

# BELLA VISTA NEWS

FALL 2018

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a Registered Community Organization

Bella Vista Neighbors Association (BVNA) serves residents of Bella Vista, which is bounded by 6th and 11th Streets, and South Street and Washington Avenue. BVNA encourages civic involvement, provides a neutral and public discussion forum, preserves and augments our institutions and character, supports the delivery of government services, and promotes dialog with elected officials. We are an independent and nonprofit registered community organization (RCO).

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# AUTUMN PUMPKIN ARTS IN BELLA VISTA



By Claudia Archer

Hello Fall! Cool nights return, leaves crunch underfoot and we crave apple cider and everything pumpkin. Our love for pumpkins doesn't stop with lattes—pumpkin picking tops many a fall bucket list, and the pumpkin emoji is practically synonymous with autumn. While there are no pumpkin farms in our neighborhood, Bella Vista does offer two annual pumpkin-centric events.

## PUMPKIN PAINTING FOR KIDS

Since 2014, BVNA has hosted its annual Kids' Pumpkin Painting event at Palumbo Playground at 10th & Fitzwater Streets. ColorWheels®, the mobile studio based at Fleisher Art Memorial, helps BVNA host this art activity for kids. Dubbed the



Photo source: Claudia Archer

## Young pumpkin artist Rafael Deutsch

event drew about 75 the first year, and the numbers continue to grow, with 175 pumpkins painted last year.

It's a hectic two hours of children, gourds, and paint everywhere! We couldn't do it without the help of the Palumbo Rec staff, Af-

ter School Program staff, and BVNA volunteers. Giordano Produce at 9th & Washington is our trusted source for primo pumpkins. This free event is funded by a grant from the Philadelphia Activities Fund. Established by the mayor and City Council, and managed by Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, the Fund supports people and communities through projects

that promote the arts. The fifth annual Kids Pumpkin Painting event is Friday, October 12, 2018, 4-6 pm.

## PUMPKIN CARVING AT FLEISHER

Our other gourd gathering is Pumpkin Carving at Fleisher Art Memorial. In partnership with Fleisher as part of their mission to offer community programming, we offer an atmospheric evening in the historic sanctuary at 719 Catharine Street.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR FALL FUN

FRI, OCT 12, 4-6 PM  
PUMPKIN PAINTING FOR KIDS

WED, OCT 24, 6-8 PM  
PUMPKIN CARVING AT  
FLEISHER ART MEMORIAL

If you've always wanted to carve your own large, illuminated jack-o-lantern, this is your chance to do it with



Photo source: Claudia Archer

Amelia and Madeline  
Carnahan create pumpkin  
masterpieces

"Swiss Army Knife of art," the ColorWheels® van is equipped with the tools and supplies Fleisher's teaching artists need to guide community members in hands-on art projects. All BVNA needs to do is provide refreshments, pumpkins and the kids. The



See PUMPKIN, page 2



Photo source: Claudia Archer



Photo source: Claudia Archer

### Pumpkin carving in the Sanctuary at Fleisher Art Memorial

professional guidance—and leave the messy pumpkin guts on someone else's table. Fleisher teaching artist Mike Storm has assisted carvers of all skill levels for the last three years.



"The event really has a vibrant, party-like atmosphere," Storm says. "For some people this event is an introduc-

tion to the fun of pumpkin carving, and for many others it's a chance to experience a fall tradition in an exciting space with friends and neighbors."

The evening ends with participants placing lighted votives in their pumpkins and showing off their masterpieces.


This event is also funded through the Philadelphia Activities Fund and a \$10 donation to BVNA is suggested.

The fourth annual carving event is on Wednesday, October 24, 2018, 6-8 pm. Reg-

istration is required; sign up for either a 6 or 7 pm time slot at [fleisher.org](http://fleisher.org).

BVNA hopes to bring the community together with art-based community events like these and welcomes all of our neighbors to get creative together. Information and registration for these events will be shared via our weekly emailed newsletter and social media. ♦





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# CIANFRANI PARK

## Secrets of a 50-year-old Bella Vista Treasure

By Nancy Biller

The beautiful and serene heart of the community we know today as Cianfrani Park was not created by the City of Philadelphia. Generations of passionate neighborhood volunteers made the park what it is today—and without continued commitment and tender loving care, the park could decline all too easily. Read on to learn about the leaders in these efforts and how you can follow in their footsteps.

