Minutes of the Meeting of October 7, 2015
Beginning at 12:30 PM
200 Ross Street
First Floor Hearing Room
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

In Attendance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Others</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erik Harless</td>
<td>Sarah Quinn</td>
<td>John DeSantis</td>
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<td>Carol Peterson</td>
<td>Sharon Spooner</td>
<td>Federico Sieyerl</td>
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<td>Raymond Gastil</td>
<td>Leslie Kaplan</td>
<td>Marie King</td>
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<td>Ernie Hogan</td>
<td>Marwan Aboud</td>
<td>Joshua Speakman</td>
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<td>Matthew Falcone</td>
<td>Suzan Lami</td>
<td>Canard Grigsby</td>
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<td>Joe Serrao</td>
<td>Joe Iannotta</td>
<td>Linda Iannotta</td>
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<td>Greg Parker</td>
<td>Kathleen Hogan</td>
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<td>Nick Kyriazi</td>
<td>Lloyd Hedlund</td>
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<td>Erik Fritzberg</td>
<td>Tom Smith</td>
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Old Business—None.

New Business

Approval of Minutes: In regards to the September 2, 2015 meeting minutes, Mr. Serrao motions to approve and Ms. Peterson seconds. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.

Certificates of Appropriateness: In regards to the September 2015 Certificates of Appropriateness, Mr. Serrao motions to approve and Mr. Falcone seconds. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.

Other Business:

1. Ms. Quinn talks about the Preservation Day in November and the various grant projects going on.
2. Ms. Spooner presents an email clarifying the status of the Southside Library HVAC project.
3. The Commission discusses the recent alterations to the Southside Market House.
4. Mr. Hogan clarifies that the property on N. Lincoln that is in violation for their windows is 856 N. Lincoln Avenue.
5. Mr. Harless states that he will look into it.

Adjourn:

Mr. Gastil motions to adjourn the meeting.
Mr. Falcone seconds.
Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and meeting is adjourned.

The discussion of the agenda items follows.
**913 Beech Avenue**

**Allegheny West Historic District**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Owner:</strong></th>
<th>Howard Brokenbek</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>913 Beech Avenue</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa 15233</td>
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<td>Ward: 22nd</td>
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<td>Lot and Block: 7-D-47</td>
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<td>Inspector: Jeremy Garman</td>
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<td>Council District: 6th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Received: 8/3/15</td>
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**National Register Status:** Listed: X Eligible: 

**Proposed Changes:** After-the-fact construction of rear carport.

**Discussion:**

1. Mr. Howard Brokenbek steps to the podium; he is the owner of the property. He states that last month they installed a carport behind their house, which met with a lot of objections from the LRC. He states that they were asked to deconstruct the carport or make changes to it, and he decided to make changes. He shows photos of the structure next door to the carport, which is about 17 feet wide and 25 feet high, the height being about one and a half times the width. His carport is 8 by 12 feet, also the same ratio, so he states that his carport is not out of the ordinary on the alley. He shows photos of the original structure, stating that the LRC had deemed it not appropriate due to issues like the form and the unfinished wood. He states that he has made changes to make it more appropriate, including framing in the metal roof to remove the “barn” appearance and painting the wood “antique white”. He painted the unfinished wood red to match the red of the neighboring carriage house and installed stained-glass windows. He also installed a six-foot high wooden fence and gate so visibility of the carport is reduced. He also states that the LRC is there to advise and help neighbors, but he feels they are trying to humiliate and intimidate people.

2. Mr. Harless states that permits are required before work is done.

3. Mr. Brokenbek says he will get permits. He feels that doing the work first has more impact than talking about it. He states that he has no problem deconstructing the work if that is what is required.

4. Mr. Harless asks if he received a stop-work notice.

5. Mr. Brokenbek says he did not. He states that he received a letter from the HRC asking him to make changes.

6. Mr. Harless states that from the perspective of his department, a permit is required before work is done.

7. Mr. Hogan asks for public comment.
8. Ms. Carol Malakoff steps to the podium; she is representing the LRC. She addresses the applicant's comments, stating that they are a group of nine neighbors, not just her, and she is speaking for them. She agrees this could have been avoided, if approvals had been obtained before any work was done. She provides some more recent photographs showing the fence. The LRC does not consider this a redecoration rather than a redesign. They recommend denial of the application.

9. Mr. John DeSantis steps to the podium. He states that the pictures speak for themselves. He states his concern that the work was done without permits in an attempt to keep the work and disregard enforcement. He urges denial of the application as well as a requirement to remove the work within a specific amount of time, and recommends that PLI to keep a close watch on it.

10. Mr. Hogan asks for any additional testimony; there is none.

11. Mr. Hogan states that the applicant has disregarded the process and not followed the direction that the Commission gave him, which was to design something and then come back to them for review and approval regardless if he worked with the LRC or not, although they would prefer that applicants work with the community group. Since he has not obtained a Certificate of Appropriateness, let alone a building permit, he doesn’t think they have any choice but to deny.

12. Mr. Harless states that his department will continue with enforcement independently of the HRC’s decision. He states that he thinks it would be helpful if the HRC just considers the design, as opposed to the fact that it was done without approval.

