



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Dick Bauer, Chair
Jillian Adams
George Born (Alt.)
Heather Davies (Alt.)
Eric Parkes
Brad Stearns (Alt.)
Todd Zinn

Abby Freedman, Vice Chair
Alan Bingham (Alt.)
Denis (DJ) Chagnon (Alt.)
Ryan Falvey
Derick Snare (Alt.)
Mark Sternman

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Minutes

Visiting Nurses Association, Community Room, 3rd Floor, 259 Lowell Street
6:40 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Staff Present: Kristi Chase.

Members Present: Dick Bauer, Heather Davies*, Ryan Falvey, Abby Freedman, Eric Parkes, Mark Sternman, Todd Zinn. Abby Freedman left after the cases of proposed alterations to historic districts were completed and before the cases of demolition review. Mark Sternman recused himself regarding the Letter of Support regarding 58 Sycamore Street and the Green Line Extension Memorandum of Agreement.

Members Absent: Jillian Adams, Alan Bingham*, George Born*, DJ Chagnon*, Derick Snare*, Brad Stearns*.

*Alternates

Others Present: Obadiah Arthur, Richard Di Girolamo, Peter Kaplan, Diane Miller, Rita Phelan, Kevin Slattery, James Veneziano.

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Business

- General update (Dick Bauer)

Dick Bauer reviewed the CPC recommendations for funding to the Board of Aldermen. There was a mix of projects from small to large. The CPC adopted all of the Commission's recommendations regarding the historic preservation projects. Some the projects considered were withdrawn for reconsideration next year. Others were funded partially or fully depending on the extent, the need and the timing of the project. Because 2 religious institutions applied for money, the Committee obtained legal opinions regarding first amendment and anti-aid amendment considerations for religious and private entities. Preservation restrictions and access requirements will be part of the condition for receiving the grants where relevant. The Commission will have review and comment on projects receiving funds for historic resources.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



Proposed Alterations to Local Historic District Properties

16 Westwood Road (HPC 2015.007)	
Applicant:	James Veneziano
Property Owner:	Westwood Road Trust
Application Date:	February 25, 2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Reconstruct widows walk, replace dormer windows, and alter front porch railings and posts.</i>
Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday March 17, 2015.
Presentation:	James Veneziano presented. His contractor had left the job unfinished due to family considerations in Ireland. He has recently returned. He has the money available and plans to do the repairs and alterations in mahogany due to its ability to withstand the weather. His intention is to replicate what can be seen in the historic photograph of the building.
Public Comment:	There was no public comment.
Staff Report:	Staff determined that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Westwood Road Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission grant James Veneziano, Westwood Road Trust a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following contingencies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The widow's walk shall be constructed <i>with the proportions and style shown in the historic photograph.</i> 2. Staff and a Commission Member shall confirm that the posts are similar in style and proportion to the photograph prior to installation. 3. The balustrade on top of the front entry porch, the rails, balusters and posts of the front porch and stairs shall match those of the widows walk. 4. The windows in the third floor dormer shall be double-hung, single glazed, diamond light upper sash and single light on the lower sash.
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits.
Discussion:	The Commission discussed the clarity of the historic photo and whether a better image could be found. Staff noted that she had been unable to locate the original. The dormer on the front of the building was from the 1950s, with poorly distributed and proportioned windows. It was important for the new windows to be as tall as possible and appropriately separated. The Commission agreed that the architects, Eric Parkes and Heather Davies would confirm the exact placement of the windows.
Decision	The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant James Veneziano, Westwood Road Trust a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following contingencies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The widow's walk shall be constructed <i>with the proportions and style shown in the historic photograph;</i> 2. Staff and a Commission Member shall confirm that the posts are similar in style and proportion to the photograph prior to installation. 3. The balustrade on top of the front entry porch, the rails, balusters and posts of the front porch and stairs shall match those of the widows walk.