Cianfrani Park was dedicated in 1968. The land it occupies served for more than 125 years as the site of Ringgold Grammar School and then James Campbell Public School. Babe Tartaglia of Pemberton Street and Domenick Lazzaro of Sheridan Street were the original “park champions.” Without their leadership in the 1960’s, ’70’s, and ’80’s, we would have a parking lot, not a park.

Friends of Cianfrani Park (FCP) formed in 1993 with Babe as honorary president

and a core group of volunteers including Rosemary Capirchio, Elaine Ulmer and David Morse—consistent and persistent park advocates for the past 25 years.



Photo source: Nancy Biller

**James Campbell School, ca. 1913.  
For 125 years, Ringgold Grammar School  
and then James Campbell Public School  
occupied Cianfrani Park.**

Their tireless efforts have focused on fundraising, event planning, volunteer outreach, park design, and tree and garden maintenance.

With the aid of partners in the city, private foundations and many talented, skilled and generous volunteers, FCP transformed a charmless chain-link-fence enclosure into the inviting “green heart of our community—everyone’s front yard and urban living room.” These efforts won FCP First Place in the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s 2012 City Gardens Contest and on Aug. 8, 2018, Inga Saffron, Architecture Critic for Philly News, cited Cianfrani Park as a model for what a collective of determined neighborhood of volunteers can do.

Work with Councilman Squilla in 2017 yielded a large grant, thanks to which, in the fall of 2018, we celebrate the most recent renovations. Over the past few months the park was improved with new

See CIANFRANI, page 4

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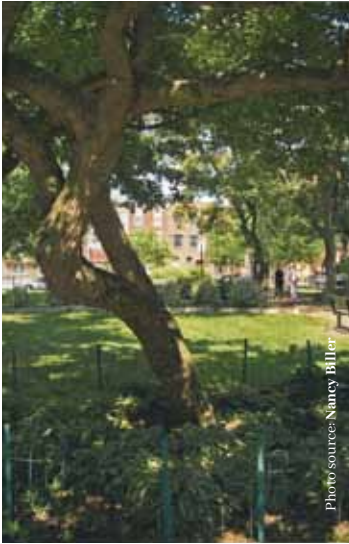


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A treasured old tree nurtured by Cianfrani Park tenders.

benches, trees, permeable paving, and the restoration and placement of the architectural cartouche from the now demolished Fante-Leone Public Pool, which was on the 800 block of Montrose Street.

FCP offers a special opportunity for Bella Vista residents to find an outlet for their creativity and build their organizational skills and résumés by becoming the new volunteer leaders to carry on FCP's critical work. Be a part of the next 50 years: the secret of Cianfrani Park's future is you. Email [cianfranipark@gmail.com](mailto:cianfranipark@gmail.com) to express your interest. ♦



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# FADING SIGNS, VIVID MEMORIES

## The Ongoing Evolution of Bella Vista Town Watch

By Leslie Pappas

Look up around Bella Vista and you can still see the signs: “BELLA VISTA TOWN WATCH—DIAL 911.”

As the red and blue sign ink slowly fades, so has much of the graffiti, broken windows, neighborhood blight and petty crime that inspired a small group of neighbors more than a quarter century ago to band together and walk the streets.



Photo source: Leslie Pappas

**Fading Bella Vista Town Watch Sign**

Founded in 1992 and incorporated in 1994, Bella Vista Town Watch started as an evening neighborhood patrol. At least three times a week, sometimes more, groups of two or more neighbors would get together to weave back and forth through darkened streets with flashlights and whistles, keeping their eyes open for anything amiss to report to police.

“We carried walkie-talkies,” remembers Janet Elfring, one the group’s early members and a current BVNA board member. “Of course no one had cell phones back then.”

On Wednesday nights, the group would make a special stop at St. Paul’s school auditorium on 9th and Christian Streets (now Christopher Columbus Charter School), where weekly Bingo games were held, to escort home the winners so they wouldn’t get robbed.

Sometimes the group gathered at Palumbo Rec Center for classes with Chik Mason, a martial artist who now teaches at Zhang Sah Martial Arts on 5th and Bainbridge.

