

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON
700-34 RACE STREET**

Reevaluating the Roundhouse's Historical Significance and Potential for Redevelopment

Woodworth, Beckett <bwoodworth@KPMG.com>

Fri 9/8/2023 3:17 PM

To:preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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To the esteemed members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission,

As you prepare to vote on the Roundhouse's induction into the Philadelphia Historical Commission on October 13th, I urge you to consider the following points. While some may argue that the Roundhouse is a significant building, its architectural and historical value is not as substantial as it may seem, particularly when taking into account the historical mistreatment of black and brown communities by the police department.

- Firstly, the Roundhouse's status as a former police headquarters does not inherently make it a significant building. Many structures have served similar purposes throughout history, and this alone does not warrant preservation. Furthermore, preserving a building that symbolizes an institution with a history of racial injustice may send the wrong message to the communities that have been directly affected by these issues.
- Secondly, the Roundhouse's interior design is far from practical. Its twisting corridors and confusing layout not only make it difficult to navigate but also limit its potential for adaptive reuse. While it may have once served a purpose in deterring escape attempts from holding cells, this design is now more of a hindrance than a benefit.
- In response to committee member [Suzanna Barucco's statement](#) that a use will be found for the building, it is important to consider the challenges that the Roundhouse's design presents. The building's unconventional layout makes it difficult to repurpose, and any potential uses may require significant alterations, undermining its historical integrity.
- Moreover, the Roundhouse's location in one of the United States' densest city centers, directly across from a future subway station entrance, presents an opportunity for redevelopment. Rather than preserving an architecturally peculiar and historically insensitive building, this prime location could be utilized for much-needed housing or other community-oriented projects that promote healing and growth.

In conclusion, I urge the Philadelphia Historical Commission to consider the broader implications of preserving the Roundhouse. While it may hold some historical value as a former police headquarters, its impractical design, prime location, and association with racial injustice make it a less-than-ideal candidate for preservation. Instead, let us focus on creating a more vibrant and functional space that better serves the needs of our city and its residents, fostering an environment of inclusivity and progress.

Best regards,

Beckett Woodworth (he/him/his)

Senior Associate, Accounting Methods and Credits Services @ KPMG LLP

Committeeperson, Ward 39A, Division 45 @ The Philadelphia Democratic Party

Board Member, Secretary @ South Philly Food Co-Op

Cell: (267) 408-9566

Address: 1737 S. 13th St., Philadelphia, PA 19148

Any advice in this communication is limited to the conclusions specifically set forth herein and is based on the completeness and accuracy of the stated facts, assumptions and/or representations included. In rendering our advice, we may consider tax authorities that are subject to change, retroactively and/or prospectively, and any such changes could affect the validity of our advice. We will not update our advice for subsequent changes or modifications to the laws and regulations, or to the judicial and administrative interpretations thereof. The advice or other information in this document was prepared for the sole benefit of KPMG's client and may not be relied upon by any other person or organization. KPMG accepts no responsibility or liability in respect of this document to any person or organization other than KPMG's client.

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October 9, 2023

The Hon. James Kenney, Mayor
City Hall, Room 115
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Mayor Kenney:

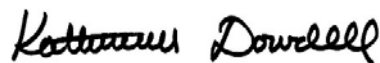
Philadelphia has a wealth of historic buildings, but as you well know, many are not protected as they should be. One of these buildings is the former Police Administration Building, known informally as the Roundhouse. A difficult building for some to love, it is nevertheless an architectural and structural landmark. However, its past use caused many to feel that this building was unworthy of protection.

The city is to be commended for the very thorough and rigorous public engagement process it conducted to discuss the architectural and social history of this building and its occupants. The conclusion of that concerted effort resulted in the building being nominated for addition to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and being recommended for approval by the Designation Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission in September. The final step in this long process, approval by the full Historical Commission, was scheduled for their next meeting, on October 13, 2023.

It was therefore quite puzzling and very dismaying to learn that this final approval hearing has been continued to March 2024. Word on the grapevine is that this delay was requested by your administration, in order to allow the next mayor to “make the decision”. Make the decision to do what? The building is clearly significant, and the public is in favor of the building being repurposed rather than demolished. It’s unclear to me what other outcome could be accomplished by waiting.

The next mayor will have a full plate of issues to handle. Rather than deferring this decision and further burdening our next executive, I encourage you to rethink this position. There’s been a long public engagement process; the memory of the designation committee meeting is still fresh, and the Commission should be reviewing this application while its own committee members and the public are still engaged. Postponing this decision after a broad public process fuels disengagement – exactly the opposite result of what that effort was designed to accomplish. Please put this case back onto the Historical Commission’s agenda as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



Katherine Dowdell, AIA

Cc: Jon Farnham, Executive Director, Philadelphia Historical Commission
All members of the Commission and Designation Committee
Paul Steinke and Hannah Stark, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia



PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

for greater philadelphia

October 10, 2023

Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: Philadelphia Register nomination of 700-34 Race Street, aka The Roundhouse

Dear Members of the Historical Commission,

I am writing in reference to the nomination for the Police Administration Building, commonly known as “The Roundhouse.” We urge the Historical Commission to consider this nomination at their upcoming meeting on October 13 and not continue it to March 2024 as is currently the plan.

The nomination is a collaboration between the Preservation Alliance and Docomomo US- Greater Philadelphia Chapter and represents an enormous expenditure of time and effort designed to show that the building meets the criteria for designation. The Committee on Historic Designation agreed and unanimously recommended the building for designation at its September meeting.

In addition, The Kenney Administration conducted an impressive, thorough, and thoughtful community engagement process that culminated in April 2023 with the recommendation that this building be placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

It is now time to finish the job and ensure that the building is preserved and eventually redeveloped to serve its community and the city. The coming new Mayoral administration will bring with it new Historical Commission leadership, risking the waste of all the effort that has brought us to this point and, more importantly, putting the long-term survival of the Roundhouse at risk.

We urge the Commissioners to deny the continuance request and approve the nomination, the last step in an already lengthy process. We believe that the Historical Commission and the current administration should proudly champion the designation of the Roundhouse as the conclusion of its robust and thoughtful engagement process.

Sincerely,

Paul Steinke
Executive Director

BREAKING NEWS from Boston

Paul Steinke <psteinke@preservationalliance.com>

Wed 10/11/2023 12:32 PM

To:preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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The Architect's Newspaper

Boston City Hall has been recommended by the municipal government for landmark status

<https://www.archpaper.com/2023/10/boston-city-hall-recommended-municipal-government-landmark-status/>

If anything, Boston City Hall has been more vilified for its architectural style than our Roundhouse, or frankly any building in Philadelphia. Yet Boston's mayor has just come out foursquare behind landmarking that city's controversial 1968 municipal headquarters.

Meanwhile in Philadelphia, our outgoing mayor wants to punt on landmarking the Roundhouse despite its clear worthiness, despite the Architectural Committee's favorable recommendation just last month, and despite all the time, effort and municipal treasure that has gone into getting it to the brink of designation.

Please share this news with the Commission.

Paul Steinke
Executive Director
Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
(215) 546-1146 ext. 1
www.preservationalliance.com



October 10, 2023

Philadelphia Historic Commission
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19102

Re: Philadelphia Register nomination of 700-34 Race Street, aka The Roundhouse

Dear Commissioners:

For the reasons set forth below, we write to respectfully request that you vote *now* in favor of historic designation of the former Philadelphia Police Administration Building (The Roundhouse). Docomomo-phl is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and reuse of significant examples of mid-century modern architecture.

Docomomo-phl first submitted the historic designation application for the Roundhouse to the Commission in June 2019. Since then, the city of Philadelphia's Department of Planning and Development has held months of vigorous public outreach and engagement – through on-line submissions, in-person testimonials, and town-hall meetings-- to gauge the public's view of the building and ask, "what's the future of the Roundhouse?" Docomomo-us held a national conference in June of 2022, which put the Roundhouse's architectural significance front and center nationally. A website, www.savetheroundhouse.org, has been established by a host of preservation-minded organizations to further educate and engage the public on the preservation and reuse of the building. And, of course, last month, the Committee on Historic Designation has agreed to historic designation. The outcome of this engagement and evaluation is clear -- repurpose the building rather than demolish it.

The thorough and rigorous public engagement process has now concluded. The architectural significance and the social history of the building have been vigorously debated. The time to study the building's past has ended and *now* is time for the Commission to vote on its future. Postponing a decision on this landmark building to wait to gauge the attitude of the new mayor toward preservation is counter-productive and does not align with the independent, non-political, and fact-based nature of the Commission and its mandate.

We respectfully request that the Commission act by voting now on the historic designation application for the Roundhouse to secure its future.