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The windows in the third floor dormer shall be double-hung, single glazed, diamond light upper sash and single light on the lower sash. 5. The placement of the windows in the dormer shall be confirmed by the architects on the Commission.
--	---

53 Columbus Avenue (HPC 2015.008)	
Applicant:	Peter Kaplan
Property Owner:	RCG Columbus Renewal LLC
Application Date:	February 25, 2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Alter rear ell and windows.</i>
Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday March 17, 2015
Presentation:	Peter Kaplan presented. The 3 rd floor addition is “lacking”. The exterior finishes and proportions are poor. The ceiling heights vary from 6’8” to 6’2”. He would like to make the building and especially the third floor cleaner and better, giving the building some architectural clarity and continuity. He had met with the neighbors to explain his plans and to ensure that all were aware of any issues arising from the project. They would continue to stay in communication.
Public Comment:	An e-mail from Dominique Stassard and David Dinklage was read. Their major concerns were an alteration of their view shed of the Prospect Hill Park and the possible effects of removing asbestos shingles from the siding. Peter Kaplan responded that he had met with them and would continue to do so as their project went forward. Rita Phelan mentioned concerns about the added weight to the addition. It was suggested that the structure should be able to handle the added weight load.
Staff Report:	<p>Staff determined that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Columbus Avenue /Warren Avenue Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission grant RCG Columbus Renewal LLC, Owner a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the rear ell and windows on 53 Columbus Avenue as per designs submitted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The roof shall follow the same eave line and roof break around the rear ell to the egress stair tower. 2. The planes of the roof shall be the match the curvature of the existing. 3. The eave details and break in the Mansard shall match the existing in design, material, and proportions. 4. The dormers shall match the existing in design, material, and placement. 5. The window casings should match the originals in size, shape, form and design. 6. The window openings shall match the original openings found on the front and sides of the building. 7. The window sash shall match the existing in form and style. 8. The siding on the walls shall be cementitious shingles to match the existing in size, shape, texture and color.



Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits.
Discussion:	<p>Eric Parkes said he was torn between the traditional and the modern approaches to constructing an addition. If they had presented plans for a modern interpretation he would have given it consideration. He did agree on the organizing principle. He noted that going from a Mansard to a flat wall was difficult. The Commission agreed that the alignment of the eaves and roof were an improvement on the existing conditions. The retention of the stair tower made things simpler and was necessary for egress from all floors. The Mansard next door has a complicated series of shapes due to the modern approach to the addition and the egress issues. Dick Bauer said that after several years of seeing the neighboring building’s alterations, he felt that the Commission had made the wrong decision. A more subtle and traditional approach would have been more in-keeping with the character of the neighborhood. Abby Freedman said that if at all possible they should use matching slate on the ell rather the Slatelines®. She also noted that it would be preferable to use clapboard rather than the cementitious shingles. Peter Kaplan said they would love to do both so if their budget allowed for it. They had looked at various types of architectural shingles. The shaped ones looked a little to Disney and cartoonish. Mark Sternman asked about the asbestos. Peter Kaplan said that the shingles were not friable. All City, State and National regulations would be followed in their handling. Peter Kaplan also said that the new zoning was not friendly to historic building types such as Mansards which were categorized as 3-story. The roof type did not work well with in the given parameters as defined. Todd Zinn asked if would be possible to reconfigure the egress as was told that it would not be feasible. A discussion on the window placement on the east side and on the egress resulted in the request that the 3rd floor window on Parkway side of the egress be removed due to crowding.</p>
Decision	<p>The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant RCG Columbus Renewal LLC, Owner a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the rear ell and windows on 53 Columbus Avenue as per designs submitted with the following contingencies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The roof shall follow the same eave line and roof break around the rear ell to the egress stair tower. 2. The roof material on the ell may be either Slateline® architectural shingles as proposed or real slate to match the existing if the budget allows. 3. The planes of the roof shall be the match the curvature of the existing. 4. The eave details and break in the Mansard shall match the existing in design, material, and proportions. 5. The dormers shall match the existing in design, material, and placement. 6. The window casings should match the originals in size, shape, form and design. 7. The window openings shall match the original openings found on the front and sides of the building. 8. The window sash shall match the existing in form and style. 9. The top floor stair tower window shall be removed on the east side toward Prospect Hill Parkway. 10. The siding on the walls shall be cementitious shingles to match the existing in size, shape, texture and color.