“They paid me a dollar a head,” recalls Mason, who taught the group tai chi and other self-defense moves to help them better prepare for the evening patrols. “Tai chi taught you how to be calm in the face of danger, and I think we did do that.”

As the group evolved, its activities expanded. The group organized neighborhood clean-ups, bought a power washer to blast off unwanted graffiti, painted classrooms, and tended a butterfly garden.

Everyone found their own way to contribute. Dan McGowan, who owns and operates Philadelphia Bella Vista B&B, was always ready with a roller to paint over graffiti. Jim Naughton, a graphic designer, created the logo for the street signs. Carla Puppini, the force behind Bella Vista Tree Tenders, planted trees. Domenick Lazzaro collected thousands of aluminum cans, which he used each year to fund a holiday dinner for the neighborhood’s seniors.

“You have to think of it as a hundred little pieces,” says John Smyth, a founding member of the group who and now serves as president of Friends of the South Street Police Mini-Station.

In 2012, Philadelphia updated its zoning code to include the role of neighborhood organizations in zoning matters, and provided a way for Registered Community Organizations (RCOs) to register with the city’s planning commission.

By then, the neighborhood had some of the lowest crime rates in the city. Bella Vista Town Watch had long since stopped its evening patrols and had branched into zoning, beautification, and other improvement efforts.

It was time for a rebranding, says Ric Hayman, a founding member who helped the group transition into its next phase. “Why should a town watch do zoning?” he asks. “It doesn’t really sound very town watch-y.”

In 2014, Bella Vista Town Watch became Bella Vista Neighbor’s Association, a 501(c)3 non-profit RCO.

Today, the group continues to evolve as new eyes bring fresh visions to the neighborhood. Check our website, [bellavistaneighbors.org](http://bellavistaneighbors.org) to find out how you can get more involved and subscribe to our e-newsletter. Or come to one of our meetings, listed on page 16.



**Ric Hayman and Janet Elfring at a neighborhood clean up**



**Dan McGowan, left, practicing self-defense tai chi moves with Chik Mason**



**Domenick Lazzaro collected cans to fund annual holiday dinners.**

Bella Vista Neighbors Association reminds everyone, we're all in this together.

Our neighborhood is ours to keep nice, so do your part . . .



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# LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW...

The weather may still be mild, but winter and snow will be here before you know it. Keep yourself and the neighborhood safe this winter by keeping streets and sidewalks clear.

Philadelphia requires that within six hours of the end of a snowfall or freezing rain, a path at least 36 inches wide be cleared on the sidewalk. Do not shovel or sweep the snow into the street; violators can face penalties ranging from \$50 to \$300. To report a sidewalk that has not been cleared, call the Streets Department Customer Affairs Unit at 215- 686-5560.

During heavy snows, authorities may declare a snow emergency and all cars must be moved off of snow emergency routes so they can be shoveled curb-to-curb. Washington Avenue is a snow emergency route. Any vehicle remaining on Washington Avenue during a declared snow emergency could be ticketed and towed. If your car is towed in a snow emergency, call 215-686-SNOW for its location. And remember: Do NOT call 911.

## Shoveling Do's & Don'ts

### DO

- Clear a 36-inch wide path within six hours of snowfall
- Use rock salt or kitty litter on icy sidewalks for traction
- Apply rock salt and de-icers sparingly
- Stretch before shoveling, rest if tired, stay hydrated
- Help neighbors who need assistance

### DO NOT

- Cover fire hydrants with snow
- Shovel snow into manholes
- Sweep snow into the street
- Overexert yourself while shoveling

Source: Philadelphia Streets Department



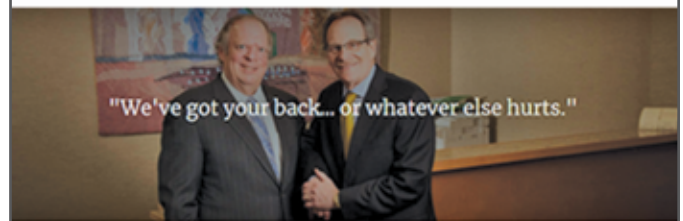
Winter weather creates hazardous conditions for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. We all need to do all we can to remove snow and ice.



