



RENEW > Historic Preservation

Cultural, Historical, and Architectural Resources

The district contains an impressive yet unbalanced mix of nationally and locally designated properties of historic significance. Eight National Register Historic Districts exist (and four more areas have been identified as eligible) yet no local districts have been recognized within the district. In fact, only one local district has been certified west of the Schuylkill River: The Parkside Historic District. A National Register designation offers financial incentives for restoring structures through a historic tax credit. Conversely, a local Philadelphia Register designation offers greater protection against inaccurate or unsympathetic alterations and unnecessary demolition. Several potential historic districts have been identified that may satisfy the criteria for designation.

Despite not having any local districts, University Southwest has 307 properties that are individually listed on the Philadelphia Register, and many other commercial, residential, and institutional historic resources have been identified as potential historic resources. To focus preservation efforts and support the plan's corridor recommendations, special emphasis needs to be placed on preserving "at risk" neighborhood anchor buildings that significantly contribute to the built environment of the district's many commercial corridors.

While the PCPC supports ongoing efforts to designate significant resources, the goal of this plan is not to assign designation priorities to individual properties, but instead to identify historic preservation opportunities that strengthen existing community assets and advance the long-term vision of the district. By leveraging historic preservation together with other recommendations, there is a better chance of stimulating development that is sensitive to its existing context.

Recommendations

35. Create Philadelphia Historic Register districts:
 - Identify and designate a group or groups of buildings that best represent the historical development of Spruce Hill
 - Identify and designate a group or groups of buildings that best represent the historical development of Powelton Village
 - > Implementing Agencies: PHC | CW Objective: 8.1.1
36. Protect commercial corridor anchor buildings
 - Add the Fire House at 701 South 50th Street and the West Philadelphia Branch of the Free Library at 3948-50 Walnut Street to the Philadelphia Historic Register and/or National Registry of Historic Places.
 - by participating in the Main Street development program
 - > Implementing Agencies: PHC, Commerce, commercial corridor managers | CW Objective: 8.1.3
37. Facilitate partnerships to utilize under-used religious buildings
 - Partner arts organizations with congregations with large facilities
 - Provide flexibility in the building code to accommodate uses other than religious services in existing buildings
 - > Implementing Agencies: MOACCE, L&I, non-profits | CW Objective: 8.1.5
38. Create a strategic plan for the reuse and stabilization of Mount Moriah Cemetery.
 - > Implementing Agencies: Friends of Mount Moriah, MDO | CW Objective: 8.1.5
39. Increase tourism to the three National Historic Landmarks that already have visitor programs:
 - The Woodlands, the John Bartram house, and the Furness Library at the University of Pennsylvania.
 - > Implementing Agencies: non profits | CW Objective: 8.2.1
40. Preserve the Paul Robeson House (4951 Walnut Street) as a place of cultural and ethnic traditions and resources by adding it to the Philadelphia Historic Register.
 - > Implementing Agencies: non profits, PHC | CW Objective: 8.1.7



*Philadelphia2035
Citywide Vision*

Goal 8.1:
Support sensitive
development that
preserves and enhances
Philadelphia's multifaceted
past.



Case Study | *Calvary Center for Culture and Community*

801 S. 48th Street

The Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1906, was among the top ten endangered Delaware Valley landmarks by 1994. In response, community members formed a coalition that has restored the building and redeveloped it as a community center, the "unofficial townhall of University City."



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National Historic Landmarks

USW has four National Historic Landmarks, the highest level of federal historic designation:



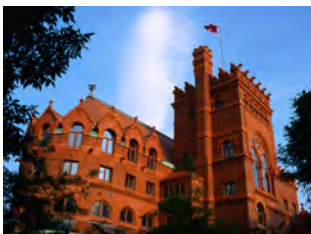
The Woodlands, 4000 Woodland Avenue



Alfred Newton Richards Medical Research Laboratories and David Goddard Laboratories Buildings, 3700-10 Hamilton Walk



John Bartram House, 1650 S. 53rd Street



Furness Library of the University of Pennsylvania

Mount Moriah Improvements

Mount Moriah Cemetery is one of the City's more prominent burial grounds. Its 142 acres of rolling hills, bisected by the Cobbs Creek and the Cobbs Creek Parkway, are situated in both the City of Philadelphia (77.3 acres) and the Borough of Yeadon in Delaware County (64.7 acres). The cemetery has fallen on hard times, both physically and financially. Invasive species have engulfed large sections of Mount Moriah, monuments have been desecrated, and the cemetery lacks a management entity with the capacity to ensure long term financial stability. This cemetery is an integral piece of Philadelphia's cultural history and, if programmed and managed properly, could serve as a major open space asset in Southwest Philadelphia, the inner ring suburbs of Delaware County, and the region as a whole. Some of the goals of the newly formed Friends of Mount Moriah are to promote preservation and passive recreation opportunities through community engagement.



Section of the cemetery lacking maintenance



Maintained section of the cemetery



Existing gateway

Future vision of new gateway entrance showing new sidewalk and creekside trail