Sincerely,
docomomo-phl

Nominate the Roundhouse

Tom Normile <TNormile@keasthood.com>

Thu 10/12/2023 6:01 PM

To: preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners:

I'm writing to lend my voice to the already loud chorus in favor of approving the nomination of the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The motion to continue the issue until the spring wreaks of old school Philly politics. Let's be better than that. This is an opportunity to seize a win for the City, both for now and generations to come.

Deny the request for continuance and approve the nomination

Tom

Thomas J. Normile, PE

Senior Principal

Mobile: [\(215\) 983-7302](tel:(215)983-7302)

KEAST & HOOD Structural Engineers

[1635 Market Street Suite 1705 Philadelphia, PA 19103](https://www.keasthood.com)

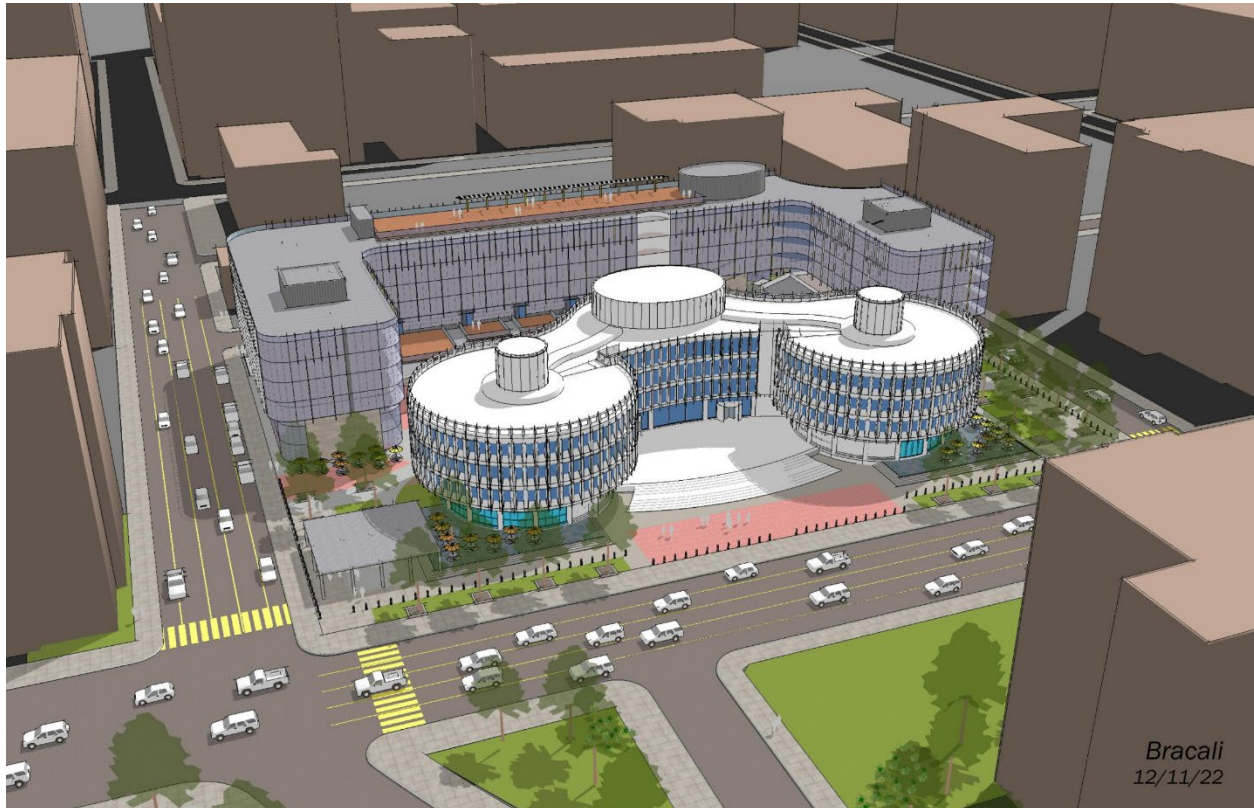
tnormile@keasthood.com | www.keasthood.com

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Advocacy statement October 6, 2023

The Future of the Past: Preserve Philadelphia’s Roundhouse

By Eli Storch, Nika Faulkner, and David Brownlee, for the DAG Steering Committee



Rendering by Anthony Bracali for the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia 2022

Philadelphia’s “Roundhouse,” the Police Administration Building, is haunted by the dark history of police brutality and destructive urban renewal. Although conceived as a monument of progressive public policy and shaped by the stereotype-breaking ideas of the so-called “Philadelphia School” of architects, not long after its construction in 1959-1962, those negative associations—in particular its connection with the regime of Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo-- began to accumulate. The building became a symbol of dysfunction and cruelty in the criminal justice system.

This complex, important, and interesting history is laid out in the July 2023 [nomination of the building to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places](#). The nomination explains the significance of its design-- by Robert Geddes (Geddes Brecher Qualls & Cunningham) and August Komendant-- and also provides an account of its subsequent association with the Rizzo era of police misconduct. The question of whether the Roundhouse should be preserved and re-used will come before the Philadelphia Historical

Commission at its October 13 meeting. The time has therefore come to imagine the next chapter of the building and consider what good it could do.

Preservation is often conflated with the uncritical celebration of the past and a narrow focus on aesthetics. That is an oversimplification. Preservation at its finest safeguards our entire cultural history, protecting buildings so that they may serve as monuments to the events that occurred within and around them.

First and foremost, the preservation and adaptive reuse of the Roundhouse offer opportunities to remember the past holistically while imagining a better future. Demolishing the building, for which some have argued, would erase some of the physical evidence of Philadelphia's complicated history—a history that should be confronted and its lessons learned. Community values must therefore be placed at the center of planning for the preservation and re-use of the building, and the City of Philadelphia has appropriately engaged in a far-reaching public engagement process, as explained in the March 2023 report [Framing the Future of the Roundhouse](#).

That process, together with the Historical Commission's decision on the designation of the building, must shape the Request for Proposals with which the city will invite plans for the future of the site. A thoughtful RFP, which mandates both the preservation of the building and continuing public outreach, can catalyze a project that recognizes the dark past of the Roundhouse while serving Philadelphia in a new and impactful way.

Indeed, the potential benefits of the preservation and re-use of the Roundhouse are great. The site faces Franklin Square and stands adjacent to Chinatown, and its redevelopment offers many opportunities to accommodate community services and create a walkable, green connection to the square. Some of those possibilities are demonstrated in the [conceptual renderings commissioned by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia](#). The drawings by Anthony Bracali demonstrate a variety of development possibilities for the empty, south part of the site, while opening it to public access. Excitingly, the renderings also show how the Police Administration Building can be stripped of the blank-walled, one-story annexes facing Race Street that were a late addition to the program. That change will allow the building to become a luminous gateway for the project, facing Franklin Square.

The adaptive reuse of the Roundhouse also has notable environmental benefits. Its demolition, the disposal of demolition materials, and new construction would require an immense amount of energy, fuel, and materials. Repurposing the building will have a much smaller environmental impact.

The preservation of the Roundhouse is an opportunity to show what holistic storytelling can do for our troubled society, how older buildings can be usefully woven into the fabric of our rapidly changing city, and what the conscientious stewardship of resources can do for our deteriorating environment. DAG supports the adaptive reuse of the Roundhouse and urges the Philadelphia Historical Commission to vote for its addition to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. We look forward to a future when the Roundhouse serves the community progressively, as originally intended.

The Design Advocacy Group (DAG) is a public forum and advocate for design quality and equity in the planning, architecture, preservation and physical development of Philadelphia.

<https://designadvocacy.org/>



[Draft] Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From

Draft saved Thu 10/17/2024 2:29 PM

To preservation@phila.gov <preservation@phila.gov>

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

[NAME & ADDRESS]

Preservation Alliance auto-generated email template



October 30, 2024

Zachary Frankel, Chair
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Chair Frankel:

The Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) enthusiastically supports the addition of the Police Administration Building at 700-34 Race Street, familiarly known as the Roundhouse, to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Designed by one of Philadelphia's most prominent mid-century architectural firms, Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham (GBQC), this building is a true modern landmark. It exemplifies two of the designation criteria perfectly – it "Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style (Criterion C), and it, "Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or Nation" (Criterion E). The building represents a unique design and construction process; it was built of concrete panels pre-cast by the Schokbeton method. The panels were then essentially suspended on a concrete frame, allowing GBQC to create the building's sinuous form. Both the GBQC firm and the structural engineer, Augustus Komendant, were internationally prominent in their respective fields, and both firms went on to design buildings which we revere to this day. The national AIA gave its most prestigious firm award to GBQC in 1979, and our chapter awarded the Roundhouse with the Landmark Building Award in 2022.

Buildings are, of course, more than physical landmarks. Architects are increasingly aware of the impact a building has on its community, whether new or old. The cultural history of the Roundhouse is a difficult one, which was recognized early on. The city conducted a very thorough and rigorous public engagement process to discuss both the architectural and social history of this building and its occupants. The conclusion reached was that the building should be saved and repurposed to best honor its complicated history.