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# UNDERGROUND RAILROAD STATION PROTECTED

The home of William Still, leader in the Abolitionist and Vigilance Movement, has been added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

By Laura Burtner

In many parts of Philadelphia it is easy to sense American history and the people who walked here before—colonists along Elfreth's Alley, patriots at City Tavern, our nation's forefathers in Independence Hall, industrialists when you stroll along the new Rail Park. The influence of waves of immigrants can be found throughout Philadelphia's neighborhoods. Take for example South 9th Street, the commercial core of Bella Vista. With its sidewalk awnings and open air produce stalls, it is still known as "The Italian Market" harkening the not so distant past. Today however, Bella Vista's place in the history of the Underground Railroad is undetectable.

On March 9 this year a major landmark of the Underground Railroad was added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and it is located in Bella Vista. From 1850-1855, 625 South Delhi Street (known as Ronaldson Street before 1897) was the home of William and Letitia Still. William Still was a prominent abolitionist and leader in the vigilance movement who has become known as the Father of the Underground Railroad. His wife, Letitia worked as a seamstress. At this time there is no sign to be found along the 600 block of South Delhi marking this important history. It has taken historians years to uncover specific details about the Underground Railroad; indeed, given its covert operation, many stations in the network and the stories of those who traveled it in their quest for freedom have been lost.



The subject home as depicted on the Philadelphia Historic Resource Nomination form by The Keeping Society of Philadelphia 2017, photographed in 1935; source: Phillyhistory.org. The adjacent building is a condominium, formerly the Samuel J. Randall Public School, originally the Institute for Colored Youth.

The William and Letitia Still House and Underground Railroad Way Station does not stand out as a landmark; it sits at the end of a row of homes, most of which date back to the early- to mid-1800s. Most have been altered over time and no longer reflect their original appearance, including 625 South Delhi. It seems fair to say that the home's physical appearance doesn't justify historic preservation. In this case it is the person who lived there and what took place inside its walls while he lived there that warrant our reverence today.

Antebellum Philadelphia had a considerable African American population. Our neighborhood, now known as Bella Vista, was a thriving African American community. The Anti-Slavery movement gained momentum here and among the region's Quakers. Starting around 1804, the Underground Railroad developed as loosely knit networks of escape routes, safe shelters known as "way stations," and "conductors" or "pilots" who would guide freedom-seekers from station to station northward to free states. When the Fugitive Slave Act became law in 1850, free states became dangerous territory for escapees and all U. S. citizens were mandated to aid in the capture and return of run-aways or face arrest and steep penalties. That same year, William Still took up residency on Ronaldson Street, became the Chairman of the Vigilance Committee of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, and stepped up efforts to aid fugitives, becoming a chief operative of the Underground Railroad. He and his wife sheltered and aided hundreds of people fleeing slavery during their five years on Ronaldson Street. Next time you walk along South Delhi, imagine how it would feel to be free for the first time in your life.

The Fugitive Slave Law instilled fear among Underground Railroad operatives who destroyed their records of the escapees to whom they had given aid. William Still instead continued to keep detailed accounts of the people who passed through Philadelphia on their way to Canada. He did so even though it implicated him in unlawful activities, putting his own safety and freedom in jeopardy. He hoped that the records would one day help families reunite. In his journals there are accounts of Harriet Tubman transferring

"The heroism and desperate struggle that many of our people had to endure should be kept green in the memory of this and coming generations."

—William Still



Portrait of William Still, ca. 1870, engraving by John Sartain. Source: William Still's *The Underground Rail Road* (1872). (as depicted on the Philadelphia Historic Resources Nomination Form for 625 S. Delhi St. by The Keeping Society of Philadelphia).



625 South Delhi Street as it appears today

See STILL HOUSE, page 10



# ADDING THE WILLIAM & LETITIA STILL HOUSE TO THE PHILADELPHIA REGISTER

By Laura Burtner

Finding the exact home of the Father of the Underground Railroad and protecting it underscores the importance and justification for undertaking the effort to maintain a historic register. It gives us today and future generations the opportunity to piece together our whole history.

