

**Germantown Avenue Study Area
INSTITUTIONS**

Historic Preservation Studio 700
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Final Report

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INTRODUCTION

Preservation Planning Studio
Group F : Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Preservation plans for institutional buildings challenge the preservationist and planner to successfully preserve these containers community identity, activity and service. While the preservationist's chief role focuses on building's preservation, it expands to the development of programs and economic incentives aimed at addressing the deterioration, growth and stability of the community. Flight from city centers, urban economic crises, disendorsement of government from preservation and social programs in city centers by inadequate government-supported economic incentives and the changing roles of institutions in our society directly impact these entities that have traditionally served as community anchors. Resulting deterioration by neglect and demolition demoralize communities through the destruction of their material culture and the disconnection of the psychological associations that are a part of the community's identity.

At the same time, response to these difficult problems exists in the form of alternative programs and collaborative efforts. Partners for Sacred Places, the Historic Religious Properties Program and similar advisory consultants, funded by private foundation grants, lend support through referral networks, and preservation, planning and fundraising consultancy. Joined by community involvement through local activism and work, all parties may assist in returning stability, health and vitality to institutions.

Team F, led by Sarah Korjeff and membered by Joan Brierton, Paul Kapp and Cassie Myers, has focused on the institutions in the study area as a part of a larger preservation plan that addresses all of the building types connected by Germantown Avenue. The identification, study and development of a preservation plan was carried out over a four week period from November 4 to December 6, 1991.

The study area spans three connected communities of northwest Philadelphia: Chestnut Hill, Mount Airy and Germantown. These three areas represent different demographics and tax bases and to some extent, the institutions in them reflect the character of their communities. Differences as obvious as thses between private and public schools, profit and non-profit institutions make for immediate distinctions. But institutional character is further marked by the community in which it is located and the population it serves. Chestnut Hill banks and post offices differ widely from those in the Wister area of Germantown. In being linked to a larger geographic community, private

schools relate to a broader community than public schools and as such, they become satellites connecting the area to a larger entity, such as Chestnut Hill College, Germantown Friends and La Salle University. Both public and private schools have less diversity in their student bodies than the surrounding community. Funding available to private institutions are often not available to public institutions. Outreach to the community occurs in healthy institutions while failing ones concern themselves with survival. Impact on the community.

METHODOLOGY

icated above (relation to street, state of preservation, open space, adjacent buildings, etc.). After briefly reviewing Germantown Avenue and mapping the institutional types according to use, the team identified clusters of institutions where a broad representation of institutional types existed. These institutions were then mapped on a small scale map (zip code map) according to use typology. The study area was then divided into five sections according to concentrations of institutions. Each team member then studied one of the area with the aim of identifying and mapping the institutions and identifying apparent problems. The area covered extended laterally no more than two blocks off the Avenue. Institutional types included banks, libraries, post offices, other government buildings, such as police stations, schools, and organizations such as the YMCA and the YWCA. The problems to be considered include:

- public transportation/parking
- open space property
- safety
- historic/ cultural property fabric
- community impact
- economic survival

In addressing these concerns, model examples have been referenced in the study area. Troubled institutions have been identified and discussed and recommendations for their survival, preservation and improvement by way of preservation-oriented tactics have been applied. Attempts have been made to provide solutions to these problems through use of existing preservation methods and creation of new planning forms.

The study area was divided as follows:

Area 1: Paul Kapp: Chestnut Hill - Chestnut Hill College to Cresheim Valley Road

Area 2: Sarah Korjeff: Mount Airy -Cresheim Valley Road to Johnson Street

Area 3 & 5: Cassie Myers: West Central Germantown - Johnson Street to Cheltenham Avenue;
East Germantown - Queen Lane to Rockland Street

Area 4: Joan Brierton: Penn Knox Area- Cheltenham Avenue to Queen Lane

Each team member then studied the institutions in order to identify preservation and planning related problems. These problems included physical siting, streetscape, historical and architectural significance, vitality, outreach to the community and other populations, relationship to adjacent buildings, signage, associated amenities, open space and condition. In order to manage the discussion of these problems, the team identified links between the institutions according to the following parameters:

- visual links, such as open space
- need for change, such as reuse or growth
- potential for cooperation, such as institutional partners in shared space or programs
- building typology, such as churches and other religious buildings.

In delineating these four principle issues, each team member has applied one of the subjects above to their study in a discussion that cites case studies and draws upon the institutions in their study area. Model examples on the avenue have been referenced. Troubled institutions have been identified and discussed and recommendations for their survival, preservation and improvement by way of preservation-oriented tactics have been applied.

Subject A: Large Institutions with Open Spaces: Paul Kapp

Subject B: Churches: Joan Brierton

Subject C: Sarah Korjeff : Candidates for Growth and Reused Structures and Reused Structures:

Subject D: Cassie Myers: Partnerships for Institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Preservation Management of Large Institutions with Open Space

There are several institutions in the Germantown Avenue study zone that incorporate large expanses of open greenspace which reflect the nineteenth century land planners' and landscape architects' ideas and visions of the institution placed in a pastoral park setting. These settings reflect the idea of the institution as an entity of its own which was more attuned with nature and less affiliated with the city. Due to the amount of land in which these institutions used to attain this kind of setting, the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century idea that Germantown Avenue was a link between the urban center of Philadelphia and the rural landscape surrounding the city was further reinforced.

