

PHILADELPHIA

CHESTNUT HILL

PHILADELPHIA ARCHITECTURE

PHILADELPHIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1

Iconic Kensington milk bottle, Engine 46 firehouse are now certified historic

Five interesting buildings recently achieved historic designation

By **Melissa Romero** | Jan 17, 2018, 10:30am EST



The milk bottle water tower is an iconic landmark in Kensington. | Photo by Melissa Romero

An iconic water tower in Kensington in the shape of a milk bottle and a stately brick firehouse in South Philly were among the five properties added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places last week.

The Philadelphia Historical Commission voted to designate five very different buildings as historic, which means that any exterior changes would have to be approved by the commission. In addition, the structures are now protected from demolition unless the owner can prove hardship in the future.

Here's what you should know about each of the historic buildings.



Courtesy of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Engine 46 Firehouse

Its gabled roof is a welcome sight for drivers getting off I-95 at the Columbus Avenue exit. Designed by John T. Windrim and built in 1894, Engine 46 Firehouse in Pennsport is a worthy example of Flemish Revival and Queen Anne-style architecture. The station

was abandoned in the 1960s, then used as an auto mechanic shop and then a steakhouse. It has sat vacant since 2006 with an active demo permit in play.

Kensington milk bottle

The milk bottle is actually a water tower that sits on top of the old Harbisons Dairies plant at 2041-55 Coral Street. The four-part factory dates back to 1895 and went on to become one of the largest dairy producers in the region. Today, the site is used as a warehouse, while another portion has been converted into condo lofts. Although the milk bottle, which was designed to hold 30,000 gallons of water, is the clear standout, “this should not overshadow the architectural importance of the other structures,” which nominator Oscar Beisert says were influenced by the designs of architect Louis Sullivan.



2 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue

This handsome Gothic Revival-style house was designed in 1864 by James C. Sideny and Frederick C. Merry for a doctor. The home, clad in Wissahickon schist stone and slate shingles, was part of developer Samuel Austin's early suburban development of Chestnut Hill, according to nominator Chestnut Hill Conservancy.

RELATED

9 converted historic firehouses in Philly, mapped

A beginner's guide to historic preservation in Philadelphia

4058 Chestnut Street

This address may sound familiar: It sits on the same block as a row of other Italianate-style rowhouses in University City that were part of a preservation battle in 2016. While some of the rowhomes were added to the local register then, others were demolished to make way for apartments. The property at 4058 Chestnut Street is the latest building to be preserved, dating back to the 1870s when it was build by developer Thomas Powers.



Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church

This Catholic Church sits at 3200 Belgrade Street in Port Richmond. It dates back to about 1890 and was designed by architect Edwin Forrest Durang, who is responsible for a number of notable churches in Philadelphia, including St. Laurentius Church in Fishtown. According to nominator Celeste A. Morello, the Nativity, which is still a place of worship today, is often considered one of Durang's best works.