625 South Delhi Street does not stand out as a monument to freedom. As Lonnie G. Bunch, III, Director of the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African American History and Culture, points out in one of the eight letters of support the nomination garnered from scholars and historians:

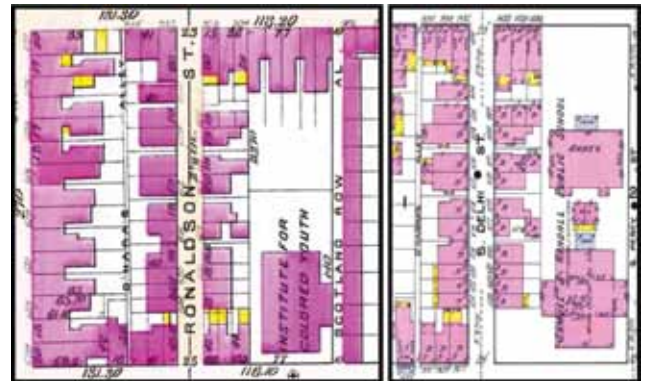
*"The powerful sense of connection with the past that comes from a specific historic site such as this is of vital importance. I am aware that the facade of the building was changed in the 1920s. However, the house's significance has never depended on precisely how it appeared to the street. Indeed, its facade always covered the work taking place inside: meetings, discussions, and the harboring of fugitives striking out for freedom."*

## THE DISCOVERY

An advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Freeman* on April 24, 1851 that read: "Fashionable Dressmaking Done in the best manner by Letitia Still, Ronaldson street, first house above Shippen street, East side, between Ninth and Tenth streets," provided historic archivist James Duffin, member of The Keeping Society of Philadelphia, with the description needed to pinpoint 625 South Delhi Street (known as Ronaldson Street before 1897) as the home of William and Letitia Still from 1850 until 1855. Before finding the archived newspaper ad, Duffin and fellow historians relied on old city maps—the Bromley Atlas and the Sanborn Atlas—and *McElroy's 1854 Philadelphia City Directory* (a precursor to the phone book) as well as other archived documents and scholarly research to determine that the 600 block of South Delhi Street was where the couple had once lived and sheltered freedom seekers.

## THE STEPS

Discovery of the precise location was the final detail The Keeping Society needed to complete a Philadelphia Historic Resource Nomination form. The form and supporting documentation was submitted to the Philadelphia Historic Commission on December 11, 2017, then officially accepted by commission staff on December 29. On March 9, 2018, The William Still House and Underground Railroad Way Station was added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic



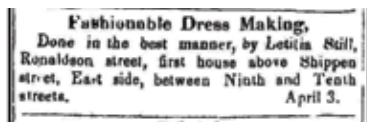
Left: 1887 Bromley Atlas of Philadelphia, plate B.  
Right: 1917 Sanborn Insurance Map of Philadelphia, vol. 5 sheet 404 (both as shown in the Philadelphia Historic Resource Nomination form for 625 S. Delhi Street by The Keeping Society of Philadelphia.

Places. It may seem like it was a quick process, however the documentation took a few years to compile.

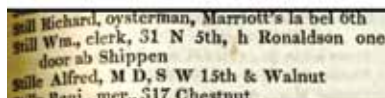
Anyone can file a nomination with the Historic Commission, but the supporting documentation must include citations from accepted sources. Depending on the type of resource under consideration, there are four to five stages involved in the commission's review and decision:

- Submittal of a complete Historic Resource Nomination form;
- Review for completeness and accuracy by Historic Commission staff;
- Review by the Committee on Historic Designation who determines if the nominated resource meets one or more of the ten criteria for designation;
- The Committee on Historic Designation and Commission Staff will work with local communities on a Preliminary Assessment to define boundaries for nominations of historic districts;
- Several public meetings are held to gather input on historic district nominations;
- Nomination and recommendation at a Historic Commission meeting where public testimony is heard, and a vote is taken by the Commission.

Of the Historic Commission's ten criteria, The William and Letitia Still House and Underground Railroad Way Station qualified under two: 1) the property has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; and 2) the property exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.