The Roundhouse was nominated for listing in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and was recommended for listing by the Commission's Designation Committee at a well-attended public meeting in September 2023. Through these efforts, the public has spoken – this is a significant building not just to architects, but to the whole city. The final step to preserve this important building is the Historical Commission's vote to accept the nomination. We strongly encourage the Commission to do so at its meeting in November.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca E. Johnson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rebecca E Johnson
Executive Director

cc: All members of the Historical Commission and of the Designation Committee
Jon Farnham, Executive Director, Philadelphia Historical Commission
Paul Steinke and Hannah Stark, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Joanne Aitken <jaitken1823@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 9:47 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

While the following text has been provided by the Preservation Alliance, I couldn't agree more. But let me add for emphasis how important this building is in the City's architectural history representing a time when Philadelphia architecture was in a position of national and international influence and acclaim. In terms of its unique structural design, innovative construction and material technology, aspirational program, and thoughtful planning, it is among of the best of what Philadelphia architects created at the time. It would be a loss far beyond the city's borders if this building were demolished.

Therefore, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Joanne Aitken FAIA

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Public Comment in Support of Saving the Roundhouse

From lynn alpert <lynn.alpert@gmail.com>
Date Thu 10/31/2024 8:19 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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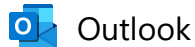
Dear Members of the Historical Commission,

As a native Philadelphian who has lived in this City for 42 years, I am writing to express my strong support for adding 700-08 Race Street, the Philadelphia Police Administration Building, to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Preserving the Roundhouse is not just about safeguarding a remarkable piece of architecture; it's about addressing the building's complicated past and transforming it into a symbol of healing and progress. The community has clearly voiced its desire to see the Roundhouse preserved and transformed into a positive asset.

Historic designation would provide legal protection for the building, safeguarding it from demolition and insensitive alterations. It would also demonstrate the city's commitment to preserving its architectural heritage and honoring the community's desire to see the Roundhouse transformed. I urge you to support the nomination of the Roundhouse and champion its transformation into a vibrant community asset that benefits all Philadelphians.

Sincerely,

Lynn Alpert (she/her)
Principal Senior Architectural Historian, [RGA](#)
215-429-2122



Outlook

Support for Police Administration Building

From Sherman Aronson <sca2012@outlook.com>

Date Thu 10/24/2024 5:34 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Philadelphia Historical Commission,

This message is sent in support of the designation of the former Police Admin Building on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

This building is a landmark in modern architectural design for its breakthrough use of precast concrete facade elements.

It is also a landmark of the history of the Police Dept. in Philadelphia and its evolution from the times of civil rights struggles, through more recent civil unrest, and the ways that our police have improved responses to our community over these decades.

The building has been analyzed for adaptive reuse and can be given new life. The site around it can accommodate other major new construction without the need for demolition.

The designation will help assure that the landmark remains part of Philadelphia for years to come.

Thank you,

Sherman Aronson AIA, LEED AP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, enclosed in a thin black rectangular border. The signature is stylized and appears to be 'S. Aronson'.



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Kristina Baker <kristinabaker2014@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 7:58 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Kris Baker

43 Jill Ave. Marmora NJ 08223

[NAME & ADDRESS]



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From srkbongo@aol.com <srkbongo@aol.com>

Date Fri 10/18/2024 10:31 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Jack Butler <jackrb1@verizon.net>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 10:47 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Jack Butler <jackrb1@verizon.net>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Thank you,
Jack Butler
05-201 Delaire Landing Rd.
Phila, PA 19114



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Jeanne Capone <unclealcaponejc@gmail.com>

Date Sat 10/19/2024 1:45 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Jeanne Capone
46 E Collingwood Ave
Haddon Township NJ 08107



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Caroline Piven <caroline.piven@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 9:22 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

[NAME & ADDRESS] Caroline C Piven
201 Queen Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147

Sent from my iPhone

October 25, 2024

Zachary Frankel, Chair
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Chair Frankel:

Welcome to the Philadelphia Historical Commission, and to your new role as Chair of the Commission. My best wishes to you.

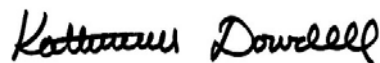
The former Police Administration Building, familiarly known as the Roundhouse, is scheduled to come before the Commission in November. As I'm sure you know, this building was the topic of much discussion when it was closed and the proposals for adding it to the Philadelphia Register began. This can be a difficult building to love, both socially and architecturally. Recognizing this, the City, under the previous administration, conducted an extensive public outreach and information gathering process to determine what would be best for the site from the public's point of view. (If you have not had a chance to read the report, you can find it [here](#)).

The report concludes that there is strong support for retaining the building, and repurposing it for a use that would be welcoming rather than oppressive; that would remind people of the complicated history, yet also honor that history in a way that moves us past it; and that would save this truly significant structure.

As an architect, I prize the building as a landmark; as a preservationist, I support adaptive reuse whenever possible; as someone committed to sustainability, I cannot endorse the possibility of demolishing a concrete structure in favor of new construction; but mostly, as a Philadelphian, I want to respect the public process that carefully considered this issue and determined that the building should remain.

I encourage you and the Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places without delay, to safeguard this important landmark.

Very truly yours,



Katherine Dowdell, AIA

Cc: The Honorable Cherelle Parker, Mayor
Jon Farnham, Executive Director, Philadelphia Historical Commission
All members of the Commission and Designation Committee
Paul Steinke and Hannah Stark, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Haley Driscoll <haleycdriscoll@gmail.com>

Date Tue 10/22/2024 4:50 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to show my support for designating 708-34 Race Street, known as the Roundhouse, which formerly served as the Police Administration Building. This property meets several Criteria for Designation, including C, D, E, F, H, and J, highlighting its social, architectural, and cultural significance.

Designed by GBQC Architects, the Roundhouse is a prime example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the earliest U.S. structures to effectively utilize precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became linked to harmful urban renewal efforts and instances of police brutality. By designating this building, we can preserve its mid-century modern design while also creating a space to reflect on the impacts of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I strongly encourage the Historical Commission to include the Roundhouse in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Best,
Haley Driscoll (She/Her)
55 East 2nd Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057

MARK DRISCOLL | 2401 PENNSYLVANIA AVE APT 9B31 PHILADELPHIA PA 19130

Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Members of the Historical Commission

I strongly support adding 700-08 Race Street, the Philadelphia Police Administration Building (AKA the Roundhouse), to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. It is clearly an architectural landmark that deserves that formal designation. Its preservation and adaptive reuse offer an unparalleled opportunity to create a vibrant community asset that both celebrates our past and embraces the future.

The Roundhouse is an internationally acclaimed masterpiece of midcentury modern architecture, designed by an important Philadelphia firm. It is also a beautiful and historically significant piece of engineering and construction, as one of the first buildings in the United States build entirely from pre-cast concrete elements.

Preserving the Roundhouse is not just about safeguarding a remarkable piece of architecture; it's about addressing the building's complicated past and transforming it into a symbol of healing and progress. The full story of the Roundhouse must be told. It's not your job to tell it—but it is your job to make sure that the building is around to be part of it's own story

The community has clearly voiced its desire to see the Roundhouse preserved and transformed into a positive asset in the Department of Planning and Development report, [*Framing the Future of the Roundhouse*](#).

Please support the nomination of the Roundhouse and champion its transformation into a vibrant community asset that benefits all Philadelphians.

Sincerely



Mark Driscoll



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From sberisoty@aol.com <sberisoty@aol.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 12:10 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

The Roundhouse is a gem of modern architecture and must be preserved. I am writing to express my strong support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse.

The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Thank you.

Steven Erisoty
71 Bethlehem Pike
Philadelphia, PA 19118



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Lauren Eustis <lauren@cearchitects.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 10:12 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Lauren Eustis R.A., LEED AP

CARNEVALE EUSTIS ARCHITECTS, INC.
181 Bridge Street, Phoenixville, PA 19460
P: 610 933 0197 | cearchitects.com



Outlook

Support for Nomination of Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

From Hovey, Lonnie <lhovey@wrallp.com>
Date Fri 10/25/2024 7:37 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>
Cc Meaghan Finney / Carl Dress <info@aiaphila.org>

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To whom it may concern:

I support the nomination of the Roundhouse, formally known as the former Police Administration Building, to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The Roundhouse is a previous winner of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architect's Landmark Building Award. I am a member of the local AIA chapter's Historic Preservation Committee and support the adaptive reuse of the building, which is in line with the results of the City's community engagement outreach.

I encourage the Philadelphia Historical Commission to approve the nomination at your next meeting.

Talk with you soon,

Lonnie

Lonnie J. Hovey, AIA, FAPT, NCARB | *Associate Vice President*

Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP

(Cell) 215.219.3755

lhovey@wrallp.com

www.wrallp.com

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WRA_Disclaimer_v20210609



Outlook

Roundhouse Preservation

From Studio Robert Jamieson <robert@studiojamieson.com>

Date Fri 10/25/2024 2:36 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

To Whom it may concern-

I am writing to express my desire to preserve the Philadelphia Roundhouse at 750 Race Street. Below are reasons for preserving this important piece of modern architecture.

