance, Section 14-1000 of code
- Served by several advisory committees
- Staff of 8 trained in architecture, history, and historic preservation
- Two primary functions
 - Identify and designate historic resources
 - Ensure the preservation of historic resources
 - Through the City's permitting processes
 - Through education and outreach

Agency History Philadelphia Historical Commission

Designations

- Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, list of designated properties
- More than 23,000 on Philadelphia Register of Historic Places
- 19 historic districts
 - 1416-32 W Girard Ave
 - 420 Row
 - Awbury
 - Diamond Street
 - East Logan Street
 - F.D.R. Park
 - Girard Estate
 - Greenbelt Knoll
 - Historic Street Paving

- Main Street Manayunk
- Old City
- Park Mall
- Parkside
- Rittenhouse-Fitler
- Satterlee Heights
- Society Hill
- Spring Garden
- Tudor East Falls
- Wayne Junction

Overview Philadelphia Historical Commission

Individual Designations



Properties nominated by PHC staff July 2016- May 2018 Philadelphia Historical Commission

Historic Districts



Girard Estate Historic District

Spring Garden Historic District

Philadelphia Historical Commission

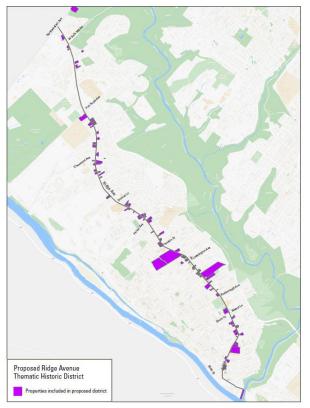
Why Designate?

Advantages of historic districts:

- Provides a mechanism to maintain the basic physical and visual characteristics of an area
- Contributes to stabilization of property values
- Fosters community pride
- Demonstrates public commitment to an area



Benefits of Historic Districts Philadelphia Historical Commission



- Nomination written by Historical Commission after passage of the Ridge Avenue Demolition Moratorium in December 2017
- Includes 188 properties on or near Ridge Avenue, from the Wissahickon Creek to Montgomery County line
 - 13 properties already individually designated as historic
- The 188 properties represent the history of Ridge Avenue in Roxborough from 1681 to 1908

Ridge Avenue Thematic Historic District Philadelphia Historical Commission



1681

1750





WAGGON AND HORSES.

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7101 Ridge Avenue





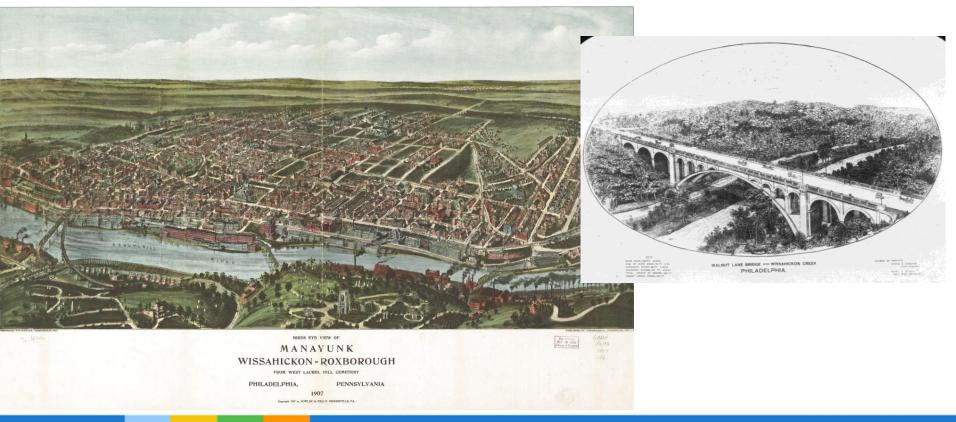
559 Righter Street

5504 Ridge Avenue



5164 Ridge Avenue

6080 Ridge Avenue





Properties Already Individually Designated Philadelphia Historical Commission

Types of properties included:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use
- Religious
- Institutional
- Cemeteries
- Parks (Gorgas Park)

Criteria used in review of properties:

- Age
- Integrity
- Social significance
- Architectural style/materials
- Context



Variety of Historic Resources Philadelphia Historical Commission

What triggers review by the Historical Commission?

 Licenses & Inspections will not issue a building permit for work to a historically designated building without the Historical Commission's approval stamp on a building permit application.

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Building Permit Applications Philadelphia Historical Commission

The Historical Commission does *not* regulate:

- Interiors
- Building use
- Paint color
- Window air conditioners
- General maintenance, including:
 - scraping and painting wood trim
 - cleaning gutters
 - replacing clear window glass
 - gardening/landscaping/tree trimming
 - temporary holiday decorations



What is not regulated Philadelphia Historical Commission

The Historical Commission *does* regulate:

- construction, alteration, and demolition of buildings and addition to buildings;
- construction, installation, alteration, repair, removal, replacement, or covering of:
 - windows and doors;
 - porches and decks;
 - fences and gates;
 - facades;
 - roofing;
 - storefront features including signage;
 - exterior mechanical equipment
 - masonry repair and repointing;
 - painting of masonry