These open spaces within these institutions are important today for several reasons. For instance, these spaces add a soft, natural quality of the natural environment that breaks up the hard, static street wall of the commercial and residential areas that can be found on Germantown Avenue in the three neighborhoods, Germantown, Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill. Furthermore, these spaces add parklike gathering place that can be enjoyed not only by the institution itself but also by the residents surrounding it, thus encouraging interaction between the people that live in the three communities and the institutions themselves. Lastly, these institutional open spaces play a vital part in the character and identity of Germantown Avenue.

In this study we have examined the following institutions which we believe embrace these characteristics: Chestnut Hill College, Chestnut Hill Hospital, Spring Garden College and Germantown Home. We have examined the problems that have threatened these institutional open spaces and have examined the strengths that these particular open spaces have for the institutions in which they belong to. We have selected a couple of institutions as examples which point out the problems facing openspace preservation management and we have also selected a couple of institutions which we see as models for good openspace preservation management. Through our observations and our coordination with the group addressing openspace management in the study area, we have drafted

up a few recommendations that may help preserve the institutional open spaces on Germantown Avenue.

There are several problems that are facing these open spaces that reflect the condition of the institution. As we observed at Chestnut Hill Hospital, expansion can greatly influence the open space. The most obvious way it can influence the openspace is by making it smaller as the institution's footprint grows larger as it expands outward. Moreover, the nature of the expansion is another component to consider as the openspace is compromised by a hodgepodge of additions that have very little relationship to the existing or original building. Furthermore, the issue of automobile parking becomes a key problem as institutions struggle to conform their nineteenth century institutional sites to the twentieth century problem of individual transportation. All of these openspace problems have manifested themselves at Chestnut Hill Hospital whose original character has been compromised by the everchanging technology of medicine, economic prosperity, and poor design considerations on the site. But what about an institution that is not prospering as well as Chestnut Hill Hospital? What are the problems that could be facing the preservation of an ailing institution's open space?

We have seen in the case of Spring Garden College the problems that would arise in the collapse of an institution and its affect on the openspace. Budget cuts in physical plant management can cause the open space to lose some of its essential character as trees and shrubbery become overgrown. But what would be particularly alarming would be the selling of openspace to private investors interested in the undesirable development of the openspace in a profitable venture. These are the main problems we have addressed in our recommendations of how to preserve institutional openspace on Germantown Avenue.

We believe that there is no one solution for this problem but a series of solutions that use economic incentives, governmental regulation and institutional cooperation which are focused on the preservation of institutional openspace. We first recommend that all institutions that have not been designated on the

National Register or by the City be done as soon as possible. In institutions that are having fiscal problems maintaining their site, we recommend mix-usage of the site with the private sector which would bring added financial support to the institution and qualify for Federal Tax Credits.

In terms of regulation we urge that viewsheds be designated such as the openspace that encompasses the Morris Arboretum and Chestnut Hill College by the Historic Commission or the protection of the same area through land-use easements or Wetlands Protection. We agree with the Openspace group that the zoning of these openspaces should be placed in the recreational category of the overall Philadelphia Master Plan.

We also recommend that cooperation and partnership should be encouraged between adjacent institutions that may share similar problems or have a vital interest in the well- being of their fellow institutions and their openspace. In regard to the maintenance and budgetary problems in which most institutions are facing, we recommend the formation of joint organization that could qualify for revolving loan programs that are managed by financial establishments or charitable foundations. We believe that smart and resourceful land management can be obtained by the formation of joint authorities of institution.

Finally, we recommend that each of these institutions adapt a set of design guidelines which reflect and preserve the essential quality of their site. We have used Chestnut Hill College as good example of openspace preservation management through their use of design attitude that prohibit the expansion of their college into their viewshed. Moreover, we feel that expansion should be limited in terms of footprint, thus encouraging institutions such as Chestnut Hill Hospital to expand up instead of out. Finally, we recommend that all expansion should pay considerable consideration to the character and essence to the context around them.

Candidates for Growth

An institutions' tendency toward growth is a major concern when addressing its impact on the surrounding community. The physical manifestation of an institution's expansion can change the character of the institution itself and of the entire neighborhood. Preservation planners concerned with maintaining the integrity of older institutional structures and the continued readability of their surrounding historic context have some opportunities for intervention, but other programs directed more specifically at this study area are necessary.

Expansion of many institutions along Germantown Avenue is plainly visible, typically in the form of new structures or additions to existing buildings. Examples include Germantown High School, Germantown Home, the Mt. Airy Public Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, and the Chestnut Hill Library. Institutional growth can also be seen through the demolition of neighboring structures to make way for new parking and physical facilities. Germantown Friends School and Chestnut Hill Hospital are most at odds with their surrounding communities because of such manifestations. The need for many institutions to expand is obvious, but because of their proximity to residential neighborhoods and their integral role in the community, institutional growth should be monitored more closely. Unsympathetic expansion of historic institutions lessens their value as a cultural resource, and irresponsible expansion of both modern and historic institutions may jeopardize the coherence of the neighborhood.