- **The Roundhouse is an internationally acclaimed masterpiece of midcentury modern architecture.**
 - Designed by the esteemed Philadelphia firm Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham, the building is a prominent example of the Philadelphia School of architecture.
 - The Roundhouse's curvilinear form is made possible by its innovative use of precast concrete and post-tensioning engineering.
 - This design evokes comparisons to other mid-century classics, such as Eero Saarinen's TWA Terminal and Dulles Airport and Jørn Utzon's Sydney Opera House.
- **The building embodies a pioneering construction method.**
 - The Roundhouse was one of the first buildings in the United States to showcase the potential of architectural precasting.
 - The precast concrete panels were manufactured using the Schokbeton process, a technique that flourished during the mid-twentieth century.
 - This method was also employed in notable Modern architecture projects by renowned architects like Louis Kahn, Minoru Yamasaki, and Philip Johnson.
- **Preserving the Roundhouse offers a unique opportunity to address its complicated past.**
 - The building has become associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives that negatively impacted Chinatown. The building is also associated with police brutality, particularly during the era of Frank Rizzo.
 - The Roundhouse became a symbol of aggressive policing, representing a dark chapter in the city's history. Repurposing the building for community benefit could begin to rectify these past wrongs.
- **The Roundhouse has strong potential for adaptive reuse.**
 - The building is structurally sound and in remarkably good condition for its age.
 - Its large size—125,000 square feet spread over multiple floors—could be adapted for various uses.
 - The parking lot to the south provides opportunities for new construction that would benefit Chinatown and the city.
- **There is a strong community desire to preserve the Roundhouse.**
 - A community engagement effort from August 2022 to February 2023 highlighted the community's interest in saving the building.
 - The resulting report, [Framing the Future of the Roundhouse](#), emphasizes the desire to preserve the building, acknowledge its history, and repurpose it for community use.
 - The community also expressed interest in incorporating green space and creating walkable areas.
- **Demolishing the Roundhouse would be a waste of resources.**

- The building's sound condition, size, and unique construction make demolition an unwise choice.
- The embodied energy and materials within the existing structure represent a significant investment that would be lost through demolition. Reusing the building aligns with sustainability principles.

The nomination presents a compelling case for the significance of the Roundhouse, emphasizing its architectural and historical significance, the potential for repurposing, and the community's desire to see it transformed into a positive asset. The Roundhouse should be preserved to serve the community while acknowledging its complex past.

Sincerely,

Robert Jamieson

| 917.676.4880



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Klett, Daniel <Daniel.Klett@UToledo.Edu>

Date Wed 10/23/2024 11:24 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

Cc Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Daniel P. Klett, M. Arch. (GBQC employee 1984-1994)

1180 E. Glen Echo Ln

Loveland, OH 45140



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Liz Knudsen <knudsenliz@yahoo.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 12:00 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Elizabeth Knudsen, 118 South 21st St # 1306, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

October 28, 2024

Philadelphia Historical Commission

RE: The Roundhouse, 750 Race Street

Dear Commissioners,

On Friday, November 8, 2024, you have the unique opportunity to provide leadership and opportunity to Philadelphia by accepting the 2022 nomination of the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The City of Philadelphia's own commissioned study under the auspices of the Department of Planning & Development recommends preservation, creating a path to formal designation.

Such an act of designation will be the next step in long overdue healing. Long disdained as a symbol of negative policing, especially against Black and brown bodies, the Roundhouse now stands ready for reinterpretation.

The significance of the property is not in question. On architectural and engineering merits alone, the Roundhouse embodies a pioneering construction method lead by a leading Philadelphia architecture firm, Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham. The building is a leading example of the Philadelphia School of architecture and takes its place in the pantheon of mid-twentieth century design classics including the Sydney Opera House and the TWA Terminal at JFK Airport.

Thank you for voting in favor of adding the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register.

Yours truly,

Amy Lambert, AIA



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Jane Landis <jlandishome@aol.com>
Date Thu 10/17/2024 8:50 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Jane Landis
2032 Pemberton St, Philly

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From sarah lodholz <salodholz@yahoo.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 7:57 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

S. Lodholz
16 St James Court
Phila PA



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From sarah lodholz <salodholz@yahoo.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 7:57 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

S. Lodholz
16 St James Court
Phila PA



October 28, 2024

Philadelphia Historic Commission
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19102

Re: Philadelphia Register nomination of 700-34 Race Street, aka The Roundhouse

Dear Commissioners:

For the reasons set forth below, we write to respectfully request that you vote *now* in favor of historic designation of the former Philadelphia Police Administration Building (The Roundhouse). Docomomo-phl is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and reuse of significant examples of mid-century modern architecture.

Docomomo-phl first submitted the historic designation application for the Roundhouse to the Commission in June 2019. Since then, the city of Philadelphia's Department of Planning and Development has held months of vigorous public outreach and engagement – through on-line submissions, in-person testimonials, and town-hall meetings-- to gauge the public's view of the building and ask, "what's the future of the Roundhouse?" Docomomo-us held a national conference in June of 2022, which put the Roundhouse's architectural significance front and center nationally. A website, www.savetheroundhouse.org, has been established by a host of preservation-minded organizations to further educate and engage the public on the preservation and reuse of the building. And, of course, the Committee on Historic Designation has agreed to historic designation. The outcome of this engagement and evaluation is clear -- repurpose the building rather than demolish it.

The thorough and rigorous public engagement process has now concluded. The architectural significance and the social history of the building have been vigorously debated. The time to study the building's past has ended and *now* is time for the Commission to vote on its future. Postponing a decision on this landmark building to wait to gauge the attitude of the new mayor toward preservation is counter-productive and does not align with the independent, non-political, and fact-based nature of the Commission and its mandate.

We respectfully request that the Commission act by voting now on the historic designation application for the Roundhouse to secure its future.

Sincerely,
docomomo-phl



Outlook

Roundhouse historic designation

From Michael Martin Mills <mmm19119@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 12:09 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I strongly support designation of the Roundhouse as historic and putting it on the city's register of historic places.

It's architectural merits are strong enough on their own for such designation. It's a continuation of Philadelphia's erection of significant designs of the 20th century, such as the PSFS Building.

At the same time, it has a history, a lamentable history, of misconduct by law enforcement. This history should not be erased, but deftly embraced as something our city should not forget and must never return to.

Please add the Roundhouse to the historic register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Martin Mills". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Martin Mills (46-year resident of Philadelphia)
632 Burnham Road
Philadelphia 19119



Designation of 708-34 Race Street

From Tom Normile <TNormile@keasthood.com>

Date Wed 10/30/2024 7:15 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

Cc Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building. The property clearly satisfies at least 6 of the criteria recommended for designation.

The building is unique and a product of it's time. No less so than so many Philadelphia treasures we and/or our ancestors have had the wisdom to save and whose loss would be mourned were they suddenly erased from our urban fabric today.

The PAB, or "Roundhouse" is also associated with troubling aspects of Philadelphia's racial history. Allowing the building to be demolished will not erase that history but preserving it will present an opportunity to remember, and therefore learn from it.

Philadelphia's built environment is one of the defining features that makes it great. Adding the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places will strengthen that environment. Not designating it risks an irreplaceable loss.

I urge you to add the former Police Administration Building to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Normile, PE

Senior Principal

(215) 983-7302 (m)

KEAST & HOOD Structural Engineers

1635 Market Street Suite 1705 Philadelphia, PA 19103

tnormile@keasthood.com | www.keasthood.com

[LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

WBE | WOSB | DBE



Outlook

The Roundhouse

From Steven Peitzman <peitzmansj@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/28/2024 3:28 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

To: Members of the Historical Commission:

I write to support the addition of the “Roundhouse” to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Here, briefly, are my reasons for this support, as a knowledgeable preservationist and native Philadelphian familiar with the city's remote and recent history, and with its reputation for architectural innovation.

--Regardless of its initial use, its design and construction methods continue the prominence of Philadelphia in the development of modern architecture both in terms of aesthetics and use of materials.

--Some would argue that its history as the home of sometimes excessive police force should require its demolition (of course, addition to the Register protects from demolition). Not every Philadelphian when looking at the building may immediately see it as handsome, but it is an insult to Philadelphians at large to assume that we cannot distinguish its *design and construction* from the unfortunate history of police aggression in the past going on inside.

--Demolishing the Roundhouse would be wasteful (also costly) – there is a great amount of concrete to deal with!

--As is well known, there is ample space to the south in the lot for development, and we have in Philadelphia the planners and architects to come up with something useful and beautiful which would include the nationally recognized Roundhouse and benefit the neighborhood.

