

ON THE WEST SIDE

THE UNIVERSITY CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



November/December 2018

<http://www.uchs.net>

Joseph Minardi, Editor

Nomination Workshop Wrap-up

On October 25th, the University City Historical Society hosted their first historic designation nomination workshop at the delightful Victorian home of UCHS Board Member, Heather Calvert. The twenty UCHS members who participated were indulged with tasty food and good company as we learned about the process of nominating individual properties to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Our featured guests included Dr. Jeffrey Cohen, Professor in Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr College. Dr. Cohen also sits on the Committee for Historic Designation for the Philadelphia Historical Commission. He was joined by Philadelphia Historical Commission staff member, Laura DiPasquale Zupan. Our featured guests offered insight, resources and advice to those who attended.

The primary purpose of the nomination workshop was to demystify the process of nominating properties to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Adding properties to the Philadelphia Register is the best tool we have to protect properties from demolition or insensitive alterations. At a time when development has run rampant, protecting properties through historic designation is more important than ever. And while the University City Historical Society has

written or sponsored many nominations in recent years, our efforts alone are not sufficient to stem the tide of demolitions that have overtaken our neighborhood. It doesn't take an advanced architectural degree to write a nomination. Sample nominations and a list of resources were provided to those in attendance. UCHS thanks Milk & Honey Market for their generous donation of delicious sandwiches and Heather Calvert for offering up her home.

As a follow-up to this event, UCHS will be hosting monthly workshops for those wanting to write their own nomination. These workshops will run through May and will offer additional resources for those writing nominations. Our first writer workshop will take place on Wednesday, January 23rd, 6pm at 4528 Regent Street, the home of UCHS Board Member Jennifer Loustau. Our first session will focus on establishing the criteria for designation, boundary descriptions, and architectural descriptions. Those who were unable to attend our nomination workshop but who have an interest in nominations are encouraged to attend. And those who were not able to attend our nomination workshop but are interested in learning more should reach out to UCHS by contacting us at info@uchs.net.



Top photo: Laura DiPasquale Zupan speaking before the group. Bottom photo: Workshop gathering watching presentation. Photos courtesy of George Poulin.

The 2019 Valentine Tea and Awards Presentation

You're Invited

Next February the UCHS will host its annual Valentine Tea and Awards Presentation at The Castle (48th and Springfield Avenue) on **February 10th from 4:00 to 6:00**. The Awards Tea is a special time for the UCHS when we get to recognize those who have made a difference in the community and connect with our members. The Valentine Tea is free to all UCHS members and their guests.

Please contact the University City Historical Society to inform us of anyone you know who has performed a superior restoration or renovation job during the previous year for our **Gift to the Streets Award**, **Outstanding Preservation Award**, or **Preservation Initiative Award**. And please feel free to nominate yourself. Email your nomination to info@UCHS.net.



Top photo: Our festive table filled with tasty treats; bottom left: 2017 Gift to the Street Award winner, AlphaCare; bottom right, 2017 Preservation Initiative Award winner, Kathy Dowdell with Elizabeth Stegner & George Poulin. Joseph Minardi, photographer.

University City Historic Architecture Walks

Today's walking tour in West Philadelphia is through Squirrel Hill, the neighborhoods on both sides of Baltimore Avenue between 46th and 50th Streets. Because this area has so many outstanding examples of stonework, we will focus on stone buildings and appreciate all the rest.

Let's begin with the old 50th Street Fire Station, now the home of Dock Street Brewery, at 50th and Baltimore Avenue.

(1) This 1903 building in the rare Chateausque style popularized in America by Richard Morris Hunt (think Biltmore Estate), draws on stone quoining, stone belt course and basement, stone segmental arches over every window, and an elaborate stone doorway with carving. Walk east along Baltimore, passing the stone-pillared Mariposa Co-op to Calvary Church at 48th Street.

(2) This 1904 Gothic edifice boasts Tiffany windows, well-preserved interior woodwork, and a Baroque, almost Mannerist, floor plan. If the doors are open, take a peek inside. On the outside, notice the carved stone window frames and imagine fitting them all together to make a "seamless" frame. Turning south on 48th you come to the Castle Apartments on the southeast corner of Warrington Avenue.

(3) Also built in 1904, The Castle is an example of Romanesque Revival, so-called because of its use of stone, the tower, and the parapeted gables. Now for a scenic detour with little stonework: walk another block south on 48th to Windsor Avenue, turn west and stroll through a block of Horace Trumbauer homes.