13. Mr. Hogan agrees. He states that the work is inappropriate for the district. He states for the record that the new elements under consideration are, from the photos submitted by the applicant and LRC, the appliques, the size and execution of the trim, the stained-glass windows, and the construction of a gate and fence. He states that the structure seems like a temporary structure that has been dressed up and doesn’t fit.

**Motion:**

14. Mr. Serrao motions to deny the alterations to the after-the-fact carport, and that the applicant should submit a new application for a new design prior to any work being done.

15. Mr. Falcone seconds.

16. Mr. Hogan states that the HRC will send a letter that the application was denied, and the Mr. Harless and PLI will handle enforcement.

17. Mr. Gastil says that the HRC also has the authority to set a timeframe.

18. Mr. Hogan states that they would probably want to set a 30 day time limit.

19. Mr. Harless says that the denial should be sufficient, and his department will handle the timeframe.

20. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
929 Beech Avenue
Allegheny West Historic District

Owner: Joseph & Linda Iannotta
929 Beech Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15233

Ward: 22nd
Lot and Block: 7-D-56

Inspector: Jeremy Garman

Council District: 6th
Application Received: 8/13/15

National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Replacement of front railing and after-the-fact alteration of steps.

Discussion:

1. Mr. Joe Ianotta and Ms. Linda Iannotta step to the podium; they are the owners of the property. He states that at the last hearing, the HRC requested that more photos be taken so they could get a better look at what was done. He explains that the main work that was done was the installation of stone over the concrete front steps. He states that they also installed non-porous tile at the foot of the stairs. He shows photos that were taken of their property and others on Beech Avenue. He explains that the adjacent property installed relatively thin sandstone over their concrete steps; the downside to this is that the sandstone has eroded. He shows another property that has either concrete or stone and a similar profile, and he also shows steps on Denny Row which are TREX, which is apparently an appropriate material as well. He states that he has read the guidelines many times at this point, and feels that they are very broad and allow a lot of leeway. He believes that their steps are consistent with the neighborhood, and many neighbors agree. He believes that at the last meeting the LRC also supported their application. Ms. Iannotta adds that they did speak with the LRC after the last meeting to see if they should consult with them further, and they were told no, because the LRC had already discussed and approved it. She doesn’t know if they discussed it further at their meeting.

2. Mr. Hogan asks for public comment.

3. Mr. John DeSantis steps to the podium. He presents some photos of the work, stating that the materials used are inappropriate for the district. He states that the surface of the steps is cut bluestone landscape pavers and the spaces between them have been parged with cement. The ceramic tile on the landing appears to have replaced a concrete landing, and the adjacent landing is brick. He states that the tile is inappropriate. He states that these issues could have been remedied if an application had been filed before the work was done. He provides photos of typical stairs on the block, stating that many are stone, which may be dressed with a lip at the top or not. He states that other steps are concrete, which probably would have
replaced deteriorated wooden steps, and there are still wooden steps as well. He states that retention of the concrete steps would have been fine; they could have also replaced the steps with wooden steps, which the house probably originally had. He states that the issue with stone is that it would have to look like the other stone steps in the immediate neighborhood, and that is not the case here. He states that he believes the HRC should deny the application, but should be generous in giving time for the applicants to correct the work.

4. Mr. Hogan states that he did walk the neighborhood and view their steps as well as others on the street. He states that it is unfortunate that this is before the Commission after-the-fact, as it puts everyone at a significant disadvantage. He states that everyone needs to work together to make sure the process is done in the right order. He states that the guidelines are pretty clear; in-kind replacement is permitted, and if new materials are used they must be appropriate. He feels that these materials are inappropriate. He states that the use of other inappropriate materials in the neighborhood is another issue that they need to address, which was discussed at the last meeting; they need to figure out, as the city continues to grow, how to embrace preservation and help people understand its value, and how to work together in getting information out and sharing knowledge. He states that the applicants have been stewards for the Northside and the community, and they have given back more than most, and should be commended. However, the Commission has rules that it has been entrusted to follow and needs to go by those.

5. Mr. Iannotta states that if the complaint is that the stone is blue, they can color it.

6. Mr. Hogan states that the color is a problem, as gray would be the most appropriate color, but the installation is also an issue as it has a seam, where most stone steps would be a single-cut stones, and there is also an issue of the ceramic tile at the base.

7. Mr. Iannotta states that is they need to tear everything out, they will. He would appreciate approval for the railings, which they did go through the proper process for. He states that he was unfamiliar with the process, as the contractor had gone through the process for previous work.

8. Mr. Hogan suggests that the Commission approves the railings, which would be black wrought iron on either side of the steps, and that the applicants come back if they wish to modify the work.

9. Mr. Gastil states that from his perspective the real problem is the ceramic tile. He feels that with time the stone steps will not look out of place in the neighborhood.

10. Ms. Peterson is undecided about the steps but agrees that the tile is inappropriate.

11. Mr. Falcone echoes his concern from the last meeting that the railings would need to be anchored to the steps themselves.