Very best,

Steven J. Peitzman, MD

STEVEN J. PEITZMAN, MD
2911 Wood Pipe Lane Apt D
PHILADELPHIA PA 19129



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Peter Piven <peter.piven@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 9:32 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Peter Piven
201 Queen Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
Tel. 215 952 2781
Email: ppiven@peterpiven.com



Support for designation of the Roundhouse

From Peter Piven <peter.piven@gmail.com>

Date Wed 10/23/2024 9:58 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H and J, which include social, architectural and cultural histories.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Peter

Peter Piven, FAIA
201 Queen Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
Tel. 215 952 2781



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Hamilton Ross <hsdross@earthlink.net>

Date Fri 10/25/2024 12:31 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. I believe the property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, the Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism. In addition, it was one of the first U. S. buildings to make use of sophisticated precast concrete elements designed by the acclaimed structural engineer August Komendant. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Thank you for considering my plea.

Hamilton Ross
25340 Goldcrest Drive
Bonita Springs, FL
Cell: (239) 340-9934



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Beth Simonowitz <beth.simonowitz@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 8:02 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]



Outlook

"The Roundhouse"

From Robert Stern <r.stern@RAMSA.COM>**Date** Wed 10/30/2024 1:08 PM**To** Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>**Cc** Brownlee, David B <dbrownle@sas.upenn.edu>; psteinke@preservationalliance.com
<psteinke@preservationalliance.com>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Dr. Farnham,

I'm writing to you today in support of the designation of the 1962 Police Administration Building, designed by architect, Bob Geddes.

The "Roundhouse" is a rarity among notable mid-century public buildings, incorporating the discipline of late Mies, but liberating with a geometrically innovative mass that moves away from the box-like package that was typical of post 1950s work.

There are very few like it: a notable public building in its time.

I'm delighted to be able to write for the designation of Bob Geddes' Police Administration Building, it should be protected.

My best,
Robert A.M. Stern

Robert Stern

Senior Partner

Robert A.M. Stern Architects, LLP

One Park Avenue, New York, New York 10016

Phone: 212 967 5100

r.stern@RAMSA.COM

www.ramsa.com

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Protecting the Police Admin Building

From Eric Sternfels <ericsternfels39@gmail.com>

Date Wed 10/23/2024 5:50 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Jon Farnham <Jon.Farnham@phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham Architects, the Roundhouse is a prime example of Philadelphia School Modernism, one of the first to use precast concrete panels.

Completed in 1962, it was celebrated but later became associated with aggressive urban renewal and later with an era police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its progressive mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I hope the Historical Commission will add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places to help preserve and protect the architectural and political legacy of our City.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Sternfels
PA-Registered Architect, retired
Philadelphia resident



Outlook

Preserve the Roundhouse

From Christa Walck <clwalck@gmail.com>
Date Sun 10/27/2024 9:42 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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I am writing to recommend the preservation of 700-08 Race Street, the Philadelphia Police Administration Building, commonly know as the Roundhouse, and its addition to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. When I moved to Philadelphia 9 years ago I was stopped in my tracks when I first saw this building. I have never seen anything like it and nothing like it will be built again. It has a sad and sorry history, but that is cause for remediation through public use and programming, not cause for destroying a fabulous piece of architecture the city should be proud of.

I urge you to vote for preservation. The history of Philadelphia is being torn down daily - let's keep this building and reuse it for something that will make Philadelphians proud.

Sincerely,
Christa Walck
1711 Green Street Apt D
Philadelphia, PA 19130
clwalck@gmail.com



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Kimberly <yocumkc@aol.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 12:02 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Sherley Young <frenchriver39@gmail.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 7:56 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

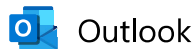
Roundhouse is an extraordinarily fine example of mid-century architecture. Please think outside of the box to repurpose this building!!

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Sherley Young
210 West Washington Square, Apt 4NW
Philadelphia, PA 19106



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Jennifer Arnoldi <jmartell@att.net>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:35 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Jen Arnoldi
3634 Merrick Rd
Philadelphia, PA 19129
215-413-1141



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Susan Babbitt <philad49@att.net>
Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:20 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners:

I support the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building (the Roundhouse).

The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J (social, architectural, and cultural histories). Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse (1962) is a striking example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first examples of skilled use of precast concrete in this country. Proper attention to its subsequent connections with urban renewal initiatives and police brutality is not incompatible with designation.

Please add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,
Susan Babbitt
1010 Pine Street, 2R
Philadelphia 19107



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Roberta Binderman <robinderman@verizon.net>

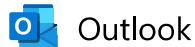
Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:53 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

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Roberta Binderman
1901 Walnut St. 11C
Philadelphia, PA 19103



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Peter Bogucki <pbogucki11@hotmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:33 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I grew up in Philadelphia during the period when the Roundhouse was built, and my father was Director of Epidemiology for the Philadelphia Health Department. The Roundhouse exemplified the optimism of the time that Philadelphia would resume its place among the leading cities of the United States, protected by a competent and professional public safety force. We could look at it and say that Philadelphia had a landmark modern building. Although the second half of the 1960s ended this renaissance, there are very few examples of public architecture from the late 1950s and early 1960s that remind us of how Philadelphia was looking forward at the middle of the 20th century. It is also one of the major examples of the work of the late Robert Geddes, whose portfolio includes many important structures.

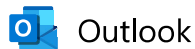
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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Peter Bogucki, 16 Hillsdale Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

--Peter Bogucki (private); www.peterbogucki.info



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Bob Brano <bob.brano43@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:50 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Robert W Brano
1901 JFK Blvd, Apt 1426
Philadelphia, PA 19103



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Jack Butler <jackrb1@verizon.net>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:06 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Jack Butler <jackrb1@verizon.net>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Jack Butler

05-201 Delaire Landing Rd.

Phila, PA 19114



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Robert J Christian <robertjchristian241@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:21 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]Robert Christian

127 Mifflin St
Philadelphia, PA



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Courtney Clark <eclynch@hotmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:31 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Courtney Clark
534 Abington Ave.
Glenside, PA 19038

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Nancy Davis <nancyjoyes@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:39 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Nancy Davis
698 Welsh Rd
Phila 19115



Outlook

Support for Designation and hopefully reuse of the Roundhouse

From cdisanto1 <cdisanto1@verizon.net>
Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:29 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am a restoration Architect with 40 years experience, and current chair of the Association for Preservation Technology, Delaware Valley Chapter

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, also known as the Roundhouse.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. It is a unique and groundbreaking building with a rich and interesting history. It's also a viable candidate for reuse as a building, given its location and solid condition.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Charles DiSanto
2446 Perot Street
Philadelphia PA

Sent from my Galaxy



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Jennifer Arnoldi <jennifera@msarchitectsllc.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:52 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

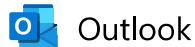
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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Eric Arnoldi
3634 Merrick Rd
Philadelphia, PA 19129
610-306-0866

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Alisa Giardinelli <agiardi1@swarthmore.edu>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:43 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Alisa Giardinelli
2503 Brown St
19130



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Gregory Grutman <gregorygrutman@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:01 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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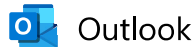
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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Gregory Grutman
859 N Stillman St
Philadelphia, PA 19130



Outlook

I support the historic designation of the Roundhouse

From Lonnie Hovey <hoveyl@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:44 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners:

As you know, Philadelphia's Roundhouse has been nominated for historic designation because of its significance in our city's architectural and social history. That nomination by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia and Docomomo US/Philadelphia has languished since it was submitted in December 2022.

The Roundhouse has been recommended for designation since September 2023 by the Commission's Committee on Historic Designation. Since then, the City, as the property owner, has requested four continuances to delay the Historical Commission's vote on the nomination. Please do not allow any other continuances and delay. I support the designation for the importance this building has in Philadelphia's architectural and social history.

Please pass the vote to designate the Roundhouse at your next meeting.

Talk with you soon,

Lonnie

Lonnie J. Hovey, AIA, FAPT, NCARB
Philadelphia, PA



Preserving the Roudhouse

From Donna Kradzinsk <dgracepk@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:28 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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I don't have much to say other than I believe that the Roundhouse should be saved. It amazes me how historic the City of Philadelphia is and yet are so willing to frequently destroy historic buildings in this City most of the time for purposes to support builders who are just interested in making money. There is no other building like the Roundhouse anywhere that I have seen. It is truly a masterpiece. It would make a fantastic museum of some sort due to the beauty of the building.

I recently travelled to Italy. Need I say more when just about every single building there is historic and no one seems to be in a hurry to destroy and rebuild on top of what has been destroyed. I believe we need to take a page out of their book.