(4) Trumbauer was one of the titans of American architecture, designing palatial residences on the East Coast (including the Eisenlohr Mansion at 42nd and Pine Streets) as well as the Free Library and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (although most of the work is attributed to Julien Abele). It's nice to know he also designed these lovely homes for ordinary people. At the corner of 49th Street, turn south and walk to Springfield Avenue, turn east and start looking for twins on both sides of the street that combine stone and brick.

(5) Stone on the first floor, brick on the second floor, these homes illustrate the infinite variety in house design that we cherish in West Philly. Keep walking east on Springfield Avenue to 48th Street to find another Castle.

(6), now in use as a bed & breakfast. Built in 1903, it's another example of Romanesque with lots of crenellated parapet and bulls-eye windows. Notice here the mix of rough-faced stone with ashlar window frames and porch columns. And 12 stone arches supporting a large circular porch. Walk one block to 47th Street and turn south. Walk one block to Kingsessing where you will see a Frank Furness-designed Romanesque Revival church on the southwest corner, the church with the orange-trimmed windows.

(7) Notice how restrained but powerful it looks in comparison with the Gothic-style church across the street. Step up close to the stone walls and let's talk about Wissahickon schist. That's the name of this stone, quarried all over the Philadelphia region and named after the Wissahickon Gorge in Fairmont Park. It's metamorphic rock, the same class as marble and slate, but schist uniquely shows the sandy strata of the ancient seafloor, the tectonic shifting, and the volcanic activity that produced this rock 550 million years ago. It contains in its layers mica (the shiny bits), quartz (white, blue, and grey colors), feldspar (pink), biotite (black), and garnet (rusty red), all of which contribute to the subtle shades of grey in this stone. Now walk north on 47th Street, turn east on Chester Avenue and walk past stone twins in the Queen Anne style.

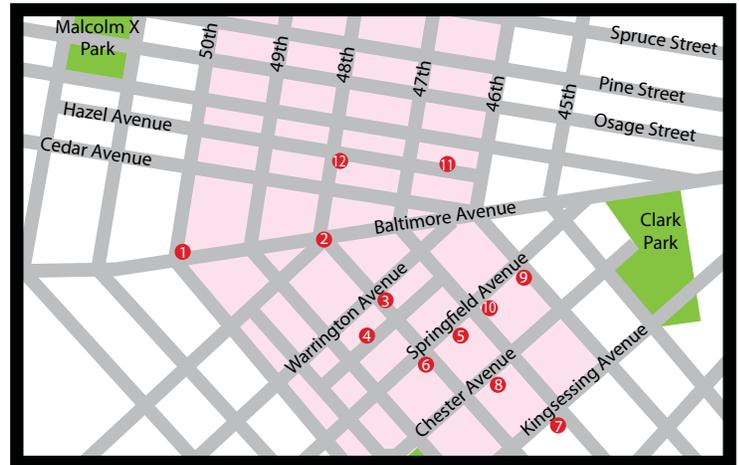
(8) Queen Anne is all about turrets and spindlework and complicated roofs and ornamented gables, and very often corners that do tricks, like setting some elements on a 45-degree angle from the rest of the façade. At 46th Street turn north and walk to the Stone House on the corner of Springfield Avenue.

(9) Built in 1891 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, a stone house was then vastly more expensive to build than wood or brick. Therefore, a corner lot to show off more of the house is ideal. Notice the unusual upside-down arches holding up the porch and the green copper details around windows, in the frieze, and above the gable. Now walk west on Springfield one block to the Cathedral of St. Francis de Sales.

(10) In yet another style, the Catholic church is in the Byzantine style – hence the domes that were originally, in 1907, covered with colorful tiles like the two small ones in front. If the church is open, take a look at the beautiful wood interior. Turn north on 47th and as you're walking past St. Francis School, pause to study the stone wall: it has a granite base, a belt course of ashlar granite, and smooth, light sandstone above. Keep walking north (notice the granite curbstones and cobblestones) three blocks to Hazel Avenue and look east.

(11) This is not stone. This is Edwardian England: an entire block, and then some (on 46th) designed with rigid Georgian Revival regularity, one of the most elegant and unusual residential blocks in Philadelphia. Head west on Hazel, taking in the stone twins intermingled with brick twins. Peek around the corner of one of the twins and you can see that the less-visible walls are brick.