Design Review Philadelphia Historical Commission

To initiate a staff review for work to a property:

- Contact the Historical Commission staff, who can help guide you through the process.
- Complete a standard Building Permit Application.
- Provide any additional documentation necessary for the staff to understand the scope of work.
- Our staff approves nearly 95% of all permit applications, most on the day of submission, always within 5 days.
- Many reviews can be conducted by email.
- In 2017, 2215 applications were reviewed
 - 2209 were approved, some with amendments
 - 6 were denied outright, any denial can be appealed

Review by the staff Philadelphia Historical Commission

Design Review: Restoration



Staff-reviewed façade restoration in Old City Historic District

← Before

After \rightarrow



Review by the staff, 52 S 2nd Street Philadelphia Historical Commission

Design Review: Restoration/Reconstruction



Design review of 6 Strawberry Street restoration Philadelphia Historical Commission

For work that exceeds staff-review authority:

- Examples: new construction, large additions, significant removal of historic features without replacement in kind.
- Contact the Historical Commission staff, who can help guide you through the process.
- Complete a standard Building Permit Application.
- Provide any additional documentation necessary for the staff to understand the scope of work.
- The application will be placed on the agenda of the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission, to be reviewed at public meetings, and to be voted on by the Commission.

Review by the Committee and Commission Philadelphia Historical Commission

Design Review: Rehabilitation



Design review of Divine Lorraine rehabilitation Philadelphia Historical Commission

Design Review: Additions/New Construction



Design review of Roman Catholic HS addition Philadelphia Historical Commission

Why is my building included in the historic district?

- Initial survey: 566 tax parcels abutting Ridge Avenue
 - 13 already designated as historic
 - Of remaining 553 properties, 317 determined potentially eligible
- Staff surveyed 317 potentially eligible and evaluated eligibility based on:
 - Age of historic resource
 - Architectural style
 - Integrity
 - Context
 - Social significance/association
- Based on survey, staff narrowed inventory down to 188 potentially eligible properties.

FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission



Am I now required to restore my building?

- No. Except in cases of extreme neglect, the Historical Commission cannot require a property owner to undertake work, and may only review a scope of work defined by the owner.
- Alterations in place at the time of designation, such as vinyl windows, are grandfathered and may be retained until the owner determines that they need replacement.



FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission

Can I demolish my building in a historic district?

- Generally, no. To secure a demolition permit for a historic building, an applicant must prove either that there is no feasible reuse for the building, or that demolition is necessary in the public interest.
- Demolition may also be permitted in instances when Licenses & Inspections has cited a property as "imminently dangerous" and has determined that demolition is the *only* means of safely abating the dangerous condition.

Does the Historical Commission regulate the use of buildings?

• No. The Historical Commission has no jurisdiction over the use of historically designated buildings, and it encourages adaptive reuse of buildings.



FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission

Does the Commission review work to the rear of a building?



- The Historical Commission's jurisdiction extends over the entire exterior envelope of a building, but the Commission concentrates its reviews on facades, roofs, and site features that are visible from the public right-of-way.
- If the rear of your building is not visible from the public right-of-way, the staff has the authority to be lenient in its review of proposed alterations, but is still required to stamp a building permit application for the scope of work.

FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission

Does historic designation affect my tax assessment?

- No. The Office of Property Assessment has confirmed that historic designation does *not* play a role in property assessments.
- Size, amenities, location, condition, and use are factors that impact property assessments, and thus property taxes.

Does historic designation affect my property insurance?

- No. Location, age, materials, and updates are key factors in determining insurance premiums.
- Historic designation is not a question used to determine insurance rates.
- Cost to ensure older homes is higher across the board because older homes were typically constructed with higher-quality materials and features, and therefore are more costly to rebuild, assuming an owner wishes to rebuild with similar quality and finishes.

Can the Historical Commission require me to do something I cannot afford?

- No. The Historical Commission does not have the authority to require anything that would create an unreasonable or undue economic hardship for you.
- The Historic Preservation Ordinance authorizes the Commission to relax and/or disregard its preservation standards in cases of economic hardship.
- The Commission and its advisory Committee on Financial Hardship evaluate claims of hardship.

FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission

Is the Historical Commission's regulation of my property unconstitutional or constitute a "taking"?

- No. Both federal and state courts have ruled that governmental actions under historic preservation laws that prevent landowners from realizing the highest and best use of their property are not unconstitutional.
- Most cities and towns regulate private property for historic preservation reasons.



Is a listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places different from a listing on the National Register?

- Yes. The National Register of Historic Places is a nationwide list of historically significant properties administered by the National Park Service.
- The Philadelphia Register of Historic Places is unrelated to the National Register.
- Properties can be listed on both Registers.

FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission

Why would I want my property listed on the Philadelphia Register?

- Satisfaction derived from stewardship of a historic landmark.
- Community pride fostered by recognition of the historic district.
- Property values in historic districts fluctuate less and increase more than those of comparable properties outside of historic districts.
- The Historical Commission provides historical and technical assistance to property owners without charge.
- Mayor's Preservation Task Force is currently exploring incentive programs for designated properties.



FAQs Philadelphia Historical Commission