Source: *Pennsylvania Freeman*,  
April 24, 1851



Source: *McElroy's Philadelphia Directory*, 1854

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### STILL HOUSE, continued from page 8

Underground Railroad passengers to safety on Ronaldson Street. He hid the journals, then in 1867 he wrote a book to chronicle the details contained in them. Published first in 1872, the 800-page volume titled, *The Underground Railroad* is the single most authoritative "passenger manifest" and first-hand account of what took place during that tumultuous era in American history.

Humble as it may appear today, 625 South Delhi Street remains as a historical landmark commemorating the Abolition, Anti-Slavery and Vigilance movement, just as Independence Hall represents the Birth of a Nation. The Underground Railroad and the work of William Still have shaped American

culture and society, moving us closer to the ideal the forefathers held in the founding of our nation, E Pluribus Unum, out of many one. ♦



**William Still's entry in Journal C of Station No. 2 noting Harriet Tubman's arrival in Philadelphia on December 29, 1854**  
(as found on the Keeping Society of Philadelphia's Philadelphia Historic Resource Nomination form, 2017).

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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION, continued from page 9

Support from historical and cultural advocacy organizations, scholars, historians, and community groups can bolster a nomination. The Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African American History and Culture, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the National Center for History in Schools—powerhouse advocates for American history and culture, provided letters of support for the William and Letitia Still House, as did a number of scholars in African American history.

### WHAT IT MEANS FOR A PROPERTY TO BE LISTED ON THE REGISTER

Inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places is a significant status supporting the thesis that the history of certain properties is extraordinarily invaluable to the community at-large. Once a property is listed, it cannot be demolished or unsympathetically altered without approval from the Philadelphia Historic Commission, a design review process that must be completed before permits can be considered.

Anyone interested in pursuing the nomination of a property they feel has

merit may want to begin with one of the several organizations that exist to help guide such an endeavor. (See the list on the right.)

For a city that has been developing for nearly 340 years, there are relatively few historic-designated properties in Philadelphia. According to The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, there are nearly 11,000 listed on the local register, 2.5% of buildings in the city. These numbers pale when compared with 4.3% on average for other U.S. cities. But there are efforts underway to address this. In May 2017, Mayor Jim Kenney established the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Task Force which is charged with making recommendations to strengthen the city's historic preservation practices. Their final public meeting has taken place and their recommendations are due to be made public in the near future. ♦

The writer wishes to thank historic archivist James Duffin for taking time to be interviewed for this story, and The Keeping Society of Philadelphia for their diligence in completing the research needed to complete the nomination.

### Organizations and Resources That Support Historic Preservation in Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Historical Commission  
[phila.gov/historical](http://phila.gov/historical)

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia  
[preservationalliance.com](http://preservationalliance.com)

The Keeping Society of Philadelphia  
[keepingphiladelphia.org](http://keepingphiladelphia.org)

City of Philadelphia Storefront Improvement Program  
[business.phila.gov/storefront-improvement-program](http://business.phila.gov/storefront-improvement-program)

Philadelphia City Archives  
<https://www.phila.gov/phils/carchive.htm>

Historical Society of Pennsylvania  
[hsp.org](http://hsp.org)

The Library Company of Philadelphia  
[librarycompany.org](http://librarycompany.org)

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia  
[philaathenaeum.org](http://philaathenaeum.org)

The Free Library of Philadelphia  
[freelibrary.org](http://freelibrary.org)

Preservation Pennsylvania  
[preservationpa.org](http://preservationpa.org)

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
[www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation](http://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation)