(12) Turn south on 48th, admiring the stone basements and porches in sparkly mica schist. In two blocks you're back to Calvary and you've earned a coffee and a pastry at the Gold Standard Café and the tour is completed.



Ask the Experts

CRACKED CHIMNEY

Q: The chimney in my Victorian home is full of cracks. In the attic I can see that it tilts slightly and has been smeared with cement there and above the roof line. I'm sure that the entire chimney and fireplace have to be rebuilt, but I don't know where to start. Any leads?

A: A licensed chimney sweep or the local fire marshal would be the first person to contact for a safety inspection. A professional sweep will also assess the structural condition of your chimney. You can search for a chimney sweep online or through apps such as Takl or Thumbtack.

If the chimney is structurally sound, all that may be needed is a flue liner. There are several varieties on the market, either clay or metal. In the meantime **don't use** your fireplace until you're sure your chimney is clean and safe. A chimney fire is the last thing you need.

Modified from *The Old-House Journal*, December, 1981.

Rules for Teachers (1915)

1. You will not marry during your term of contract.
2. You are not to keep company with men.
3. You must be home between the hours of 8 PM and 6 AM unless at a school function.
4. You may not loiter downtown in any of the ice cream parlors.
5. You may not travel beyond the city limits unless you have permission from the chairman of the school board.
6. You may not ride in carriages or automobiles with any man except your father or brother.
7. You may not smoke cigarettes.

8. You may not dress in bright colors.
9. You may not dye your hair.
10. You must wear at least two petticoats.
11. Your dress may not be any shorter than two inches above the ankles.
12. To keep the classrooms neat and clean you must sweep the floor once a day, scrub the floor with hot soapy water once a week, clean the blackboards once a day and start the fire at 7 AM so the room will be warm by 8 AM when the scholars arrive.

From *The Old Sacramento Schoolhouse Museum*

PROFILES IN ARCHITECTURE

H. D. Prettyman

Henry D. Prettyman (active c. 1889-1910) was an architect that occasional worked as a builder and contractor. He was the brother of Charles B. Prettyman, a prolific builder and architect in Philadelphia.

Selected Relevant Commissions:

- 1905: Residences (6), East side of 60th Street, north of Spruce Residences (5), Vine and Gross Streets
1906: Platt, Frank W., residences (15), 52nd and Walnut area
1908: Gallagher, Timothy, residences (101), 64th & Greenway area
1909: Welsh, Robert, residences (28), 54th and Wyalusing area

Door Glossary

Astragal: A moulding applied to one stile of a French door, sliding French door, or French casement window, which the other door panel or window sash strikes.

Batten Door: A wood door made of vertical planks or boards fastened together with horizontal boards (battens), which are usually nailed to the inside of the door.

Cope-and-Stick: A frame-and-panel joinery technique often used in making doors, where a mating member on the frame is given a decorative profile on the edge that joins to a panel.

Divided Lights: Glass panes (lights) held by permanent, stationary muntins and bars that separate individual panes in a window or door sash. Often sold in "lite" (grid) variations by door makers.

Dutch Door: Introduced by Dutch colonists who settled in the Hudson River Valley in the early 1600s, these are usually wood batten doors separated into top and bottom halves. The top could be opened for light and air while the closed bottom kept livestock out.

Frame-and-Panel: A style of construction that features vertical wood stiles and horizontal rails that form one or more frames around thinner recessed inner panels. Doors usually have between one and eight panels, and the door is often referred to by the number of panels it has.

Glazing: Installing glass into windows and doors, or the glass itself. Single glazed means glazing with a single piece of glass; double or insulated glazing means two panes of glass separated by a spacer and hermetically sealed together with insulating dead air space or gas between the panes.

Mortise-and Tenon: A joinery system by which a projecting tenon is snugly into a mating mortise in either a stile or rail. Once the tenon is in place, it's fastened by drilling a hole through both the mortise and tenon and driving a wood peg or other fastener into the hole.

Passage Door: An interior door between a hall and a room, or between two rooms.

Rail: A horizontal bar that connects the vertical bars, called stiles, in a door or window frame.

Stile: A vertical length of material (usually wood) in door or window frames, connected to other stiles by horizontal bars called rails.