The most obvious tool preservationists could use to regulate institutional growth is historic designation. Though somewhat limited in its benefits, National Register district nomination would provide a review process if a contributing institution's expansion was federally funded or if it impacted other nationally registered properties. City certification of historic institutional structures provides several other opportunities. Creation of a Local Historic District would require any structural changes be reviewed by the Philadelphia's Historic Architectural Review Board, thus providing preservationists an opportunity to voice their concerns. City certification of particular buildings places a similar control on

structural changes, which are reviewed by Philadelphia's Historic Preservation Commission.

Another important element in controlling expansion is the formation of neighborhood coalitions which monitor building and variance permits and organize to dispute them if they would result in a negative impact on their community. The general education of residents about their ability to influence the permitting process is essential, and could be accomplished by existing community or preservation groups in the study area.

Creation of standard design guidelines regarding institutional expansion would be beneficial during the review processes mentioned above and, perhaps more importantly, as a reference for the town planning board during its review of building permits. These guidelines could include limitations on structural growth near the institution's boundaries, required maintenance of specific historic facades, and regulations regarding the material, scale, and form of new construction. Additions to the Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Mount Airy Public Library are relatively good examples of considerate new construction. Chestnut Hill Hospital and Germantown Home expansions are not so sympathetic. Guidelines might also include a mandatory study of nearby abandoned structures as potential sites for expansion, providing an alternative to new construction. Institutional growth, whenever possible, should be directed toward existing unused buildings and the community benefit achieved through re-establishing vitality in vacant structures.

The zoning code's Institutional Development District (IDD) is a strong tool for growth regulation, but its scope is limited. The IDD applies only to institutions with at least three contiguous acres of property and a large proportion of open space. City support for long-term development plans, required in the IDD, should not be limited to institutions with large boundaries. Similar programs could be developed to encourage smaller institutions to plan their future, though perhaps looking at a shorter time range. Unfortunately, the IDD is a completely voluntary process, encouraged only by the promise of an easy permitting process, provided the institution's growth follows its written development plan. The IDD could benefit from some sort of economic incentive in addition to its regulatory one, perhaps directing foundation monies to those institutions which are willing to create a long-range plan which incorporates a

preservation philosophy. Spring Garden College, a good candidate for an Institutional Development District but one which has passed up the opportunity, might be enticed to develop a plan if financial assistance to their ailing institution were included.

Reused Structures

Institutions must change as society and neighborhoods change. While some institutions remain active, others die out or move to new locations. New institutions enter the area and may choose not to build a new structure, but instead to adapt a vacant existing structure for their use. In an effort to maintain the physical resources of these institutions at times when the institutional entity itself is no longer viable, we must encourage continued use of the structures through adaptive reuse.

Reused structures within the institutional realm may be divided into three category types. The first concerns institutional buildings which house institutions other than those for which they were constructed. Spring Garden College is an example of this, since the property was originally used by the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. The School for the Deaf is another example, having adapted a group of smaller historic institutional buildings in Germantown to its current needs. Mizpah, a Seventh Day Adventist Church on the Avenue in lower Germantown, is reusing an old school building.

The second category type encompasses non-institutional historic buildings which have been reused as institutions. Off of Germantown Avenue, where there are many large residences difficult to maintain as homes, numerous examples of residential conversion for institutional use can be found. On the Avenue itself, there is a greater variety of reuse. Doctors offices for Chestnut Hill Hospital have adapted large residential structures, Project Learn: A School Community has utilized an historic rowhouse in Mt. Airy, The Germantown Montessori School has moved into an historic duplex, and the Hebron Tabernacle has converted a commercial storefront for its use.

The third type concerns vacant structures which have the potential for reuse by institutions. This includes both vacant institutional and non-institutional structures. Noted examples within the study area are the Germantown YWCA and several abandoned historic residences along the Avenue. Taylor Radiology and several other medical offices which may be viewed as an institution have recently adapted a previously abandoned structure, presumably apartments, at 6620 Germantown Avenue. Their

presence, and that of the above-mentioned Hebron Tabernacle, has already begun to encourage restoration of other structures on the block.

In all three of these institutional reuse types, economic incentives would be important in encouraging continued use. Creation of an "Institutional Support Zone," with the purpose of facilitating institutional movement through financial support and advisory assistance, could provide the necessary impetus, especially in areas of heavy abandonment and limited vitality. Financial assistance could take the form of saleable tax credits for non-profit institutions, allowing them to benefit from an equivalent of the credits which would be available to any profit-making owner. Another economic incentive could be provided through Foundation support monies directed toward the adaptive reuse of structures for institutional use. Either revolving loan funds or seed grants would help to discourage the construction of new buildings in areas where vacant structures exist. As specified in the Philadelphia Ordinance, the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Commission has the ability to suggest to the Mayor and City Council where grants, gifts and budgetary appropriations should be directed. Institutions should be defined as important recipients of these monies because of their importance in maintaining surrounding property values and commercial viability. Of course, to qualify for either tax credits or the support of the Historical Commission, the structures in question must be designated on the National Register or City certified.