Thank you,
Donna Kradzinski



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Evan Litvin <evanlitvin@gmail.com>
Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:45 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Evan Litvin, Registered Architect
2116 Locust Street
Philadelphia PA 19103



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From sarah lodholz <salodholz@yahoo.com>

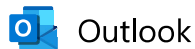
Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:19 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]

Regards, Sarah Lodholz



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Alison McFall <alisonmcfall419@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:32 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Thank you,

Alison McFall
402A S. 2nd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Lenor Mirochna <lm@paprikaletterpress.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:23 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

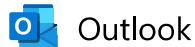
Lenor Mirochna

250 Briar Hill Lane

Woodbury, NJ 08096

lm@paprikaletterpress.com

609-221-5725



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From charg98@aol.com <charg98@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:16 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.
C.Nolten 19145



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Michael Norris <m.norris13@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:19 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

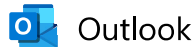
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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Michael Norris
721 S. Darien St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147

Michael Norris
Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Kim Pelkey <kimpelkey99@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:06 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Kimberly A. Pelkey
634 W. Upsal St.
Philadelphia, PA 19119



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From JOHN PETTENGILL <jnason88@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:04 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Susan Pettengill
131 Hunter Wood Way
Port Matilda PA 16870
814-777-0807



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Caroline Piven <caroline.piven@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:47 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

[Caroline Piven
201 Queen Street
Philadelphia PA 19147

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Lindsey Scannapieco <lindsey@scout-ltd.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:06 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

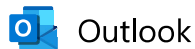
Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,
Lindsey Scannapieco

Managing Partner, Scout (WBE design and development practice)

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From jerry silverman <jerrysilverman1@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:46 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Jerry Silverman
920 South 6th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147
215-463-4994



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Maria Sturm <msturm99@gmail.com>
Date Fri 11/1/2024 9:57 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

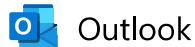
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Start by removing the concrete wall surrounding the building which would make it possible to appreciate the architecture of the building the way it was intended, and eliminate the barrier between the building and its surroundings. There are so many possible new uses for it while at the same time acknowledging its problematic past ... and with the opening of the new PATCO station, more people might come to that area ... why not greet them with some great architecture??

I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Maria Sturm
266 Hathaway Lane
Wynnewood PA 19096



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Sherley Young <frenchriver39@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 8:48 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

& ADDRESS]

Sherley Young
210 West Washington Square, Apt 4NW
Philadelphia, PA 19106



Outlook

preserve the Roundhouse

From kettell@aol.com <kettell@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 10:34 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

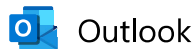
From Alvin Holm <alvinholmaia@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 10:48 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Ivan Joseph <ivanjoseph1@yahoo.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 10:58 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Ivan Joseph
801 South Street, Unit C
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(M) 267-230-7800



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Kate Cowing <kcowing@cowingarchitect.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 11:37 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Kate Cowing, AIA, APT-RP, Principal
Kate Cowing Architect, LLC (wbe)
kcowing@cowingarchitect.com
<https://katecowingarchitect.com>
215-876-0808



[NAME & ADDRESS]



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Margaret Emerson <margaret.emerson@comcast.net>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 1:42 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Margaret Emerson
1326 Spruce St
Apt 3003
Philadelphia, PA 19107



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From George Felice <georgefelice@hotmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 11:59 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

George Felice
6420 Woodbine Ave
Phila PA 19151



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Joan Hauger <joanhauger@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 1:23 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,
Joan D. Hauger
903 Knorr Street
Philadelphia, PA 19111



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Kimberly <yocumkc@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 2:00 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Melanie Rodbart <melanie@jmpreservation.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 1:13 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Melanie Rodbart, 1617 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Suite 2008
Philadelphia, PA 19103



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Lawrence Schofer <lawrence.schofer@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 12:20 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of The roundhouse for preservation designation. I have lived in Philadelphia since 1971, and I've always found the Roundhouse to stand for something significant in that area of Philadelphia. I visited several times when it was used as a hospital, but both before and after that time, it was always important to me as a building that was distinctive in Philadelphia, and did not fall victim to the traffic that seems continually to flow around it. I note below an official letter of support giving the information that seems to be necessary.

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Lawrence Schofer
600 East Cathedral Rd., apartment L-206
Philadelphia, PA 19128



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From James Sherman <jamegsherman@verizon.net>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 2:21 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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James G Sherman

306 Cliveden Ave
Glenside PA
19038

George Poulin, AIA
3502 Hamilton St
Philadelphia, PA 19104

November 1, 2024

Zachary Frankel
Chair
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch St, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
preservation@phila.gov

Dear Mr. Frankel,

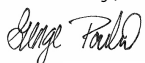
As a resident of Philadelphia and someone with a deep interest in the stories of our City, I am writing to express my support for the designation of the Roundhouse, 700-34 Race Street to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The Roundhouse is an important visual and cultural landmark worthy of protection. Beyond architecture, the building represents a complicated array of emotions for many Philadelphians, both good and bad. Other landmarks such as Eastern State Penitentiary, City Hall, or Mount Pleasant, the home of slave trader John McPherson, do the same. Just because these sites represent complicated feelings does not mean that they are not worthy of protection. How are we to learn from our past if we do not tell the stories that these landmarks represent?

Philadelphia underwent profound changes in the middle of the 20th Century. These changes were reflected through massive urban renewal projects and broad social reform. As an example of Philadelphia Modernism, the Roundhouse has a strong expressive form that allows it to stand out from the boxy grid of our beloved City. I proudly admit being captivated by the design of this building. It has withstood the test of time. May we all look so good at that age! As someone who has worked within a few blocks of the Roundhouse for nearly twenty years, I have delighted listening to the passing tourist buses broadcast the history of the building as they move west towards Chinatown.

Philadelphia undertook a comprehensive public engagement process to determine the future of this place. I was one of hundreds of Philadelphia citizens who offered my ideas. It seems only right that we follow through on the recommendations of the report and add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Thank you for your continued work to protect the architectural and cultural heritage of our beloved City!

Sincerely,



George Poulin

Board of Directors

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PRESIDENT

Robert Meckfessel
VICE-PRESIDENT

Flora Chou
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Liz Waytkus
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Modern STL
North Carolina
Modernist Houses
Palm Springs Modernism
Week

November 5, 2024

Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Members of the Historical Commission:

Docomomo, the international advocate for documentation and conservation of buildings of the Modern Movement, with its thousands of members that span 70 countries, is writing to express our strong support for adding 700-08 Race Street, the Philadelphia Police Headquarters, commonly referred to as the Roundhouse, to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Its preservation and adaptive reuse offer an unparalleled opportunity to create a vibrant community asset that both celebrates our past and embraces the future.

Designed by the award-winning architecture firm Geddes, Brecher, Qualls, and Cunningham (GBQC) who were notably awarded the American Institute of Architects' Gold Medal Award for Best Philadelphia Architecture in 1963 for their design of the Roundhouse, the building continues to be one of the most important and poetic structures in the city of Philadelphia for its unique sweeping curvilinear concrete façade.

Preserving the Roundhouse is not just about safeguarding a remarkable piece of architecture; it's about addressing the building's complicated past and transforming it into a symbol of healing and progress. The Roundhouse has become associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives. It also carries the weight of a history marked by police brutality, when it became a symbol of aggressive and discriminatory policing. Repurposing the Roundhouse for community benefit offers a unique opportunity to acknowledge and learn from this difficult past.

The community has clearly voiced its desire to see the Roundhouse preserved and transformed into a positive asset. The recent community engagement effort, overseen by the city's Department of Planning and Development, yielded the report [*Framing the Future of the Roundhouse*](#). This report highlights the community's strong interest in:

- Preserving this architectural masterpiece
- Opening the site to the public
- Incorporating green spaces and walkable areas
- Repurposing the building for community-facing purposes
- Acknowledging the building's past and providing a space for healing
- Ensuring the site's redevelopment benefits Chinatown

The Roundhouse presents immense potential for adaptive reuse. The building is structurally sound and in remarkably good condition. Its large size – 125,000 square feet spread across multiple floors – provides ample space for a variety of uses. The adjacent surface parking lot

to the south offers further opportunities for new construction that could revitalize the area, strengthen the economic vitality of Chinatown, and benefit the city as a whole. Preserving and repurposing the Roundhouse aligns with principles of sustainability, utilizing the embodied energy and resources already invested in the structure.

Historic designation would provide legal protection for the building, safeguarding it from demolition and insensitive alterations. It would also demonstrate the city's commitment to preserving its architectural heritage and honoring the community's desire to see the Roundhouse transformed. I urge you to support the nomination of the Roundhouse and champion its transformation into a vibrant community asset that benefits all Philadelphians. The Roundhouse is significant well beyond the confines of Philadelphia and we have no doubt our international counterparts would agree this building should be preserved and protected.

Sincerely,



Liz Waytkus
Executive Director

Cc: Docomomo US/Philadelphia



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Darrin Britting <d_britting@yahoo.com>

Date Sat 11/2/2024 1:03 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Darrin T. Britting
722 N. 2nd St.
Phila., PA. 19123



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Kirsten Kent Carangi <kirsten@beamld.com>

Date Mon 11/4/2024 2:45 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners,

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I strongly urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Thank you,

Kirsten

Kirsten Kent Carangi, RA
Principal

BEAM, Ltd.

