

## ***Press Release***

For Immediate Release

### **CONTACT:**

Marian A. Kornilowicz, Chair, Preservation Alliance Board of Directors

215 564-1700

[mak@cohenseglias.com](mailto:mak@cohenseglias.com)

## **Philadelphia Preservation Alliance, Philadelphia Cathedral and Radnor Property Group Reach Agreement on Development Project and Preservation of Historic West Philadelphia Church**

Philadelphia (March 13, 2013) -- The **Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia** has reached an agreement with the **Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral and Radnor Property Group** that guarantees the **long-term care and preservation of the historic Cathedral building at 38th and Chestnut Streets**, Philadelphia.

The church was built in 1855 by Samuel Sloan and then rebuilt and enlarged by the well-known Philadelphia architect Charles M. Burns after a devastating fire in 1902. Formerly known as "The Church of the Saviour," the Cathedral is the spiritual and liturgical home for the 144 congregations that make up the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania.

The Cathedral is partnering with Radnor Property Group LLC of Wayne, PA in a development project immediately south of the church building. The Preservation Alliance had appealed the approval by the Philadelphia Historic Commission to allow the demolition of two brownstone-fronted buildings along Chestnut Street to make way for the development project.

Under the detailed agreement, the Cathedral will dedicate specific funds from the development project to maintain and preserve the church, and the Preservation Alliance will no longer seek to overturn the Historic Commission's approval of the development. The agreement stipulates that money will be set aside for immediate stabilization of the Cathedral and for continual maintenance over a period of 50 years. Initial improvements will be made as part of the development project to repair the building which is in need of significant work.

"We are happy that the parties were able to reach this agreement. This project and the decision of the Historical Commission presented difficult issues for the preservation community in general and the Alliance specifically", stated **Marian A. Kornilowicz**, Chair of the Board of the Alliance. "Although the Alliance recognizes the good intentions of the Historical Commission in reaching its decision, it has serious reservations about the Commission's interpretation of the law and the procedures followed in this case. Nonetheless, the Alliance concluded that an appropriate settlement would be in the best interest of all parties and we were able to accomplish that. This agreement includes a detailed 50-year plan or program for the preservation and restoration of the Cathedral building as well as the commitment by the Cathedral to the Cathedral Building itself, to implementing the preservation plan, and to funding the plan including all necessary work and maintenance. It also contains a mechanism for the funding including the payment into escrow of \$2.1 million to cover the immediate work and the generation of approximately \$1.3 million through operations and/or financing for future work."

In addition to childcare and community centers, the development project includes an apartment building to be located on the corner of 38th Street and Chestnut Street. A second building for

church offices and including rental space will be built to the east of the apartments along Chestnut Street.

**The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia** actively promotes the appreciation, protection and revitalization of the Philadelphia region's historic buildings, communities and landscapes. The Alliance is one of the nation's premier historic preservation organizations, recognized for its advocacy work, neighborhood preservation program initiatives, and easement program. Contact: Caroline E. Boyce, CAE, Executive Director (215.546.1146 x1) <http://www.preservationalliance.com>

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