12. Mr. Hogan states that when you walk the street, the steps do look out of place. There are multiple types of steps on the street, the sandstone steps on the one side of this property, even though they are showing their age, are very elegantly done, and even the concrete steps on the other side don’t call undue attention to themselves.

13. Mr. Harless asks if they might be able to dye the grout to match.
14. Mr. Hogan would prefer to see the grout in the back eliminated and the stone pushed back, but the color to him is still wrong. He suggests that they give the applicants some time to decide on a solution. He suggests that the Commission should approve the railings, and the applicant can install them and alter them later, or anchor them at the top and bottom of the stairs.

Motion:

15. Mr. Serrao motions to approve the railing as submitted, and to table the after-the-fact installation of the stairs for 30 days for the owners to make modifications incorporating the comments of the Commission.

16. Mr. Iannotta asks if he can take out the installation.

17. Mr. Serrao states that he can, and that would be an over-the-counter approval.

18. Mr. Harless seconds.

19. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
900 Cedar Avenue

Deutschtown Historic District

Owner: Odontological Society
900 Cedar Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15212

Ward: 23rd
Lot and Block: 23-S-273

Applicant: Odontological Society
900 Cedar Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15212

Council District: 6th
Application Received: 9/18/15

Inspector: Jeremy Garman

National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Façade renovations including after-the-fact installation of glass-block windows.

Discussion:

1. Mr. Dennis Zabelsky steps to the podium; he is the current president of the Dental Society. He explains the project, which has four parts; he starts with item two, which has to do with the windows in the building. They had been approved previously to paint and repair the windows and trim, but the cost is prohibitive and they would like to replace the windows. They also have questions about the HVAC vents and what color they need to match in painting them, which is item three. The fourth item is installation of an electric meter on the outside of the building. The first item, which is the problematic one, is the after-the-fact glass block windows and window grates. He states that he is a historian and appreciates historical significance. He shows a picture of one of the existing metal grates that is in better condition; he states that the grates are over a hundred years old and are in poor condition. They also were not able to retrieve them until the middle of June. He realizes the HRC already made a ruling on the windows but they want to bring it up again along with these other items. He shows photos he took recently of the McKinley Museum and Tomb in Canton, Ohio; they have metal grates installed over glass block windows on the basement of the on a structure from 1905. He did some research and states that glass block windows have been around since the turn of the century and could have been installed historically by someone that had the means. He states that the glass block is also not out of character for the street. He shows a historic photograph of the building showing that it has been significantly altered from its original state; for example the front porch was an open porch and there were no dormers over the windows. They submitted some examples of black iron grate styles, and if those are not appropriate, they would like assistance in choosing an appropriate style. He states that the glass block is valuable to them for insulation and safety.

2. Mr. Hogan states that they will need more information on the proposed grates than the cut sheet provided.

3. Mr. Hogan asks for public comment.
4. Mr. Nick Kyriazi steps to the podium. He states that at this time a lot of historic infrastructure and buildings needs to be repaired and replaced, and it should be expected in a historic district. He states that in this case they do know what was done and what was there before, and he thinks that that condition should be restored. He states that glass block is inappropriate; it may have been used in the ‘20s or ‘30s, but he has not seen 100 year old historic glass block at all in the neighborhood. As far as the meters, he states that the electric company will allow the meters to be installed in the building as long as they are accessible form a common area. As far as the grates, he would like to see the originals used, but it is likely that whoever built the house just picked the design out of a catalog because they liked it. If the applicant can find something of the same dimensions with similar detail and pattern it could be acceptable.

5. Mr. Jay Wells steps to the podium; he is the past president of the Dental Society and is currently on the board of directors. He wants to follow up on the subject of glass block. He says that the guidelines state that glass block “should not be used”, and he is sure that the language was approved by a legal entity. He states that if the intent was that glass block should never be used, the word “prohibited” would have been used. He states that this indicates that there are situations where glass block may be used, and he feels that this is one of those situations. He states that their building has low windows which are not very visible, and glass block adds to the safety and insulation of the building.

6. Mr. David Anderson steps to the podium; he is also a member of the Dental Society. He speaks about the Society and states that they don’t see this as an adversarial process; they do want to cooperate and support the integrity of the neighborhood and region. They are looking for direction and will act upon it shortly.

7. Mr. Chris Gates steps to the podium. He submits photos of the various grates. He addresses the issue of the language in the guidelines, stating that grandfathered glass block in the district has to be approved, so “never” would be an inappropriate term. He states that if the applicant is supportive of the historic nature of the district, they would restore what was there, namely the windows with grates over them. He states that at the previous meeting that the applicant attended, it was determined that glass block was inappropriate for a building that did not already have it; and given that the Commission already ruled on it he doesn’t know why it is still a question. He states that the process was disregarded as permission was not asked for before the work was done, and the ruling of the Commission, which was over six months ago, has been ignored. He states that many buildings were mutilated by glass block prior to the creation of the district, and that should not set a precedent for new glass block. He talks about how the window grates were saved and states that the neighborhood had reservations about turning them back over to the applicant, but they were returned after they took photos of all of them. He states that one is in poor condition, but the other seven are in better condition. He states that another option would be to recreate them. He talks about the benefits of the historic district and why it is damaging to go outside of the rules.