Design guidelines are also a necessary element of any plan which encourages reuse of historic structures. Especially when dealing with a potential use for an abandoned building which would otherwise remain vacant and deteriorate, these guidelines must be flexible. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation should be used as a basis, but flexibility can be encouraged in several sections without seriously compromising preservation principles. Specifically, flexibility can be suggested in Section one: "Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use of a property which requires minimal alteration of the building . . . or to use a property for its originally intended purpose," Section six: "Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in

composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities," and Section ten: "Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired."

Partnerships for Institutions

By means of physical examination of the study area, the occurrence of clusters of institutional buildings is readily discernable. Adjacent but separate institutional buildings appear frequently on and nearby the urban thread of Germantown Avenue. This physical proximity inspires discussion of shared resources and energies aimed at preserving both the historic property and embracing the community needs. The following discussion addresses partnerships for institutions, a proposal for the shared use of services, facilities, programs, physical space and the joint effort in seeking and qualifying for economic support.

As a means for considering the subject, three areas will be discussed as follows:

1. Germantown High School Area: Five institutions exist between Germantown Avenue and Baynton Street and between High and Haines Streets. They include two public schools, namely, Fulton Public School on Haines Street, Germantown High School, and three churches, the Janes Memorial United Methodist Church, and its attached Janes Memorial Educational Daycare Center and Senior Citizens Community Program Inc. on Haines Street, the Providence Baptist Church, also on Haines Street, and the ... Church on Germantown Avenue.
2. Vernon Park is the site for two institutions, Center in the Park, a Senior Citizen's Center, and Vernon House, an historic house used for offices, including offices of professionals associated with the Center in the Park. The park is near other institutional buildings which are located on the park's perimeters, notably, a Baptist Church, an Apostolic Church, the YWCA and the YMCA together which represent an enclave of some six institutional buildings.
3. Chestnut Hill Hospital is similarly in close proximity to other institutions, notably, the Catholic Church, Chestnut Hill branch of the Free Library, the former PSFS building (now vacant), and St. Paul's Episcopal Church, located on the north side of Germantown Avenue between Paper Mill Road and Bell's Mill Road in Chestnut Hill.

Relevant to a discussion of partnerships, the following considerations and concerns are common to each of these areas: 1. parking 2. use of open space 3. redundant facilities 4. community obligations/services 5. physical boundaries 6. safety and 7. economic needs.

1. Parking is important for the convenient use of the institutions, particularly for hospitals, nursing facilities, senior centers and daycare centers and, generally, for out-of town populations.

However, parking lots affords for little alternative use. An effective preservation plan on Germantown Avenue addresses the need for limited parking and recommends improved public transportation, either in the facilities, schedules or routes. Partnerships for institutions recommends shared parking lots by consolidation of redundant parking spaces. It further recommends the use of nearby vacant property to be used for parking lots *in lieu* of dominating the surrounding area of the institution.

2. As discussed above, the open space associated with many institutions is an important component of its physical entity. Churchyards, open college grounds, green space around hospitals and school playgrounds are essential characteristics and amenities to institutional buildings. Partnerships for institutions encourages the use of open space between institutions and by the community. It invites landscape architecture to combine and enhance these open spaces that increases community activity, thereby deterring crime, encourages the community to see the institution as a center of activity, and to blend some of the physical boundaries that separate (and alienate) institutions.

3. Redundant facilities use valuable space. In some cases, it is appropriate to share facilities, such as libraries, special health facilities, athletic facilities and open spaces for economy as well as in an effort to preserve historic buildings, discourage new building and encourage community interaction. Preservation planning may participate in facilitating partnerships through adaptive use of redundant spaces by guiding the design and proposing physical means for associating the institutions.

4. As community anchors, institutions are, in part, defined by their outreach. Since institutional interaction with its immediate community varies with institution, a preservation plan looks to distinguish such institutions and to encourage and cooperate in the integration of community involvement in the building through appropriate preservation oriented measures.

5. Physical boundaries are at times appropriate to institutions. School campuses require boundaries for definition of the extended open space as do nursing centers and other centers of study and retreat. Partnerships for institutions would seek inclusive boundaries to adjacent institutions, where desirable and appropriate, through adjoining pedestrian paths, removal of hostile boundaries, such as cyclone fences, and building additions that responded to the existing institutions.

6. Safety in the study area is of prime significance. An increase in crime and inadequate security has contributed strongly to suburban flight. The loss, even if partial, of the middle and middle-upper

economic contingency of the population is marked by literal and figurative disinvestment both in economics and in morale. The upshot is increased deterioration. Areas armed with community support have fared best. Responding to the theory of "eyes on the street", (Jane Jacobs, *The Life and Death of the Great American City*) applied to the study of institutions aims to encourage activity as a means for improving security. Institutions offer ideal physical spaces for after-hours activity. Partnerships for institutions proposes that institutions share programs such as evening classes, recreational activities, meetings and performances. Security measures necessary to assure participation in evening programs or programs in remotely located buildings include shared transportation such as shuttle busses, security guards and escort services.

