

Queen Village Neighbors Association, Inc.

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Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Attn: Secretary
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

July 6, 2012

To whom it may concern:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposal by the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission to relocate all interior gas meters and pressure regulators to the outside of historic homes in Philadelphia and across Pennsylvania. In particular, our concern is our own neighborhood, Queen Village, a unique community almost entirely composed of historic properties. Although the proposed regulations include some exemptions for historic homes, we fear that a number of properties in our neighborhood would not qualify due to the language used in the proposal.

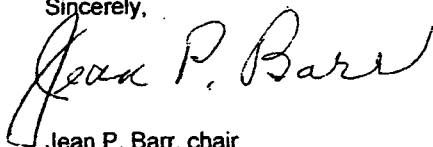
The currently proposed regulations include certain exemptions for individual properties that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places or those that are located within the boundaries of a nationally recognized historic district. A large portion of our neighborhood may qualify for these exemptions by virtue of the Southwark Historic District nomination that was submitted in 1972. However, our neighborhood extends beyond the boundaries described in this nomination, and a number of our historic homes could be considered ineligible for the exceptions. To make matters worse, these individual properties are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and may have no means of protection against the proposed regulations.

However, the properties of concern, along with 900 other historic properties in our neighborhood, are listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Properties with this local designation are considered to be historic resources and alterations to the appearance of the buildings must be approved by the Philadelphia Historic Commission. We would like the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission to take local historic designations such as this into consideration while developing the regulations for this proposal.

Furthermore, we are concerned about the negative impact exterior utility equipment would have upon the historic character and general aesthetic of our neighborhood. In this modern age, surely there must be an alternative solution to enable unfettered access to meter readings that does not involve relocating existing equipment or installing new equipment to street-facing exteriors of our homes.

We applaud the efforts put forth by the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission to improve access to and increase the accuracy of meter readings. However, we do not feel that the current proposal is appropriate for historic row home communities like Queen Village. We are hopeful that the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission will take our concerns into account and keep our community informed and involved as you proceed with this challenging project.

Sincerely,



Jean P. Barr, chair



S. Amy Singh, chair

Historic Preservation Committee

Cc: Councilman Mark Squilla, State Representative Mike O'Brien, State Senator Larry Farnese