8. Ms. Kathleen Hagan steps to the podium; she was the one that preserved the grates. She didn’t know about the historic district at the time and had asked for the grates because they were beautiful. She states that her issue with the glass block is that they are not individual glass blocks fit to the window, but modules that don’t
9. Mr. Zabelsky steps back to the podium. He states that they are not trying to delay. He states that the grates were not the contractors’ to give away. He states that the condition of the grates is a matter of opinion, but they did have professionals look at them. He states that the original grates will not offer much in the way of safety, and they will not replace the glass block windows until they have a secure solution.

10. Mr. Hogan asks for additional testimony; there is none. He acknowledges that the after-the-fact glass block was denied, and the Commission required the glass block to be removed in the Certificate of Appropriateness issued February 9, 2015. He states that they also asked for the heating duct to be painted brown to match the existing HVAC installation. He states that the new application is asking for the glass block to remain, for new grates to be installed over them, and for window replacement, for which there are no cut sheets or information on replacement windows. He also states that they are asking approval for installation of meters. He states that they should take the application in parts.

11. Mr. Gastil states that the ruling on the glass block has already been made.

12. Mr. Hogan agrees. With regards to the alternate grates, he feels that they don’t have enough information and may want to require something to be submitted to staff.

13. Mr. Gastil states that he thinks they may not want to require them to reinstall potentially damaged grates, but agrees they need more information and the applicant should bring more information to staff.

14. Mr. Hogan states that they should try to imitate or stay close to the original design if they install new grates. The applicant should submit something more appropriate to staff. He states that without a cut sheet he can’t determine if the windows are appropriate. He states that clad windows are not appropriate per the guidelines, but there are prefinished wood composite windows available that have been approved before. He states that this item should be continued for more information on what windows are being replaced and what they will be replaced with. He states that the HVAC should be painted to match. Regarding the meters, he states that the meters can be installed on the inside as long as they are accessible. The Commission can issue a denial letter for them to take back to the electric company so they can allow them on the inside.

**Motion:**

15. Mr. Serrao motions to deny the installation of the glass block windows as dictated by the Commission on February 9, 2015. He states that the applicant should submit a more compatible design and material to staff or reinstall the original metal grates. The window replacement will be tabled for more information. The HVAC vents should be painted to match the surroundings. He motions to deny the installation of a meter board on the outside of the building and requests that it be installed on the inside.

16. Mr. Gastil seconds.

17. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
907-909 E. Carson Street  East Carson Street Historic District

Owner:  Marwan Aboud
1024 Berkshire Ave
Pittsburgh, Pa 15226

Ward:  17th
Lot and Block:  3-G-57

Applicant:  George Nadour
126 Kensington Dr
Pittsburgh, Pa 15237

Inspector:
Council District:  3rd
Application Received:  8/14/15

National Register Status:  Listed:  X  Eligible:

Proposed Changes:  After-the-fact façade renovations, demolition of rear addition.

Discussion:

1. Mr. Fadi Aboud step to the podium; he is the owner of the property. He states that they did not know the buildings were historic, and all the exterior features of the buildings had been covered up since they have owned them. They removed the siding, as the brickwork was ready to collapse and needed to be repaired. They have repaired and repointed the brick. They also had to remove the windows and the roofing, and are looking for approval on new windows and new shingles and color. They have also demolished the rear addition, which he says the building inspector gave them the ok for.

2. Mr. Harless states that the building inspectors don’t give permits out in the field.

3. Ms. Spooner clarifies that no C of A was issued yet and no permits should have been issued.

4. Mr. Hogan states that all alterations visible from the public right-of-way have to undergo historic review first. He asks what all the items are that they are looking for approval of today.

5. Mr. Aboud states that the items are the roof, the windows, and HVAC units in the rear as shown on the plot plan.

6. Mr. Hogan states that the HVAC units are hidden in the alcove so he is not as concerned about them.

7. Mr. Hogan asks about the rear structure.

8. Mr. Aboud states that it was demolished to build a new rear addition.

9. Mr. Hogan asks if they received a stop-work order at all.

10. Mr. Aboud says no.

11. Mr. Serrao asks if the new rear addition is to match the neighboring building.

12. Mr. Aboud says yes. He states that the rear addition that was there was in terrible
condition.

13. Mr. Hogan asks about the materials, specifically those that will be used for trim and to reclad the overhang, and he also asks about the gutter.

14. Mr. Aboud says the gutter will be a box gutter, which is being constructed by his father with copper.

15. Mr. Hogan asks about the roof.

16. Mr. Aboud says it was shingles.

17. Mr. Hogan asks about the doors.

18. Mr. Aboud states that the doors were wooden, and they will be replacing them with wood.

19. Mr. Hogan asks if any of the original detailing on the windows was still there when they removed the siding.

20. Mr. Aboud says there was a small piece of wooden trim which they have tried to match. There are no windows in the building right now, and they were looking to install new vinyl windows because that is what was there before. He states that they will be rebuilding the soffit and fascia with wood, because that is what was there.

21. Mr. Hogan asks for public comment; there is none. He acknowledges the letter from the LRC asking the application to be tabled to allow them to review the drawings.