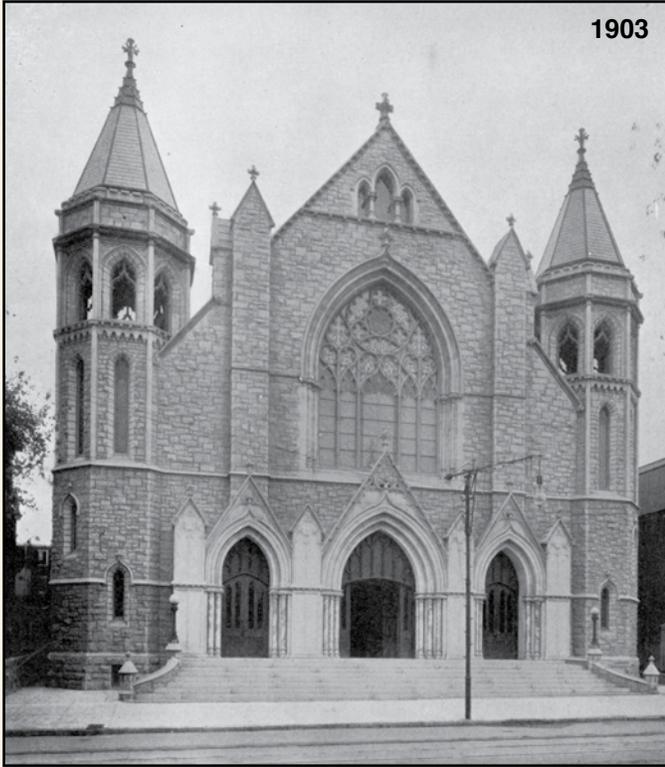
U Factor: A measure of the ability to transfer heat in glass windows or doors. The lower the number, the more efficient the glazing.

From *The Old-House Journal*, August 2017.

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University City Then & Now: 4017 Chestnut, Tabernacle Baptist Church (CCCP)



Reproduced from West Philadelphia Illustrated

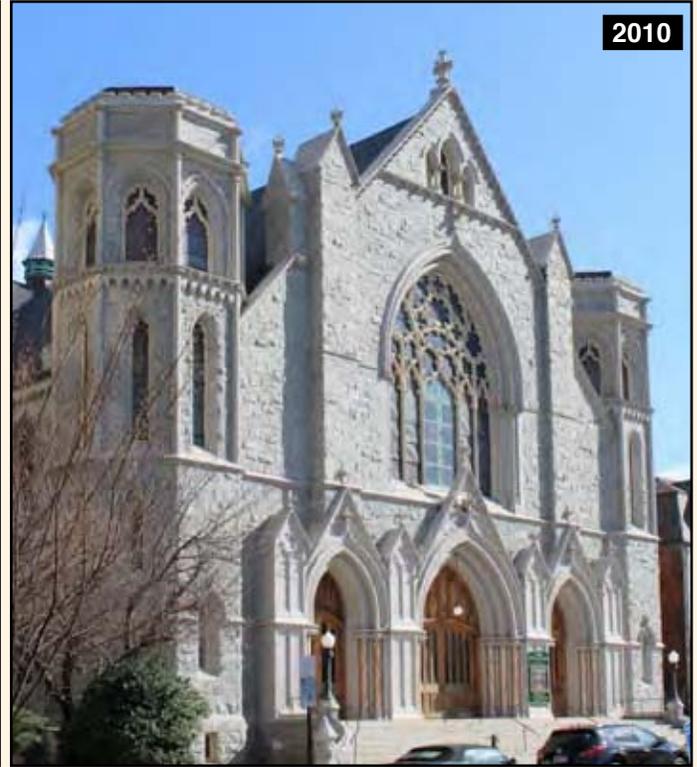


Photo by Joseph Minardi.

The Christ Community Church of Philadelphia is an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival style and features an impressive sanctuary, elaborate plaster ceiling ornaments, and carved oak furnishings. The cornerstone of this church was laid May 6, 1896. The chapel was opened on December 27 of the same year, and the completed church was dedicated on May 7, 1897. Formerly known as the New Tabernacle Baptist Church, it did sport two turrets on top of its bell towers which have long since been removed. The architect for the church was Frank Rushmore Watson (1859-1940), one of the most important of the several architects specializing in church design in Philadelphia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was born in the Frankford section of Philadelphia.

University City Historical Society

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