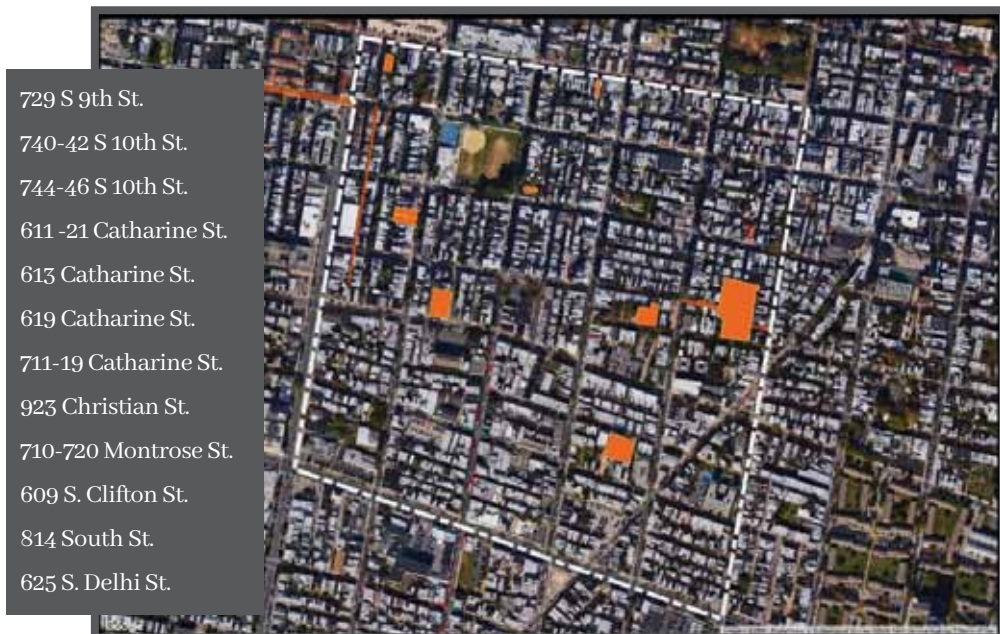
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
[savingplaces.org](http://savingplaces.org)

### HARRIET TUBMAN CROSSED THIS THRESHOLD WITH FREEDOM SEEKERS



The marble stoop of The William and Letitia Still House and Underground Railroad Way Station, 625 South Delhi Street, as it appears today.

### Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Listings in Bella Vista



Source: The Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia



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# SEPTEMBER BVNA NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING RECAP

## Historic Preservation in Philadelphia

By Eugene Desyatnik

On Wednesday, September 5th BVNA welcomed experts from Bella Vista and across the city to discuss issues of historical preservation with Bella Vista residents. Fittingly, the meeting took place in the sanctuary of the Fleisher Art Memorial—a building on the city's Register of Historic Places. Elizabeth Grimaldi, Executive Director of Fleisher Art Memorial, kicked things off with an overview of Fleisher's programming and mission, then gave a flavor of the events that take place inside the sanctuary walls, from Day of the Dead celebrations, to weddings and other receptions, and even wrestling. Fleisher also plays host to the ever-popular fall pumpkin carving event in partnership with BVNA. Formerly a church, Fleisher Art Memorial was acquired by Samuel Fleisher in 1922 and has since served as an art gallery, a community art space, event space, civic gathering place, and even polling location. Grimaldi discussed the joys and unique challenges that come with the stewardship of a historic space.

The audience then had the opportunity to see recent adaptive reuse projects by David Waxman of MMPartners. Waxman discussed a number of adaptive reuse projects that his firm had undertaken over the years. His work in Brewerytown has included rehabilitating and converting large industrial structures for residential and ground floor commercial use with the help, in part, of the federal historic tax credit program. Waxman spoke of the challenges of reusing historic properties and the uncertainty that comes with opening up walls in historic buildings. Moreover, he discussed the impact that revitalization of such properties can have on the fabric of a neighborhood and how these projects can serve as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization.

Councilman Mark Squilla joined the meeting to provide a brief update on the preservation tools being explored by Mayor Kenney's Historic Preservation Task Force, specifically the incentive committee, of which Councilman Squilla is a member. The incentive committee is charged with developing resources to help individual property owners and developers maintain and rehabilitate historic properties. He announced that the last public meeting was to take place on Thursday, September 20th, 2018, after which the task force is to issue its recommendations.

Paul Steinke, Patrick Grossi, and Caroline Slama of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia closed out the evening by discussing steps city residents can take to ensure that historic buildings are protected. Buildings in Philadelphia are preserved from demolition only if they are placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. The Preservation Alliance provided an extensive overview of many notable and historic Bella Vista properties, telling a brief story of each. The speakers highlighted a few Bella Vista properties that are protected as a result of their placement on the city's register as well as a great number that, despite their history or unique architecture, are not protected against demolition or alteration.

As with many of city functions, ordinary volunteers play a critical role in the designation of properties as historic on the city's register. Because Bella Vista does not have a historic district, it is up to individuals to identify and advocate for specific properties with a notable history, architecture, or other characteristics of significance. Attendees hopefully left the meeting feeling more empowered to play a part in that process.