22. Mr. Hogan states that the application says that existing windows are to remain, which he is entitled to do.

23. Mr. Serrao asks if the applicant is replacing any of the existing windows on the front.

24. Mr. Aboud states that they wanted to install new vinyl windows if they can.

25. Mr. Hogan states that they would like the front façade windows to be wood, but the rear windows can be vinyl.

Motion:

26. Mr. Serrao motions to approve the after-the-fact façade renovations as submitted in the drawings, with the conditions that the windows on the Carson Street façade be replaced with new wood windows to be approved by staff, that the remaining windows on the side and rear can be replaced with vinyl, that the asphalt shingle roof be replaced in-kind with a dark grey color, and that final paint colors are to match existing and are to be submitted to staff.

27. Mr. Hogan states that the doors can be replaced in-kind, and that the HVAC units are approved as long as they are not visible from the street.

28. Mr. Harless asks about the rear doors.

29. Mr. Hogan states that they are showing a four panel steel door. He states that they could find a more appropriate fiberglass door, which can be submitted to staff.

30. Mr. Serrao modifies the motion to include these recommendations.
31. Mr. Falcone seconds.

32. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
1739 E. Carson Street  
East Carson Street Historic District

Owner:  
Andrew Stewart  
Main Street Holdings  
5812 Darlington Rd  
Pittsburgh, Pa 15217

Ward: 17th  
Lot and Block: 12-E-318

Applicant:  
Andrew Stewart  
Main Street Holdings  
5812 Darlington Rd  
Pittsburgh, Pa 15217

Inspector:  
Council District: 3rd  
Application Received: 7/9/15

National Register Status:  Listed: X Eligible:  

Proposed Changes:  Construction of ADA ramp.

Discussion:

1. Ms. Suzan Lami steps to the podium; she is the architect for the project. She explains that the application was tabled last month, and the LRC had objected to the ramp being at the front of the building. She prepared two alternate designs to share with the LRC, one with a small ramp at the front with the stairs going forward, and one with the ramp on the side of the building with a rear entrance into the space. She met with the LRC on site, and they approved of the second option. She incorporated their comments and has received verbal and written approval from them. The new proposal consists of a straight ramp at the rear of the building, a new handrail, and replacement of an existing window with a door to match the door at the front of the building. They will have to flip the door swing at the front of the building so it will not swing out and create a hazard, and they will also have to alter the fire escape so it will miss the ramp.

2. Mr. Hogan thanks her for working with them and the LRC on a solution.

3. Mr. Hogan asks for public testimony; there is none. He acknowledges for the record an email in support received from the LRC and another email in support from one of their members.

Motion:

4. Mr. Harless motions to approve as submitted.

5. Mr. Serrao seconds.

6. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
Southside Market House
1201 Bingham Street

Individual Landmark

Owner: City of Pittsburgh
City of Pittsburgh
414 Grant Street, Room 200
Pittsburgh, Pa 15219

Ward: 17th

Lot and Block: 3-H-202

Applicant: Patrick Russell
Renaissance 3 Architects
48 S 14th Street
Pittsburgh, Pa 15203

Inspector:

Council District: 3rd

Application Received: 9/18/15

National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Replacement of asphalt shingle roof with faux slate.

Discussion:

1. Mr. Patrick Russell steps to the podium; he is the architect for the project. He states that the project consists of roof and gutter replacement, as the existing roof and gutter are leaking and causing deterioration. They are proposing to replace the asphalt shingle roof with synthetic slate or asphalt shingles if the cost is prohibitive. The gutter is to be an external half-round gutter to replace the existing condition, which is an angle iron with a piece of wood in front acting as a stop. The gutter will be aluminum with a weathered copper finish painted on. He states that they will also paint the new fascia area to match to soffit underneath.

2. Mr. Hogan asks for public testimony; there is none.

3. Mr. Hogan states that his only concern is the alteration of the roof gutter system, but states that it has already been gone for years. He states that perhaps the gutter should be painted to match instead of with the faux copper patina.

4. Mr. Russell clarifies that the copper look will be a darker brown.

Motion:

5. Mr. Serrao motions to approve the roof replacement with faux slate and the new aluminum gutters as submitted.


7. Mr. Hogan amends the motion to include approval of roof replacement with asphalt shingles.

8. Mr. Serrao accepts the amendment.

9. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
130 Thackeray Street

Oakland Civic Center Historic District

Owner: University of Pittsburgh
127 N Bellefield Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15213

Ward: 4th
Lot and Block: 27-R-27

Applicant: Dunn and Associates, Inc
5813 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15217

Inspector: Council District: 8th
Application Received: 9/18/15

National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Infill of one of two entrance doors, signage.

Discussion:

1. Mr. Canard Grigsby of the University of Pittsburgh steps to the podium; he is the senior project manager. He also introduces Ron Lebow, the project manager, and Alan Dunn and Erik Fritzberg from Dunn and Associates, the architect for the project. He states that the building is in the National Register and Oakland Civic Center city historic districts, but he does not think it is recognized as a contributing building in the latter. He states that the building was built in 1911 or 1912 in an early modern style. He states that there are different geometric elements, panels and rhythms on the façade, and they are trying to be sympathetic to those by removing one of the former entrances along Thackeray Street.