2220 Mount Carmel Avenue

Glenside, PA 19038

T. [215.508.0900](tel:215.508.0900)

C. 215.275.7406

www.beamltd.com

BEAM is a WBENC certified design firm.





**2024 Winner of The Architect's Newspaper
Best of Practice for Lighting Design**



4 November 2024

Zachary Frankel, Chair
Members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission
Philadelphia Historical Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Chair Frankel and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of The Center for the Preservation of Modernism at Jefferson University, we are writing to express our enthusiastic support for the addition of the Police Administration Building, familiarly known as the Roundhouse (700-34 Race Street), to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The Center shares the values of the community that clearly voiced its desire to see the Roundhouse preserved and re-envisioned as a community asset. The recent award-winning community engagement effort, overseen by the city's Department of Planning and Development, yielded the report [Framing the Future of the Roundhouse](#). This report highlights the strong interest of Philadelphians in:

- Preserving the building for its architectural significance
- Opening the site to the public
- Incorporating green spaces and walkable areas on the site (walls enclosing the site are later additions)
- Repurposing the building for community-facing purposes
- Acknowledging the building's past and providing a space for healing
- Ensuring that the site's redevelopment benefits Chinatown

The Roundhouse presents an outstanding potential for adaptive reuse, a tenet of preservation practice that runs through the work of the Center and the educational program of the masters in Historic Preservation at Jefferson University. The building is structurally sound and in remarkably good condition. Preserving and repurposing the Roundhouse aligns with principles of sustainability which call for utilizing the embodied energy and resources already invested in the structure. Its large size – 125,000 square feet spread across multiple floors – provides ample space for a variety of uses. The adjacent surface parking lot to the south offers the opportunity for new construction on the site, with the Roundhouse as a transitional gateway across from Franklin Square. Just such a project was envisioned by a consultant to the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, and can be viewed here:

<https://savetheroundhouse.org/preservation-efforts/> So developed, the site could help to revitalize the area and contribute to the renewed energy that the recently opened SEPTA station promises to bring to Franklin Square and adjacent neighborhoods.

Designed by one of Philadelphia's most prominent mid-century architectural firms, Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham (GBQC), it is not an exaggeration to call the Roundhouse a landmark. It meets two of the Philadelphia Register's designation criteria, as it reflects, "the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style" (Criterion C), and stands as, "the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or Nation" (Criterion E). The building represents a unique construction process; it was built of concrete panels pre-cast by the *Schokbeton* method. These pre-cast panels were essentially suspended on a concrete frame, allowing GBQC to create the building's sinuous form. Both the GBQC firm and the structural engineer, Augustus Komendant, were internationally prominent in their respective fields, and both firms went on to design buildings that continue to be revered today.

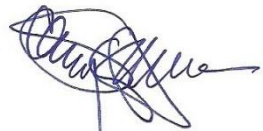
4 November 2024
Zachary Frankel, Chair
Members of the Philadelphia Historical Commission
Page 2

The Roundhouse was nominated for listing in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and was recommended for listing by the Commission's Committee on Historic Designation at a well-attended public meeting in September 2023. Through these efforts the public has spoken – this is a significant building not just to architects, but to the entire city. The final step to preserving this important building is the Historical Commission's vote to accept the nomination. We strongly encourage the Commission to do so.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Singletary, PhD
Director
Director, M.S. Historic Preservation Program
College of Architecture and the Built Environment



Suzanna Barucco, MA
Steering Committee
Adjunct Professor, Historic Preservation Program
College of Architecture and the Built Environment

cc: Jon Farnham, Executive Director, Philadelphia Historical Commission
Paul Steinke and Hannah Stark, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia
Dan Macey, Docomomo
Advisory Board, Center for the Preservation of Modernism



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From John Egan <jjegan3@netscape.net>

Date Sat 11/2/2024 12:05 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

John Egan EAIA
7505 Chancellor Way
Springfield, VA 22153



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From hpgf@aol.com <hpgf@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 7:32 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Commissioners, I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories. Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, it later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices. I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. [NAME & ADDRESS]

It is a familiar part of center city Phila., a mid-century "friend" even though the history is tough to remember. Let's move on as a community and make peace with this "round" friend and use it to educate not only architectural students but all students in the city, in the need to respect all of their fellow residents.

Thank you
Helen Fecak
East Norriton, PA
Born and raised in West Oak Lane, Phila., PA



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Leora Friedman <leorafriedman1@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 10:04 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

We are new to Philadelphia and cherish architecture that is both beautiful with historical significance. That's one of the reasons we chose Philly and what makes it rated as such a "walkable" city.

Leora and Jay Friedman
301 Catharine St. Phila Pa 19147



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Vivian Gast <vb.gast@outlook.com>
Date Sat 11/2/2024 5:25 PM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

Designed by GBQC Architects, The Roundhouse is a quintessential example of Philadelphia School modernism and one of the first U.S. buildings to expertly use precast concrete. Completed in 1962, I was attending Philadelphia Museum College of Art when it was built and later had occasion to be inside this most unique and unusual building. It later became associated with destructive urban renewal initiatives and police brutality. Designating the building will preserve its mid-century modern design while providing an opportunity to address the legacy of police misconduct and urban renewal practices.

I strongly urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Vivian Gast
101 Cheston Lane
Ambler, PA 19002



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Eleanor Gesensway <ellieges@yahoo.com>
Date Fri 11/1/2024 5:08 PM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>
Cc Paul Steinke <paul@preservationalliance.com>

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The Roundhouse is REALLY SPECIAL and UNIQUE to Philadelphia. SAVE IT

Eleanor Gesensway
626 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
[NAME & ADDRESS]

Sent from my iPhone



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Carol Hauptfuhrer <carolah333@gmail.com>

Date Sun 11/3/2024 11:04 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the designation of 708-34 Race Street, the former Police Administration Building, known colloquially as the Roundhouse. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, E, F, H, and J, which include social, architectural, and cultural histories.

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, to be part of the rich architectural legacy of Philadelphia.

Sincerely,
Carol Hauptfuhrer

2401 Pennsylvania Ave
Apt 20-B-29
Philadelphia, PA 19130



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From srkbongo@aol.com <srkbongo@aol.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 4:42 PM

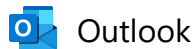
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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The Roundhouse is a unique, irreplicable architectural creation with universal significance in the history of Philadelphia. It would be short sighted to erase the Roundhouse from the landscape of Philadelphia. Rather, it should be preserved for its educational potential for generations to come.

Suzanne R. Kasenic
554 Parker Avenue
Philadelphia PA 19128



Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Michael Kearney <m.kearney@generalcontrolsinc.com>

Date Sun 11/3/2024 11:02 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

The negative comment about the police was not necessary.

The elected officials failed the people by allowing corrupt city agencies to provide an inefficient and ineffective City government. They failed the marginal citizens with poor health programs, little or no mental health programs, poorly run schools, this forced many blue-collar companies to flee the corrupt city.

Leaving many of those citizens, if they could, to leave as well. The marginal citizens that were unable to leave had no self-help or other educational programs to help them handle their new limited situations.

Many neighborhoods became unstable, and the corrupt (one political party rule) city government did little or nothing to help the needy. Yet the Police were blamed.

The Roundhouse building can be used as an auxillary building to a residential or unique commercial development, if we can get a developer and a financial institution to piece together a plan.

The New City Government needs to clean up its act and govern in the best honest and effective manner possible.

There is a complete lack of respect, by many citizens, of authority of any kind, be it; Police, Teachers, Government Agencies, Employers Etc. They do not respect their neighbors or their neighbor's

Property, store owners or their contents.

Many areas of the once thriving N.E Phila are sliding into awful crime ridden communities.

The New Police Chief admits they are short 1600 police officers. How effective can they be that short staffed? It will take 10 years to get that many new officers. If the Police Chief and the Mayor

Really want to help they should be calling in the State Police or State Guard to help.

Please keep my personal info confidential.



Outlook

Support for Designation of the Roundhouse

From Judi Kearney <pntjudith@verizon.net>

Date Mon 11/4/2024 10:13 AM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Commissioners,

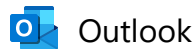
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I urge the Historical Commission to add the Roundhouse to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Judith A. Kearney
303 Forest Av
Ambler PA 19002-4309

Sent from my iPad



Why the Philadelphia Police Administration Building Should be Preserved

From Carl-Dag Lige <carldag@gmail.com>
Date Thu 11/7/2024 6:06 AM
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear representatives of the Historical Commission,

Below you will find a contemplation and some arguments in support of saving the Philadelphia Police Administration Building.