By cooperative ventures these concerns may be addressed through preservation plans.

6. Economic needs are common to all institutions. Partnerships for institutions seeks to improve the qualifications of an institutional entity in applying for fellowships and grants and in qualifying for tax credits. National register designation of the institution is a necessary initial step. Through the introduction of a profit-making presence associated with the institution, possible tax credits for rehabilitation are introduced where tax credits (106 review) for non-profit institutions would otherwise be irrelevant. Partnerships with commercial sector are a viable alternative as well. Investors buy the property, rehabilitate it and assume the benefit from the tax credit. They then lease the institution back to the original owner. Institutions might also raise funds through their patronage, the community, preservationists, and other interested groups by local fundraising activities. Finally, institutions must might seek funds from grants and private foundations, a process that requires creativity and the adoption of programs and other alterations to meet the granting agencies' missions. Partnerships for institutions acts as a consultant for fundraising. It provides direction, advise, assistance in grant writing, etc.

Case Study A : Description

The Germantown High School area is rich in the concentration of institutions as noted above. However, the buildings' relationship to each other are marked for their disparity. Crouching under the shadow of the 1960's high school, two historic Gothic style masonry churches (nationally registered) remain separated from the school by defined property lines, disparate architecture, contrasting maintenance (the churches are pristine while the school is graffiti-tied, poorly maintained and surrounded by trash). Moreover, a bent and dysfunctional cyclone fence surrounds the high school in a lame gesture of security that reads more clearly as hostility. Behind and adjacent to the high school on Haines Street, Fulton Public School is a significant architectural structure of the

art deco period. However, like the modern school, it is graffitied, dirty, surrounded by trash and hostily surrounded with cyclone fences. Moreover, the asphalt playground contains destroyed outdoor play equipment and a derelict small outbuilding with broken windows and graffiti. In keeping with the physical deterioration of the small building, it stands as an obvious invitation for equivalent derelict activities. The high school dominates the blocks. It spans the streetfront block of Germantown Avenue with a yawning unused and untended yard and then appears rudely at unexpected intervals among the older buildings. The grounds are mostly paved and fenced (cyclone fencing again). Graffiti is pervasive.

Baynton Street parallels Germantown Avenue and borders the rear side of these buildings. Middle class relatively non-distinctive residential properties are located in the neighborhood behind Baynton Street. Possible candidates for parking lots might exist in these blocks.

Because of the need for the high school to exist (and probably to grow) and the difficulty in justifying its partial or complete demolition, the building must be integrated and its presence enhanced through measures that embrace the entire blocks.

It is recommended that sidewalks and other footpaths link the school to the street and the school to the Fulton Public School in a way that creates attractive open spaces including sitting spaces. By means of landscaping and maintenance, the front grounds would be more attractive, providing seating and a more gentle transition between the inside and outside. The playground of Fulton Public School presents a difficult but manageable problem of neglect. By means of the integration of walkways, landscaping and removal of all cyclone fences, the grounds would alleviate the building's derelict and stark appearance. It is further recommended that the playground equipment be replaced with sturdy toys. The small outbuilding should be rehabilitated into a satellite classroom for a desirable activity, such as art class. If it cannot be used, it should be demolished as it is a negative presence and is subject to vandalism.

It is recommended that joint maintenance programs be established to periodically remove graffiti and to maintain and replenish grounds for all of the institutions.

It is also recommended that a series of community programs be established and held in the auditoria of the institutions including the church basements, as follows:

1. evening class and lecture series on community interests ie: "Crime and Drugs in Germantown," Small Business Start-up Classes; career development classes, etc.
2. shared athletic programs. ie: community sports teams (basketball); gymnastics; dance classes; yoga, etc.

3. Meetings. ie: self-help groups, community meetings, etc.
4. Community dinners: pot-luck at the local churches ; "neighbors gatherings"
5. Performances. ie: music, children's performances, small dramatic productions

Case Study B: Vernon Park

Vernon Park is well on its way towards a positive preservation plan and path of revitalization. Bordered by some five institutions, it is geographically the center of a great deal of community activity. Those institutions include the YWCA, YMCA, three churches, Center in the Park, a senior center with an extensive senior program, and Vernon House. A grass-roots advocacy group called Friends of Vernon of Park organizes programs that involve the nearby institutions. They organize musical performances, Christmas programs and other activities. They also organize clean-up and maintenance days directed at cleaning the grounds and maintaining the park furniture , encourage the use of the ball park area and direct fundraising to preserve the park and its nearby buildings. The group further aims to improve the use of the park (provide incentives for positive community use) and encourage it to be a community gathering place by existing and special programs. To this end, they have proposed for additional lighting and worked to prepare an apartment in Vernon House to provide a constant presence in the park. They have applied for government and private funding, sought financial support from the local businesses and continue to seek support from the community.