2. Mr. Hogan asks why they are proposing this and if there is some other use going on behind this former entrance.

3. Mr. Grigsby says yes, the form and function behind this door will not allow entrance or egress from it any longer.

4. Mr. Dunn steps to the podium. He explains that this building has six points of entry, which for a small building creates a lot of confusion. He states that the stair behind this was not useful and was removed, and by doing that they were able to unify two parts of the building. They want to treat the unused portal in a dignified and architecturally relevant way. He shows several options for the treatment of the entrance. In each option they would preserve the small stained glass panel and construct an infill panel to reflect the existing brickwork patterns in color and detail.

5. Mr. Harless asks about elements outside of the entrances.

6. Mr. Fritzberg states that there is an exterior bench and also signage included in the application.

7. Mr. Dunn states that the signage will help to emphasize the entrance.

8. Mr. Hogan states that they are changing the interior behind the unused door to
create more capacity and flow and he asks why they can't just keep the door, black it out, and leave it alone. He states that they are proposing to alter a significant piece of architecture and they haven't made a case as to why they need to do it.

9. Mr. Serrao agrees.

10. The applicant asks if they can remove the hardware and use black out paper on the inside.

11. The Commission agrees.

12. Mr. Hogan asks for public testimony; there is none.

13. Mr. Harless mentions the signage.

14. The Commission agrees that the signage is acceptable.

15. Mr. Hogan states that what is being suggested is inactivation of the existing door with removal of the hardware and blacking out of the windows and approval of the new signage for the operable door.

16. The Commission discusses the landscaping furniture proposed in front of the door and decides that it is not appropriate.

**Motion:**

17. Mr. Serrao motions to deny the infill of the entrance door and installation of a bench. The signage as proposed is approved, and the other entrance is to be inactivated.

18. Mr. Hogan clarifies that the one door is to be inactivated by hardware removal and black out paper, but the rest of the entrance and sidewalk are to remain unchanged.

19. Mr. Falcone seconds.

20. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
4309 Parkman Avenue

Owner: Massimo & Giuliana Trucco
4309 Parkman Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15213

Ward: 4th
Lot and Block: 27-G-181

Applicant: Massimo & Giuliana Trucco
4309 Parkman Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15213

Inspector: Council District: 8th

Application Received: 9/18/15

National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Addition of terracing to front landscape.

Discussion:

1. Ms. Giuliana Trucco steps to the podium; she is the owner of the property. She explains the project, stating that they have had problems with the landscaping as a stream of water runs from the rear retaining wall to the front landscape. They have tried to deal with it by removing the grass and planting evergreens, but they had trouble keeping the plants alive and now that area is covered with weeds. She is proposing to construct tiers to match the front brick wall and steps; the tiers will be constructed from Versa Lok blocks and there would be two tiers with flower beds.

2. Mr. Hogan asks for public testimony; there is none.

Motion:

3. Mr. Serrao motions to approve construction of a terrace with Versa Lok block to match the existing brick.

4. Mr. Falcone seconds.

5. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.
1812 E. Carson Street  East Carson Street Historic District

Owner:  United American Savings Bank  Ward:  17th
1812 E Carson Street  Lot and Block:  12-E-356
Pittsburgh, Pa 15203

Inspector:  

Applicant:  United American Savings Bank  Council District:  3rd
1812 E Carson Street  Application Received:  8/14/15
Pittsburgh, Pa 15203

National Register Status:  Listed:  X  Eligible:

Proposed Changes:  Demolition of rear building.

Discussion:

1. Mr. Tom Smith steps to the podium; he is the president of the United American Savings Bank. He thanks the Commission for their assistance in renovating the main 1812 East Carson Street building. He states that the house behind it is the one being discussed today. He states that they have several concerns, one of which is parking, which he knows is not the Commission’s concern. They also have a concern about safety; where the front and rear buildings join there is a small area that is hidden from view and could be a security hazard. He also states that the building has structural issues and is not safe. He states that the building is also not a unique structure in the South Side. Their last concern is economic; they had an appraisal done that found that every dollar they would spend renovating the building, they would get back only fifty cents.

2. Mr. Max Mavrovic steps to the podium; he is the architect for the project. He states that they have been working on the project for many months and have explored several options. They have prepared several documents and have also spoken to the LRC and addressed their concerns. He gives some information on the building, stating that this rear small brick building is set back from the alley about twenty feet, and the bank staff parking is limited to a small area. He shows photos of the building and context photos of the surrounding fabric. He states that there are no other residential buildings on this side of this block on the alley. He states that they did have a structural engineer look at the property, and his report is included in the packet. The engineer found that the structure would require significant repair work, and even if the repairs were done there would still be ongoing structural issues that can’t be corrected. For example, the building will always be out of plumb and will get worse, and the foundation will continue to leak without excavation. He outlines some of the other structural issue that were found. The bank has explored options to either convert the building to an office space or back to residential, both of which would require extensive renovations. They also had the paint tested for lead, which came back positive, and they tested for asbestos, which the results are not back for. They had cost estimates done for renovation of
the building and also demolition and conversion to a parking lot. He states that the renovation would be about one and a half times more expensive; this would include the detailing they would do if the building was demolished, including the fencing that will match the adjacent parking lot, setback of security gates, and illumination. He talks more about the site, stating that there are parking lots to either side of the property. He shows a drawing of the site and the proposed demolition and renovation plan. He states that there are four residential row houses across the street from the site, and they did receive letters of support from two of the owners or residents. He shows drawings with the building removed, showing how the gates will be set back giving more open area, and the protected, illuminated entrance for employees. He shows photos of the views of the building from East Carson and the side street. He states that these show why they feel the building is non-contributing, and he asks what the definition of non-contributing buildings is because he has seen references to it in the guidelines but no definition.

