



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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ANNE FADULLON

Director

September 9, 2016

Stephanie K. Meeks
President and CEO
National Trust for Historic Preservation
2600 Virginia Avenue NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Ms. Meeks:

I am proud to report that the City of Philadelphia is embarking on an ambitious effort to augment and improve its authority and capacity to protect and preserve the city's wealth of historic resources, and I would like to request the support and assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in this important, multipronged undertaking. Philadelphia finds itself at a defining moment in its history. The City is enjoying its first sustained population growth in generations, but significant preservation challenges accompany that growth and concomitant building boom. For decades, Philadelphia's planners and preservationists managed a city in contraction. Today, we are quickly shifting gears, seeking the tools and strategies to manage a city in expansion. The Organization of World Heritage Cities recently recognized Philadelphia as the first World Heritage City in the United States, attesting to its enviable collection of historic resources, however, without investment in its preservation infrastructure, those resources will inevitably face risks. Leading the charge, Philadelphia's new Mayor James F. Kenney has proven himself a strong advocate of historic preservation. Facilitating this preservation effort, the City recently amended its charter, creating the Department of Planning & Development, an umbrella organization encompassing planning, preservation, housing, and zoning agencies, of which I am the Director.

Breaking down barriers between agencies, the newly created organization is poised to advance preservation through myriad mechanisms on many fronts. The new leadership in Philadelphia understands and values a robust preservation program informed by an inclusive notion of history as a powerful planning tool, a potent economic driver, and a key to Philadelphia's continued growth, vitality, and sustainability, but it needs assistance developing that program.

Over the coming weeks and months, the City and its partners, both in and out of government, will evaluate several coordinated mechanisms to enhance its abilities to identify, protect, and preserve historic resources. Through these efforts, the City will develop a comprehensive preservation plan which will identify and document significant themes in Philadelphia's rich and diverse history, expanding the scope of current preservation efforts. To implement this plan, the City will seek to impose fees for services such as building permit application reviews, generating a revenue stream to better fund and significantly increase the capacity of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the municipal preservation agency that oversees the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. These additional resources will be used specifically to survey the entire city for historic resources that represent those historic themes, and prioritize newly discovered historic sites for designation to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The City will seek to enhance its ability to promote preservation and discourage demolition by considering mechanisms such as allowing for the transfer of development rights from historic sites, potential down-zoning along historic commercial corridors, and consideration of adjusting its tax abatement program. . Further, as part of the comprehensive preservation plan is, the City will seek to investigate best practices regarding instituting a demolition delay ordinance to prevent the loss of important but overlooked historic resources not yet listed on the Philadelphia Register.

I would like to request the support and assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in educating Philadelphians to the value of historic preservation, assisting the City of Philadelphia in identifying and implementing best practices in municipal preservation, and advocating for the adoption of more thoughtful preservation laws and more compelling preservation incentives in the city. Please contact me if I can provide any additional information about Philadelphia's exciting preservation initiatives. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,



Anne Fadullon

Director of Planning & Development

cc: David J. Brown, Executive Vice President and Chief Preservation Officer
Paul Edmondson, Chief Legal Officer