

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Frederick A. Poth development houses
AND/OR COMMON
3301-11, 15 Powelton Avenue

USE THIS COPY
FOR DUPLICATING

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
3301-11, 15 Powelton Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Philadelphia

STATE
Pennsylvania

VICINITY OF

CODE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

COUNTY
Philadelphia

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

3301 Corporation

STREET & NUMBER

3301 Powelton Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Philadelphia

VICINITY OF

STATE
Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Philadelphia City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

Broad and Market streets

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

STATE
Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In 1890, plans were announced in the Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide for the construction of seven houses on the north side of Powelton Avenue, west of Thirty-third Street in the Powelton Village section of Philadelphia. The houses, designed by Otto Wolf for brewer and real estate developer Frederick A. Poth, were described as being "brick, with brownstone trimmings, in German gothic style, with mansard roof(s), open halls, with separate entrances, hard-wood finish, (and) all modern interiors."

Today, the exterior of the houses, arranged as three doubles and a half double, remain basically unchanged. They are topped with double tiered, shingled, mansard roofs that are broken by elaborately decorated dormers. The dormers of the doubles alternately don pyramidal caps (with secondary pyramid forms terminated with crockets) and haystack-shaped caps. Below, they are bracketed, columned and consoled and rest on balcony-like projections that are bowed for the hard-edged pyramid dormers and faceted for the softer haystack tops. On the sides of the houses at roof level, four dormers, similar to those uses on the facade though less complex, and a paneled brick chimney rise up from a heavy wood cornice. At the rear, each house has a single dormer and a shared chimney.

In the masonry portions of the house, both the complexity and the sense of hierarchy found in the top story are in evidence. A corbelled brick cornice, that assumes three different formations depending on location, sits below the wood roof cornice. On the facade the bricks are arranged into brackets that are terminated with a molded modillion brick course. On the side wall of the end house, along Thirty-third Street, the same bracket form is used though the modillion brick has been eliminated. While on all walls of tertiary visual impact, a more austere continuous cornice is found. A similar zoned treatment typifies the window detailing. On the facade, the second floor openings are heavily framed with brick posts, brownstone lintels and imposts, and boldly carved brownstone voussoirs; molded decorative brick sets off the panels between the frames. On the Thirty-third street wall the framing has been eliminated, while the bold voussoirs remain. And for the remaining walls, a far simpler segmented brick arch supports the load above.

Clearly, the most extravagant exterior detail on the houses are the spidery porches that stretch across the doubles, visually unifying the two units. At their bases, the porches rest on battered brownstone piers, tied together with segmented brownstone arches. Above, turned posts support a superstructure, decorated with knee braces and cusping and infilled with spindle work. A peaked roof is carried overhead. For complexity of pattern, the porches vie only with the iron fences between the doubles.

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that incorporate no less than a dozen different motifs in their composition-- including spirals, spikes, pierced work and snake patterns.

On the interior, the houses were originally arranged as expansive, single family dwellings. A main stair-- expressed on the exterior side wall by a two story, arched window-- was centrally located with a large parlor in front and dining and kitchen areas to the rear. Later the houses were converted into apartments, though much of the interior detailing was retained. Most notable are the handsome, Queen Anne stair newels and balustrades that carry the patterns of the porches inside and the coved cornices in the front rooms which create a softened transition from walls to ceilings.

3 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1890

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Otto Wolf, architect

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The most immediate significance of the Frederick A. Poth development houses is their importance to the streetscape of Powelton Village, a middle-class neighborhood that developed in the second half of the nineteenth century as a quasi-surburban alternative to the bustle of center city. The German gothic doubles are central to a play of architectural styles that was produced by a generation who saw vitality and beauty in the build-up of various forms and surfaces. Together with the Flemish-styled row developed by Henry Gibson and the Queen Anne row developed by Wendell and Smith, to the east, Poth's own German-styled house across the street and the large Romanesque, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival singles to the west, the Poth houses create a milieu that is characteristic both of the late nineteenth century and of the community.

Beyond their significance to the neighborhood, the houses are important to the social and architectural histories of the Philadelphia region. Poth was a German immigrant, who made his fortune in Horatio Alger fashion, after coming to America at mid-century. As one of the founders of the Poth and Engels Brewery, he parlayed the business into one of America's largest breweries of the last century. He also engaged in various real estate development projects including a number in Powelton Village. The houses on the 3300 block of Powelton Avenue were of special importance to him being directly across the street from his own house. They reflect both his taste and, through the German gothic style, his ethnic pride. That he chose to retain control of the properties until his death rather than sell them individually as most developers did, is indicative of his interest in the project. They were not sold by the family, in fact, until 1953.

The architect of the houses also is of considerable interest. Active in the decades before and after the turn of the century, Otto Wolf was Philadelphia's chief brewery architect at a time when local breweries and their outlets abounded throughout the city. Aside from Poth, for whom he also designed a number of outlets, factories and warehouses, Wolf worked for Christian Schmidt and Sons, The Philadelphia Brewing Company and Betz Brewery. Stylistically, Wolf worked in a manner similar to Willis

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Hale, architect to another wealthy German immigrant, P.A.B. Widener. Both tended to work in germanic styles and sought richly decorated surfaces, though Hale's work, for the most part, was more extreme. Wolf's design instead reflected the more controlled taste of clients such as Poth, who found merit in the values of the American middle-class.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide, V:21 (28 May 1890)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. .6 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Philadelphia, Pa.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,8 4,8,3 7,5,0 4,4 2,3 1,6,5

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
The houses are situated on a rectangular lot that has 172 feet of frontage on Powelton Ave., measured from Thirty-third Street, and is 150 feet deep.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Carl E. Doebley, M.A.

ORGANIZATION

Clio Group

DATE

August 1, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

3920 Pine Street

TELEPHONE

215-386-6276

CITY OR TOWN

Philadelphia

STATE

Pennsylvania

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Ed Weintraub 2-1-79

TITLE ED WEINTRAUB, Director
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

Frederick A. Poth Development Houses
Philadelphia Count
Zone 1B E493750 N4423165