3. Mr. Hogan says that the guidelines do not directly define the term. He states that if you look at the ordinance (chapter 11) it defines what is to be included when a district is created, such as time and place, architectural style, the history of who might have lived there, and if it exemplifies the rhythm or pattern of the neighborhood. In the case of East Carson Street, the front commercial buildings with rear auxiliary buildings are a typical standard. If this was in front of them as a nomination, he would argue that this is a contributing building based on the rhythm, articulation, materials, etc., and how it fits in to the context of the district. He states that the fact that it is on fire maps dating back to the 1800s shows that it has been a consistent piece of fabric for a significant amount of time.

4. Ms. Peterson states that it is also an example of a “flounder house”, which is not a very common housing type in Pittsburgh.

5. Mr. Mavrovic states that they did find other examples in the neighborhood, which they did include in the documentation. He talks a bit more about the engineer’s report. He shows exterior and interior photos of the building and talks about some of the structural and cosmetic problems. He shows maps and pictures of similar buildings in the surrounding area. He states that there are many variations but they looked at conditions such as the sloped roof, number of stories, etc.

6. Mr. Harless asks what they are trying to show and if the point is that it is consistent with the pattern of the neighborhood.

7. Mr. Mavrovic states that the purpose of this is to show that there are many buildings like this in the neighborhood and that the district would not be diminished if this building was removed.

8. Mr. Serrao states that a few years ago there was a similar demolition case where the applicant provided other examples of similar buildings in the neighborhood to argue that taking one building down would not have an adverse effect since there were so many similar ones.

9. Mr. Mavrovic states that they are trying to present a project that is historically sensitive and responsive to the neighborhood. He states that part of the project will be to rebuild the brick wall in the rear of the building using the same brick. He presents additional documentation showing parking lots in the vicinity and neighborhood and also uses. He states that the proposed parking lot would be for employees only and would not have the impact on the street and alley that the
adjacent municipal parking lot does. He states that the building is not visible from 18th or 19th Streets, and the entrance is not even visible from the alley. He shows the map of the historic district, and states that it seems to show that the spirit of the designation was to manage the commercial properties on East Carson Street and not the residential structures on the back alleys. He states that it seems like if it was meant to protect the back alleys, the district would have been extended another block; as it is, the residential structures just on the other side of the alley have no designation. He talks about the structure and how parts of it including the stairs don’t meet current code; although there is an exception for historic structures that allows these features to remain in place, they believe this is an indication that the conditions are unsafe. He states that they believe they have addressed the concerns of the LRC through the documentation presented today. He states that the district guidelines do allow for demolition of buildings that meet certain criteria, which they believe it does. The guidelines mention the historic or architectural significance of the structure; he states that the structure is old, but they have been unable to find its historic or architectural significance. Another criterion is the contribution of the structure to the character of the district; he states that they showed 40 examples just in the immediate area of structures that contribute in a similar way. The structural condition of the building is another criterion, which they addressed with the engineer’s report. The next criterion is the feasibility of renovation and continued use of the building; he states that the building has been vacant for a year, and they have addressed what they feel is the infeasibility of renovation. He states that the character of the new structure is another criteria; as he stated, they will be reusing the brick and rebuilding the wall, they will be setting back the fencing and gates, installing lighting, and adding landscaping to improve the surroundings. Other criteria address economic factors, which they have addressed in their economic study and cost estimates. He states that they believe they have made their case and asks for the Commission’s approval.

10. Mr. Hogan asks for public testimony; there is none.

11. Mr. Hogan states that his organization and the bank have a working relationship, so because of the perceived conflict he will abstain from voting.

12. Mr. Harless addresses the issue with the stairs that are not up to code. He states that steep stairs are not uncommon in old structures, and it is not prohibited to retain them in an existing structure, unless there was a change of occupancy or some other change.

13. Mr. Mavrović states that they would need to be addressed if they were to lease the building.

14. Mr. Harless talks about the structural report. He states that there are several items pointed out for repair and replacement, and this is not what they would usually see in a report for a building on the verge of being condemned. What he is talking from the report is that the building hasn’t been worked on and needs serious repair, but he doesn’t see an indication that it is infeasible to restore the structure. He talks about the criteria for demolition and addresses the contributing/non-contributing issue. He thinks that it is important to talk about this as a stand-alone house, which it is, rather than an addition. He feels that the fact that there are so many similar structures in the district shows that is part of the character-defining feature of the district.
15. Mr. Falcone agrees.