In addition to programs, it is recommended that the local advocacy groups more assertively make themselves known. Furthermore, it is recommended that a plan looking at other important nearby buildings be examined and reviewed as part of a larger cityscape. It is recommended that a professional firm or individual be contracted to seek out and apply for grant assistance, such as CDBG grants or foundation grants, to be able to implement some of the ideas already discussed.

Case Study C: Chestnut Hill Cluster :PSFS/ Hospital/ Library/Church/ Historical Society

The cluster of institutions in upper Chestnut Hill offer a good example of the treatment of adjacent institutions . Responding to the townscape in scale, street setting, signage and the integration in the landscape, the institutions of Chestnut Hill Hospital, the Free Library branch, St. Paul's Episcopal Church , the Catholic Church and the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, are physically well integrated and sympathetic to each other and the environment. The former PSFS building beside the Free Library, in a prime location for an institutional building again.

Parking behind the churches and in the lot for the office buildings also behind the hospital could be used for hospital parking overflow. Otherwise, it is recommended that the institutions share and coordinate programs and services in as much as it would be beneficial to the community.

"We are all very sensitive to our surroundings. Great buildings dominate and influence the lives of all who live near them. A church... should be a monument in which the affection and aspiration of many generations.... are centered."¹

One of the more unique institutional buildings displayed throughout the study area is the church. Along Germantown Avenue, and around the nation, places of worship stand as physical symbols of diverse cultures and religions. An evaluation of religious institutions within the boundaries of our project area exemplified this diversity, identifying the many different denominations present in the community and the variety of structures in which they are housed. Religious properties range in scale from the large, conventional church, originally designed as a place of worship, to the small, storefront church recently incorporated within a commercial or residential structure. Though varying in size and prominence along the Avenue, religious institutions remain as symbols of stability despite other disquieting neighborhood changes.

A preservation plan for institutional buildings must take into consideration that the church is not only a physical entity, but an establishment that extends its ministry beyond the building itself, reaching out to the community through a variety of service programs. Therefore, as the needs of the community change so must the institution. Often, such transformation calls for the expansion of the religious structure to accommodate a greater number of individuals and services - the most common of which is the establishment of day-care centers or elderly care facilities within the church itself. To an even greater extreme, a congregation may experience a serious decline in members, resulting in the collapse or relocation of an entire religious group. In this instance then, the church is abandoned and all too often slighted for demolition. A preservation plan seeks to manage such transformation, introducing and directing change in a manner that will preserve the historic integrity of the structure.

One of the greatest stumbling blocks to the preservation of religious institutions is the lack of adaptability of such structures. These buildings are large, complex, ornamental structures designed specifically as places for worship. Their polychromatic interiors, stained glass windows, and vaulted ceilings that extend several stories, are just a few of the historic architectural/design elements that place limitations on alternative use. These factors leave church leaders and community groups to question the rationale of continuing to invest in their historic religious property. These individuals do not possess the skills, knowledge and/or financial means to approach such "white elephants", as they have often been regarded. Therefore, maintenance is deferred indefinitely and the building is left to deteriorate.

¹ Kennedy, Roger American Churches, - as excerpted from INSPIRED a quarterly publication devoted to the preservation of historic religious buildings. Produced through the Historic Religious Properties Program, PHPC, Philadelphia, PA, p.4.

Fortunately, for the religious community, strong support organizations have been formed to address these critical issues. The Historic Religious Properties Program (HRPP), a subsidiary of the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation (PHPC), is a five-year old program that assists the religious community in effectively managing and repairing its buildings. It offers a wide range of services and grants which can be used for:

- Architectural and engineering services to assess and prioritize building repair problems.
- Fund-raising consultation to carry out capital campaigns for building improvements.
- Assistance to bring about the full and active use of under-utilized spaces within church complexes, by matching congregations with community or cultural groups that can use these spaces.
- Professional consultation in areas such as energy conservation, property insurance, contractor selection, building security, tenant management and space planning.²

Program assistance is available to those churches and synagogues with significant architectural and historical value. Though the majority of religious institutions involved in the program thus far have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this is not a requirement. Assistance and grants are most often distributed to religious property owners that demonstrate a commitment to managing their buildings. Financial need and severity of the problem threatening the structure are also factors used to determine eligibility. The HRPP is also inclined to assist those congregations that seek to share their space with the broader community.

The following is a list of organizations, within our study area, that have received assistance through the Historic Religious Properties Program.

St. Michael's Church - Germantown Avenue and Phil-Ellena Street

The HRPP provided a technical assistance grant to the parish. Martin J. Rosenblum, Preservation Architect, assessed the building and prepared a conditions report and repair plan. The most immediate threat to the building was its failing slate roof. A complete repointing of the structure was also suggested. The slate roof is currently being replaced with new slate.

Due to a cut in federal and state aid the church will soon be forced to cancel its elderly and child care programs. The Religious Properties group is now looking for new tenants to occupy available space once these programs are shut down. The new tenant would pay rent for the space, generating income for the church.

