

# Manayunk Neighborhood Council, PO Box 4667, Philadelphia, PA 19127

[www.ManayunkCouncil.org](http://www.ManayunkCouncil.org) 215-487-2125



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Philadelphia Historical Commission  
1515 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

July 12, 2024  
**Re: 4045-61 Main Street**

Dear Members of the Historical Commission

At the conclusion of the April 23, 2024 Architectural Committee, the committee concluded ***“The proposed building would be too large in size, scale, and massing for the Main Street Manayunk Historic District and therefore fails to satisfy Standard 9.”***

The superficial modifications in this proposal represent a minimum to even suggest a change but in no way address the profound mismatch in size, scale and massing for the Main Street Historic District.

This is best shown with their own illustrations.

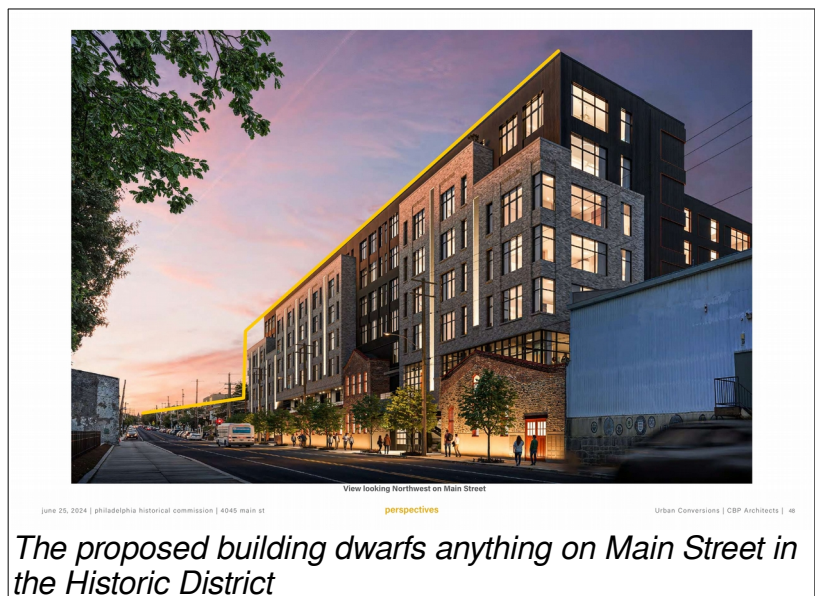
A building satisfying Standard 9 would be 38 feet (three stories) above the Design Flood Elevation yielding a total height around 49-50 feet. Already a bonus from the 38 foot limit for other other buildings on Main Street. Even in this scenario the top floor should be set back from Main Street to conform as much as possible to the 38 foot height limit in the district.

This building, while often referred to as seven stories, would be 82 feet tall, a full eight stories.

The proposed building makes no attempt to satisfy Standard 9 requirement to to respect and respond to the context.

Irrespective of their arguments for needing to move the building forward and not crowd 11 Shurs Lane (behind them) their project will tower at least forty feet over them. Not towering over 11 Shurs Lane can best be done by simply not towering over 11 Shurs Lane which can be done by meeting the requirements of the Main Street Historic District.

**We also note that in the applicants revised submission to the Historical Commission there is a memorandum update from Econsult Solutions Inc. regarding development costs and answers to**



**specific questions raised during the Architectural Committee review.**

The Memorandum appears to primarily argue financial hardship to justify completely disregarding the requirements in Standard 9 with regards to scale and context.

The Architectural Committee rejected the proposal because it did not address the requirements of Standard nine to respect and respond to the context, which is the Manayunk Historic District.

Whether a particular proposal is financially viable depends a wide range of factors, not the least of which is the purchase price of the land.

**Since the applicant is not providing any actual financial data and since this is not a financial hardship hearing, one can conclude the entire contents of the Memorandum is a irrelevant distraction and should be ignored.**

Recall that the hardship hearing that did occur determined solely that the existing buildings could be demolished.

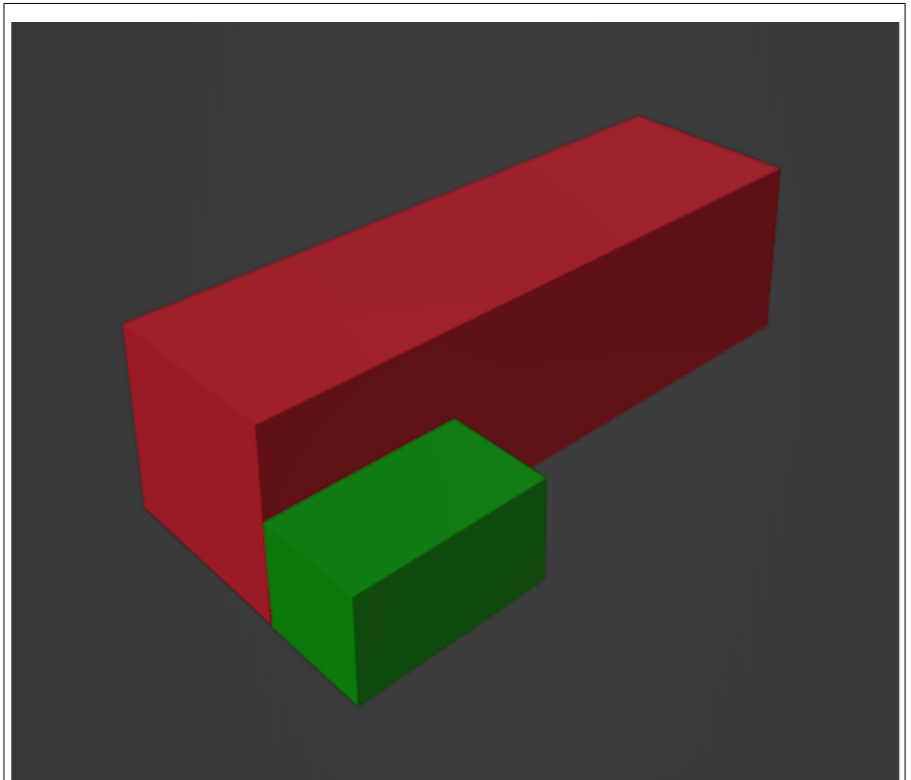
With regard to the contrived petition of Manayunk business and property owners, also in this revised submission, we offer the perspectives on the right.

We therefore urge the Commission to conclude that this plan also fails to satisfy Standard 9 and urge the applicant to produce a plan addressing those requirements in a significant and compelling way.

Thank you

Kevin Smith

Manayunk Neighborhood Council



*Massing comparison of 4100 Main (directly opposite 4065 and one of the taller buildings on Main Street within the Historic District) -vs- proposed 4065-61 (4100 Main 53'x100'x42'; 4065 Main 100'x400'x82')*



*Massing comparison with an image of 4100 Main*