16. Mr. Harless commends the research and work that went into the presentation. He does feel that they have demonstrated that the building is actually consistent with other structures in the district and that the structural condition is not necessarily beyond repair and continued use. He also states that in other cases, they have looked at what would be replacing a demolished building, and replacement of a building with parking has been a sore spot.

17. Mr. Serrao states that he felt that demolition criteria F and G were the criteria that applied.

**Motion:**

18. Mr. Harless motions to deny the proposed demolition of the rear building, given that it fails to meet an acceptable level of the criteria they are charged with considering.

19. Ms. Peterson seconds.

20. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; Mr. Harless, Mr. Falcone, and Ms. Peterson are in favor and Mr. Serrao abstains. Mr. Hogan had recused himself. Motion carries.

21. Mr. Hogan states that they are able to apply for economic hardship.
Card Carriage House

Historic Nomination

Owner: David and Aliza Kashi
Ward: 14th
Lot and Block: 126-H-102
Inspector: Mark Sanders
Council District: 
Nomination Received: 7/20/15

National Register Status: Listed: Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Nomination as a historic structure.

Discussion:

1. Ms. Susan Barclay steps to the podium; she is one of the nominators and neighbors on Card Lane. She states that the property is important for its architecture and well as its association with a significant piece of Pittsburgh history. She states that the building has been deteriorating, which they have tried to address with the owner; some of the cosmetic issues have been addressed, but they are still concerned. They feel that the building does deserve historic designation due to its significance, and they believe that the designation would promote improvements more in keeping with the building’s architectural integrity.

2. Mr. Peter Kaplan steps to the podium; he is another nominator and neighbor. He and Marie King, another neighbor, prepared the nomination. He talks a bit about his background in historic preservation. He states that he is sometimes skeptical about historic property nominations, but as he worked on the nomination he became strongly convinced that the property is worthy of designation. He states that the property is significant for its association with William Warren Card, who played a prominent role along with George Westinghouse in the development and adoption of the railroad air brake. He states that Card constructed the house as an outbuilding for his Penn Avenue residence at the time the house was constructed in 1893. He states that the structure is also significant in that it is one of only two known stable buildings surviving in the neighborhood from the 19th century, when Penn Avenue was the home to large estates. He states that the structure is also a reflection of the neighborhood’s evolution from the home of Pittsburgh’s elite to a middle-class suburb. He addresses the integrity of the building, stating that it retains the form and materials of its original construction as well as its exterior features and character, even after its conversion to an apartment building in the 1920s. It has undergone unfortunate exterior changes, but they can be reversed. He states that the designation has been endorsed by PHLF and Preservation Pittsburgh.

3. Ms. Leslie Kaplan steps to the podium; she is another nominator and neighbor.
She addresses the neglect of the property and some of the issues that the neighbors have faced. She states that most recently, the owners have responded to pressure from Building Inspection by putting up vinyl siding, but the underlying issues were not fixed. She states that the property could fall to demolition by neglect if something isn’t done.

4. Mr. Hogan asks if the owner is supportive of the nomination.

5. The nominators say no.

6. Ms. Spooner states that Ms. Quinn has spoken to the owner of the property about the process.

7. Mr. Kaplan states that they have also spoken to the City Council representative, Mr. Burgess, and he is not supportive. He knows that the councilman’s views will have to be taken into consideration, but he hopes that just because they happen to be in this district, they won’t be denied the benefits of historic preservation.

8. Mr. Falcone asks if they have any plans to nominate other properties associated with Card.

9. Ms. Kaplan states that the Card mansion on Penn Avenue is currently owned and occupied by a religious organization. The neighbors have not had any conversations with them, but the property is being maintained well.

10. Mr. Hogan states that the church would have to nominate that structure, but it would be great if this pair of structures could be nominated. He encourages them to talk with the church.

11. Mr. Falcone asks if there were any other structures associated with Card.

12. Ms. Kaplan states that their house, built in 1870, was moved to the corner of the property when the Card mansion was built. There is also a stone wall that surrounds half the superblock that was the Card estate.

13. Mr. Hogan states that they determined at the last meeting that the application has merit, and at this point they will review and make a recommendation to City Council. He states that the staff report does recommend approval and lists the criteria by which the nomination is recommended. They will put a motion forward to recommend approval of designation if that is the will of the Commission.

**Motion:**

14. Mr. Serrao motions to recommend.

15. [The Commission did not re-read the list of criteria, but in the September 2, 2015, meeting minutes Mr. Gastil listed the criteria for the record. He stated that, subject to further review, the building meets criteria #2, identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States, criteria #3, exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship, and possibly criteria #8, exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction.]
16. Mr. Falcone seconds.

17. Mr. Hogan asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.

18. Mr. Hogan recommends that they look to building support for the nomination in Planning Commission and City Council. He states that the building is protected from demolition; however, designation will in no way permanently ensure that the owner will invest in the property and that the property will not continue to deteriorate. The code does not mandate that owners take care of historic buildings.