Sincerely,
Carl-Dag Lige, architectural historian
Tallinn, Estonia



Image: Courtesy of August Komendant Collection, Estonian Museum of Architecture

Why the Philadelphia Police Administration Building Should be Preserved

Completed in 1962, the former Philadelphia Police Administration Building, also known as the Roundhouse, is an architectural and structural masterpiece. Designed by the architecture collaborative Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham (GBQC) in close collaboration with the Estonian-American structural engineer August Eduard Komendant, it remains an excellent example of American postwar modern architecture, characterized by technological innovation, economy of construction and thoughtful programming of spaces.

As many in Philadelphia know, the Roundhouse has a complicated past. Police brutality and social injustice are part of the legacy of this building. That painful past should never be forgotten. However, great architecture should not be punished for unprofessional, inhumane policing in the past. The Roundhouse should rather be preserved as a unique example of postwar Philadelphian architecture, and re-used in a manner that helps heal the social and cultural wounds. Instead of razing it to the ground, the Philadelphia Police Administration Building should find a new purpose, ideally as a civic, community-oriented public building.

Architectural, structural and urban value

As preservation architect Jack Pyburn has addressed, the Philadelphia Police Administration Building was among the first buildings in the United States that was almost entirely built of precast concrete, that is, factory-made concrete panels. Precasting as a technology has since become commonplace all over the world, but it was something new and inspirational for the talented architects of the 1950s and 60s. Even the world-famous Louis Kahn integrated precast concrete into his designs, like the Richards Medical Research Laboratories at the Penn campus in Philadelphia (1957–1965). Structural engineer August Komendant who was an expert in precasting technology was consulted by both Kahn and GBQC when the latter opted for using precast concrete for the Police Administration Building, the design of which started in 1959.

The Police Administration Building is like a three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle or a life-sized Lego kit. It consists of close to 1000 individual concrete panels that were assembled on the construction site. The individual concrete elements, primarily floor and facade panels, were tied together with high-quality steel cables. This “knitting together”, or post-tensioning, to use construction terminology, was another novel method that gained popularity at the time. Post-tensioning not only enabled more economic use of materials and shorter construction time, but helped enhance architectural and aesthetic quality, especially in case of reinforced concrete structures.

Next to its architectural and structural value, the Police Administration Building has a strong urban presence in downtown Philadelphia. With its round forms and spacious entrance area, the building has a welcoming character. This effect could further be enhanced by removing the concrete barrier surrounding the site. Additionally, the building could contribute to improving the surrounding public space, particularly if it were better connected with the neighboring Franklin Square, and make the car-dominated district more pedestrian-friendly.

If architecture can break, it can also heal

Architecture is often seen as an indicator if not a generator of social change. Much pre- and post-war architecture has received harsh criticism for the failed programs it supported. But a building does not have a conscience; and something without a conscience cannot take responsibility. Architecture is a passive agent, a tool that gains influence only through our decisions and actions. We have the power to use architecture for either good deeds or for causing pain, help communities unite, or segregate.

If the Roundhouse was used in negative ways in the past, it can be used for social healing and cultural integration in the future. Razing or substantially altering the building would only remove the physical, visual memory but would leave future generations without the possibility of making peace with what has happened before them. Great architecture would thus fall victim of a human trauma, and remain without a chance to redeem its controversial past.

The desire to create a tabula rasa, a clean slate, is typically manifested in the destruction of architecture or monuments. Some Philadelphians have proposed a tabula rasa approach for the Roundhouse but a more pragmatic, less violent, mode of conduct would enable us to negotiate history, study its peculiarities, and accept its ambiguities. In this way, a new life is imaginable for the Roundhouse.

If preserved and reimagined, the reborn Philadelphia Police Administration Building could both celebrate its original achievement as a masterful expression of civic design while also providing a community platform for healing as a past place of social injustice and misuse of power.

Carl-Dag Lige (1982) is an architectural historian, critic and curator based in Tallinn, Estonia. He is the editor of the book [Miracles in Concrete: Structural Engineer August Komendant](#), published by Birkhäuser Verlag and the Estonian Museum of Architecture in 2022.

*The text was originally published on the [website](#) of the Stuart Weitzman School of Design, University of Pennsylvania, on 6 September 2023.

-

Carl-Dag Lige
architectural historian
PhD student, junior researcher

Faculty of Architecture
Estonian Academy of Arts
Põhja puistee 7
Tallinn 10412
Estonia

carl-dag.lige@artun.ee / carldag@gmail.com

+372 55 688 395



Outlook

The Round House

From Lea Litvin <lea@lodesignco.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 4:18 PM

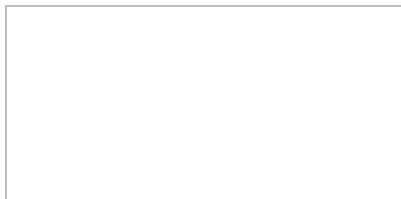
To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Philadelphia Historical Commission,

The Roundhouse needs to be preserved! It is one of the most interesting buildings of a specific era in the city and can be made a fabulous destination with many different uses. It adds character to the fabric of the city.

Best regards,
Lea Litvin AIA





Eleven of the most under-threat modern buildings in America

From Dan macey <dantasticfoodstyling@gmail.com>

Date Fri 11/1/2024 4:23 PM

To preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Would love this to be added to the record

Conservation group Docomomo has selected 11 of the most significant 20th-century buildings that are at risk of demolition in the USA.

Source: Dezeen

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.app%2FyWYaiJkXn6TJYJqS8&data=05%7C02%7Cpreservation%40phila.gov%7C9c39e25e2da340c6aa4608dcfab2ef1b%7C2046864f68ea497daf34a6629a6cd700%7C0%7C0%7C638660894013591899%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=s4GWroBY8BqDk4gw7n%2BPPb8DEx7AZZG%2Fmw2MAK12EiM%3D&reserved=0>

Sent from my iPhone

Jack Pyburn, FAIA

6 November 2024

Dr. Jonathan Farnham, Executive Director
Philadelphia Historical Commission
preservation@phila.gov

Dear Dr. Farnham,

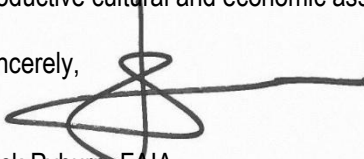
Please accept this letter expressing my dire concern for the future of the Philadelphia Police Administration (the Roundhouse) at 750 Race Street and my support for its preservation and reuse. I am a historic preservation architect in Atlanta, Georgia, past board member of Docomomo/US and immediate past president of the International Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage (ISC 20C) of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). In January of 2023, ICOMOS headquarters in Paris issued an international Heritage Alert for the Roundhouse signifying the site's international significance and alerting the world's heritage community of the threat it faces. That alert is still active (<https://www.icomos.org/en/get-involved/inform-us/heritage-alert/current-alerts/119879-icomos-heritage-alert-philadelphia-police-headquarters>)

Please accept the following points from the Heritage Alert when considering the protection and listing of the Roundhouse.

- The signatories to Heritage Alert, ICOMOS, the ISC 20C, Docomomo International, US/ICOMOS, Docomomo/US, Docomomo/US/Philadelphia, ICOMOS Estonia and the Estonian Museum of Architecture document that, based on internationally accepted metrics, the Roundhouse is of worldwide importance. I hope, with its substantial reputation for cultural heritage internationally, the Philadelphia Preservation Commission will list the Roundhouse, not just for Philadelphians but for its national and global heritage value.
- The Roundhouse is a unique design and construction by internationally recognized architects, engineers, and contractors, and is one of only two of its kind in the world. It was structurally innovative and was architecturally responsive to its context and the City's aspirations. It is also one of the premier structures of the internationally recognized Philadelphia School of architects.
- The Roundhouse retains its significant features and is in sound structural and architectural condition poised to be preserved and reused.
- The Roundhouse is exceptionally suited to reuse. Its elegant serpentine shape is an efficient footprint to accommodate new uses. At the time of its construction the Roundhouse was touted as having 5% greater floor area efficiency than the typical commercial or institutional building. The clear span interior can accommodate a variety of uses. A joint graduate studio of Georgia Tech Architecture students and University of Pennsylvania Historic Preservation students spent a semester analyzing the Roundhouse and considering alternatives for future use. The results confirmed the flexibility of the Roundhouse to support public, private, and/or institutional uses. The student study further demonstrated opportunities to capture the site's development value with a new building to the rear of and integrally related to a preserved and adapted Roundhouse. Since the student work, additional pro bono studies have confirmed the students' findings and demonstrated how the 750 Race Street site can be creatively developed while preserving the Roundhouse.

Thank you for your consideration of the points presented above. It would be a tragedy to lose the Roundhouse due to lack of appreciation and recognition of its value to the City, USA, and international heritage and for its ability to be a productive cultural and economic asset for the City of Philadelphia for the long term. Please list the Roundhouse.

Sincerely,



Jack Pyburn, FAIA