St. Peter's Church - Mount Airy

St. Peter's has a rectory that was designed by Frank Furness which now serves as a housing facility for the elderly. Approximately six tenants reside in the home. A grant through the HRPP paid for the building assessment.

Calvary Episcopal - lower Germantown

The program is working with the congregation and planning to provide technical and financial assistance. Extent of assistance to be determined by need.

² Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation, *The Historic Religious Properties Program*, a brochure which outlines the significant features of the program. Produced and distributed by PHPC.

Germantown Community United Presbyterian - Tulpehocken and Greene Streets
Recommended consultants to prepare a conditions report and repair plan.

Grace Episcopal Church - Ardley and Galant

Provided two grants - one for a building condition survey and another for an asbestos appraisal. Asbestos has since been removed.

First Unitarian Church of Germantown

HRPP was approached by the religious community to find new tenants for building as they were vacating premises. The Germantown Friends School quickly purchased the property, which is adjacent to their property, and has transformed the space into a performing arts center.

This list identifies only six of the over one-hundred religious facilities that have received assistance through the Historic Religious Properties Program. Another organization dedicated to the preservation of America's religious properties is Partners for Sacred Places. Partners provides the following services to individuals responsible for the care of the nation's historic churches and synagogues:

- An Information Clearinghouse that answers questions by phone or mail.
- Publications which provide comprehensive guidance on critical issues.
- Consulting services to develop new assistance programs.
- Sponsorship of the annual Sacred Trusts Conference which provides state-of-the-art information on issues ranging from property management to building maintenance.
- An Advocacy and Outreach Program to introduce religious property care and management issues to local clergy, laypeople, preservationists and civic leaders

When speaking with Randy Cotton, Director of the HRPP, it was interesting to learn that there are other programs throughout the nation that seek to preserve a particular building type. The National Trust for Historic Preservation oversees the BARN AGAIN project, and the National Lighthouse preservation program. The Theater Historical Society, based in New Jersey, provides advice to those individuals interested in restoring historic theaters. In addition, Mr. Bob Jaeger, Director of Partners for Sacred Places, acknowledged that an independent developer has recently adapted several old, abandoned parochial schools throughout the nation. These adaptive re-use projects were achieved utilizing the low-income and historic preservation tax credits - a combined incentive program.

Based on the success of the above-mentioned programs, it is our suggestion that a support organization be formed to address the needs of institutional buildings as a whole. The program would address many of the same criteria attended by the Historic Religious Properties Program and Partners for Sacred Places. This effort must be expanded beyond the religious institution to include schools, government buildings, public buildings - such as banks, libraries, museums, etc. . . . and health-related facilities. It is through this recommendation, as incorporated within a preservation plan, that we can make our greatest attempt at preserving our institutional heritage.

The survival of the religious institution is critical to the stability of the neighborhood. The church is viewed as a reassuring presence within a community, as its grand spaces inspire and stimulate people in living better lives.³ It is the responsibility of the parish, the surrounding community, and professional support organizations to seek out alternatives sensitive to the historic fabric. Additions to architecturally significant religious buildings must complement and respect the original design intent as well as its structural configuration. In order to raise the financial funds necessary to maintain an historic religious property, the congregation must consider various profit-making ventures and mixed-use alternatives. As mentioned earlier day-care programs for children and the elderly has been a successful venture for many parishes.

STOREFRONT CHURCHES

The storefront church, though considered a religious institution, is an entity that must be given careful and separate consideration. Storefront churches are visible along the Avenue throughout the Germantown and Mount Airy neighborhoods. They are indicators of change, marking the integration of new cultures and religions throughout the community. Despite the fact that they are not grand buildings occupying large lots, storefront churches are sited in prominent locations throughout the Avenue. They are most often housed in small commercial or residential structures, that would otherwise go unnoticed were it not for the protruding, back-lit, signs that announce their presence. In recognition of the fact that these signs stand as visual symbols to these congregations, our recommendations do not suggest their removal, but do seek to place guidelines on their size and placement along the exterior of an historic building.

In addition, storefront churches will be required to comply with design guidelines similar in nature to those placed upon conventional churches. These guidelines seek to prevent insensitive alteration along the Avenue, while preserving and enhancing the character of this historic streetscape.

³ Kennedy, Roger. American Churches. - as excerpted from INSPIRED, a quarterly publication produced and distributed by the Historic Religious Properties Program, PHPC, Philadelphia, PA >

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

The Germantown Avenue Study Area contains a surprisingly broad mixture of institutional types. It is these largely historic institutions themselves, and their relation to the surrounding community, which are important to preserve. The range of institutions here conveys a sense of Germantown Avenue's development over the past two centuries, and of the continuing changes in the area. For these reasons, and for their potentially strong positive impact on local neighborhoods, institutions need to be encouraged on and around Germantown Avenue. The outreach services they provide, the visual statements they make, and the vitality they encourage are all essential to the future of Germantown, Mt. Airy, and Chestnut Hill.

