

Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee (“Committee”)
Society Hill Civic Association

Chairperson. The Chairperson of the Committee is Paul Boni. The Chairperson was recommended by the President of the Society Hill Civic Association (“SHCA”) and was approved by the majority vote of the SHCA Board in 2024. The Chairperson shall serve until the Chairperson resigns or is removed. Upon the resignation or removal of the Chairperson, a new Chairperson shall be selected upon the recommendation of the SHCA President, subject to the majority approval of the SHCA Board.

Members. The Committee has the following eleven (11) members: Paul Boni, Esquire (Chair); Rick Herskovitz P.E.; Lorna Katz Lawson AIA; Judy Neiswander; Robert Kramer, Esquire; Norm Lieberman; Rosanne Loesch, Esquire; Joseph McLaughlin; Jules Pepitone¹; Larry Spector, Esquire; and Mary Tracy. (Note that our current membership includes Robert Kramer, the current President of the SHCA.)

Purpose. The Committee reviews applications seeking zoning relief at the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment (“ZBA”) and provides a recommendation to the ZBA. The review includes, but is not limited to, hosting a community meeting to which near neighbors are invited. The Committee also strives to review applications seeking Philadelphia Historical Commission approvals, with such review also involving a community meeting (to which near neighbors are invited), if possible. We sometimes try to negotiate for better design, materials, etc. Indicating support is a simple matter. Indicating opposition can include presenting our own testimony and documents to the agency. Involving outside professionals is sometimes helpful, with the support of the SHCA Board.

The committee reports to the Board monthly. The SHCA is a registered community organization (“RCO”) with the Philadelphia Planning Commission. The Committee is responsible for complying with the obligations that being an RCO entails.

In accordance with the SHCA Bylaws, Section VII(D)(3) the Committee may not take action without SHCA Board approval respect (1) to matters which would reasonably be foreseen to be of significant interest to the Association, or (2) to matters which would foreseeably require the expenditure of Association funds in excess of \$500 (or, with the prior approval of the President, in excess of \$1,000). In such circumstances, there must be a recommendation to the Board, and the Board may approve or reject or take such other action as it deems appropriate. The Board retains its right to review any decision taken by the Committee.

Addition of Committee Members. The number of members of the Committee shall be capped at eleven (11) members, but may be fewer from time to time. Individuals may be added as members to the Committee, by the motion of the Chairperson to the Committee and the approval of the motion by two-thirds of the Committee members. To be considered for membership an individual must have a demonstrated interest and experience in

¹ Jules Pepitone is expected to be voted in at the next Committee meeting (i.e., June or July 2025).

matters related to zoning or historic preservation, and a commitment to being a good steward for the history and physical character of Society Hill.

Removal.

Chairperson. The Chairperson of the Committee may be removed as Chairperson and as a member of the Committee on the recommendation of the President of the SHCA or upon the Motion of at least five Directors of the SHCA, provided the Board of Directors approves of the removal by a majority vote.

Member of Committee. A member of the Committee may be removed by (a) the Chairperson of the Committee, subject to the approval of a majority vote of the Committee or (b) the President of the SHCA, subject to the approval of a majority vote of the SHCA Board. Any committee member who has not attended 3 regular Committee meetings during the past six-month period will be removed as a Committee member, unless the Committee by majority vote waives the attendance requirement for the member.

Committee Rules. SHCA Bylaw Article VII D. (2) provides that the Chair of a Committee shall have the discretion to maintain orderly proceedings.

A Committee meeting may be called by the Committee Chair, President of the SHCA or five or more Committee Members acting together. A call for a meeting shall be sent to all Committee Members by email and shall state the purpose of the meeting, the place and time of the meeting. The date of any meeting shall be at least seven days after the notice of the meeting is emailed to all Committee Members. The time and place of meetings shall be posted on the SHCA website.

An agenda for all Meetings shall be circulated at least seven days prior to the Meeting date. The agenda shall be prepared by the Chairperson or the members who called the meeting. Members of the SHCA may attend all Committee meetings, except where the Chairperson has called for a meeting to be in “executive session” in the case of the meeting involving sensitive subject matters. All deliberations of the Committee shall be held in executive session.

Minutes of the Meeting shall be prepared by the Secretary of the Committee, or the Chair, if there is no Secretary. Minutes of all meetings shall be provided to the SHCA directors.

All Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, but the Committee shall strive to work on consensus

Additional Committee rules:

- a. Regular Membership in the Civic Association is required to be a member of the Committee
- b. New members, or previous members returning to the roster, must attend a minimum of 3 regular monthly meetings before voting on an issue. Members will be eligible to vote at their 4th meeting. The purpose of this is to help prevent people from joining the Committee for a particular project.

- c. All current and new members will be required to familiarize themselves with the basics of the following:
- [“The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties”](#)
 - [“The Philadelphia Code, Chapter 14”](#)
 - [“Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for New Construction in Historic Districts”](#) – a publication of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.
 - [“The District Nomination of the Society Hill Historic District.”](#)
[Society Hill Historic District: Guide for Property Owners.](#)
 - [Nomination of Society Hill to the National Register of Historic Places.](#)
 - [Society Hill Neighborhood Plan.](#)
- d. New members without design expertise will be given an overview about how to read plans, and an introduction to basic architectural, planning, and zoning terminology.
- e. All members, during each year of service on the committee, must strive to attend at least one hearing of the Historical Commission, one session of the Historical Commission’s Architectural Review Committee and one hearing of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Members will advise the Chair of attendance, and a record will be kept as a part of the roster.
- f. Members shall recuse themselves from voting on matters before the committee where there is a conflict of interest.

GENERAL COMMITTEE POLICY

Voting on matters before the committee shall be done in person at the Committee members, or during attendance of an online virtual meeting, or a hybrid virtual meeting.

The Chair will vote on all matters before the committee.

In a matter requiring a recommendation to the Board under Article VII(e) of the Association’s Bylaws where the Chair’s vote does not concur with the majority, a designated member of committee will present such recommendation before the Board, and indicate that the Chair does not concur.

This Charter was approved by the Board of Directors on June 18, 2024.