If you would like to learn more about the steps you can take to help identify, research, and nominate buildings of significance, please reach out to BVNA or consult the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia's website:

[preservationalliance.com/preservation-alliance-publications/](http://preservationalliance.com/preservation-alliance-publications/)

Then click the title:

*How to Nominate an Individual Building, Structure, Site, or Object to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places (2007)*

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# BELLA VISTA SIDEWALK AND CURB SWEEPING IS GOING STRONG

BVNA is pleased to report on the success of our clean-up program. Through the generosity of neighbors we are able to keep the crews of Acam Management, our service provider, busy cleaning the sidewalks, curbs and storm drain inlets after garbage and recycling collection day. To continue this service and keep our neighborhood clean, we need to continue raising funds. Turn to the last page of the newsletter to find out how you can donate.



**\$23,884 RAISED**  
from the community



**\$11,385 PAID**  
for 5 months of sidewalk  
and curb cleaning



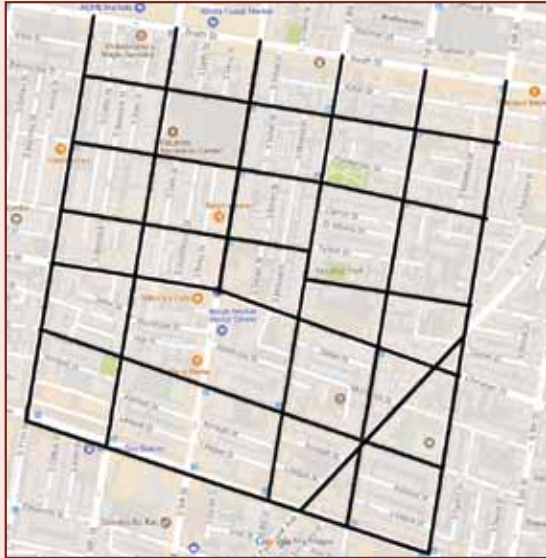
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in 5 months



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of garbage collected

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# BELLA VISTA NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

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Bella Vista Neighbors Association (BVNA) is a volunteer organization. None of our members receive compensation for their service. Your involvement and contributions are essential to our success and the quality of life in our area.

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## BVNA Meetings

### ZONING

**First Tuesdays at 7:30 pm**  
**Palumbo Recreation Center, 10<sup>th</sup> & Fitzwater**

*Open meetings for community input on building and renovation projects requiring variances of the zoning code.*

### PSA 1

**First Wednesdays at 6:30 pm**  
**Santore Library, 7<sup>th</sup> & Carpenter**

*Meeting between police leadership and stakeholders in Police Service Area 1 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> District. Review of monthly crime statistics.*

### BVNA BOARD

**First Mondays at 7:30 pm**  
**Palumbo Recreation Center, 10<sup>th</sup> & Fitzwater**

*Board of Directors' monthly business meeting. All meetings open to the public.*

*Check our website and social media for possible schedule changes:*

[BellaVistaNeighbors.org](http://BellaVistaNeighbors.org)



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## A Message From the President Eugene Desyatnik

# BELLA VISTA

Welcome to the fall edition of the Bella Vista News! As you enjoy this issue's look back at our neighborhood's history, and the association's beginnings as BVTW, I'd like to reflect on our present and where we're headed.

It's now been a year since our close call with losing insurance due to external factors—and thanks to the support of neighbors, neighboring civics, and our tireless volunteers, we've emerged stronger than ever, galvanized by our shared experience.

We've launched new initiatives like our sidewalk and curb sweeping program, and created new committees to pursue walkability improvements, explore historic preservation, and tighten up our bylaws.

I'd like to thank everyone who expressed their generosity, rolled up their sleeves, and helped make this possible. I'd especially like to thank everyone who continues to support our events—from Night at the Phillies, chamber music benefit concerts, to the ever-popular happy hours, these events get neighbors together while supporting our operating expenses; a win-win!

If you'd like to help shape the future of our neighborhood, join us at one of our upcoming meetings, or drop us a line! Any adult residing in or owning a business or real property in Bella Vista, is considered a member and eligible to serve on our committees.



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