Past plans for the regions encompassing Germantown Avenue have generally not focused on the potential of their institutions, but have made some recognition of their impact. The Central Germantown Plan of 1966 acknowledged the need for institutional expansion and the importance of allowing such growth to retain the institution in the community. The Wister Neighborhood Plan of 1978 lists the area institutions but does not mention their importance or potential. Very few specific recommendations were made toward encouraging or monitoring institutional development. The Chestnut Hill Plan of 1989 aims to keep institutional development from interfering with the quality of residential life by controlling their secondary development. The Chestnut Hill Community Association is working to create institutional development plans in the area. The East/West Mt. Airy Neighborhood Conservation Plan of 1977 voiced concern over increases in parking and city service demands associated with the conversion of large residences to institutional use. This plan advocated monitoring variance applications to prevent a concentration of institutions which might substantially alter the character of West Mt. Airy.

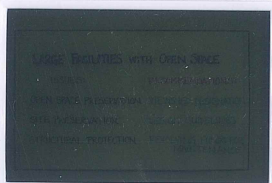
It is clear that more specific recommendations could be reached if this study were continued for a longer period of time. Though we have learned much about the study area, occasional stumbles across important information continue to show us that it is difficult to collect all of the

relevant material when you are not a resident familiar with the area you study. In the future, more attention should be paid to local newspapers, which may contain information on small citizen's groups and events that are not visible during a windshield or walking survey. Also, more time to gather general histories of the various institutions would have provided the team with a better understanding of their development along the Avenue. Knowledge of historic development patterns might help to illuminate current trends in institutional change.

The team's recommendations can be summarized into five main categories. The first regards historic certification and designation, the logical starting point for any preservation plan. Designation then clears the way for the imposition of design guidelines, both for new construction and development of open space. Support organizations and the creation of Institutional Support Zones could capitalize on tax incentives, foundation monies, and other economic incentives available to historically certified structures, helping to perpetuate the positive impact of institutions in the study area. Finally, encouragement of institutional partnerships will benefit ailing institutions and lessen the negative impacts that expanding ones can have on the surrounding community. The use of existing preservation tools, together with the creation of new ones which provide greater incentives for cooperation with preservation ideals, can support the continually important role which institutions play along Germantown Avenue.



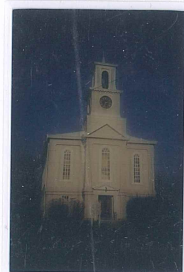
CH. Hosp. X



16/21



Stapely Nursing Ctr.
16/24 @ Greene + Johnson



CH

CHESTNUT HILL
COLLEGE



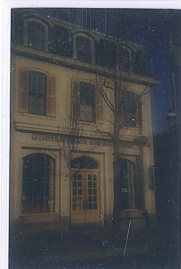
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VIEW SHED
CHESTNUT HILL COL



X

intro?



16/28 Mt. Airy Center
6700 gumantown
Ave.



16/27 Lutheran
Seminary
Additions



16/26 Lutheran
Seminary

intro. Wayne + Bristol



Ed. T. Steel ~~High~~ School
16/25 Public

Moorewood Academy



X

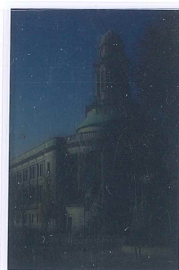


16/22 Spring Garden
College



16/21 Spring garden
College

11/191
intro?



Mayors Action Ctr.



Faith Christian Assembly
Canton & Ashmead



Germantown
Montessori
School + Nursery
6767 Germantown Ave.



12/91



Chestnut
Hill College



12/91



PA School for the
Deaf



12/91



Germantown
Home



Germantown
Home
6950 Germantown Ave.



Hebron Tabernacle
6639 Germantown Ave.



Project Learn: A School
of Community
6525 Germantown Ave.



12/91



12/91 GFS



6/01



Vacant bldg @
Phil-Ellena and
Germantown Ave.



12/91

Church of the Holy Spirit



Parking area for
GFS



15/21 Chestnut Hill
former PSES
Public Library



15/21 Chestnut Hill Park
from Catholic Church
parking lot.



19/91 intro?
YMCA



15/21 Fulton Public School



15/21 Germantown H.S.



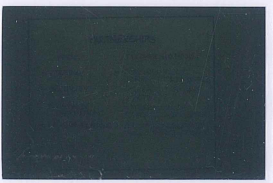
15/21 Church of G'ton H.S.



15/21 Germantown H.S. area.
Church Park



15/21 Fulton Public School



15/21 EPISCOPAL



15/21 New Inspirational
Baptist Church
G'ton & Uber



15/21 APOSTOLIC CHURCH



15/21 Fulton Christian
Assembly
Adams & G'ton Ave



15/21 Second Baptist Church
W. of Germantown
G'ton Ave + Upsal

15/21 HIGH STREET - GOTHIC
MEMORIAL PARK
BURRY CRT



15/21 THE T. NICHOLS
MEMORIAL BLDG
1976



15/21 VACANT Church at
Wister + Wakefield,
Germantown



15/21 St. Michael's
Lutheran Church
G'ton Ave + Phil-Ellena



15/21 Victor Community
Baptist Church



15/21 Universal Missionary
Baptist Church



15/21