Demolition Reviews***Determination of Preferably Preserved***

18 Kent Court (HPC 2015.001)	
Applicant:	Douglas Beaudet
Property Owner:	Douglas Beaudet
Application Date:	January 5, 2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Determination of Preferably Preserved</i>
Recommendation:	Preferably Preserved
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday March 17, 2015
Presentation:	Richard DiGirolamo presented. The property now has new Owners, Keith Glover and Atilla Javor. He recognized the historic character of the workers housing but said that it should be noted that the building had numerous code violations and therefore should be demolished. It was very small with only about 700 square feet of living space.
Public Comment:	There was no public comment.
Staff Report:	<p>The c.1850 dwelling at 18 Kent Court is found on the 1852 Draper Map of Somerville. The Commission found that the subject building is importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to a pre-1852 construction date; simple form and massing including the rear ell; three-bay primary and single-bay side fenestration patterns; and remaining architectural detail such as the return eaves on the gable ends. This building is an early to mid-nineteenth century example of working class housing and is part of a collection of housing associated with the early development and industry of Somerville. The Commission further found that the subject dwelling is historically and architecturally significant as a representative of mid-19th century working class housing stock due to the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, massing, and visible fenestration patterns. In addition, due to the location of the structure within a small collection of structures that represents the same cultural context, this dwelling is significant within the context of the group of buildings which, together, represent the early development and industry of Somerville.</p> <p>The side-gable orientation, size, early date of construction, and context of associated structures raise this building to a higher level of significance and integrity than other buildings in a similar condition. Therefore, Staff found the potential demolition of 18 Kent Court detrimental to the heritage of the City.</p> <p>In accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (2003-05), Section 4.D, Staff found the potential demolition of the subject structure detrimental to the heritage of the City, and consequently in the best interest of the public to preserve or rehabilitate. Therefore, due to the level of integrity, its association as an intact example of working class housing, and as part of a mid-nineteenth century collection of buildings, Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission find 18 Kent Court Preferably Preserved.</p>
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance section 7.28, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits
Discussion:	Eric Parkes said that having three such buildings on one street was unusual and valuable to have so much context.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
 (617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



Decision	The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to determine 18 Kent Court 'Preferably Preserved.' Per Section 4.2.D, "If the Commission determines that the demolition of the significant building or structure would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City, such building or structure shall be considered preferably preserved." The Commission found demolition detrimental due to the side-gable orientation, size, early date of construction, and context of associated structures which raises this building to a higher level of significance and due to the level of integrity, its association as an intact example of working class housing, and as part of a mid-nineteenth century collection of buildings.
----------	---

35 Moreland Street (HPC 2015.003)	
Applicant:	Kevin Slattery
Property Owner:	Kevin Slattery
Application Date:	January 6, 2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Determination of Preferably Preserved</i>
Recommendation:	Preferably Preserved
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday March 17, 2015
Presentation:	Kevin Slattery presented. He bought the house in 2001, married and moved to Beacon Hill. He now has a child and would like to move. He has tried to sell the house but has been unable to do so. He submitted proof of offers by 4 different buyers. He said they withdrew their bids after receiving reports from home inspectors stating deficiencies. He explained the structural problems that were found by Tiger Home Inspections and submitted a proposal for repairs from Caisson Construction Corporation. Foundation and crawl space problems were discussed as was the removal and separation of joists. His is a large lot. He believes that the current house does not meet the highest and best use. The other later houses on the street are all larger. He would like to build a 2-family with enough space for his own plus a rental unit to offset the costs. He found the house to be the ugly duckling on the street. He has exhausted all his options and would really like to demolish the building and start anew.
Public Comment:	There was no public comment.
Staff Report:	<p>The Commission found the subject parcel Significant due to an association of the property with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to its association with laborers and the early development of Winter Hill and representative of 19th century workers housing stock due to the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, and massing and the early development of that section of Winter Hill. Significance is also due to the ability of the subject parcel to convey integrity regarding location and form as well as, to a moderate degree, design. The additional information provided and consideration criteria (a-e) listed above articulates that this type of dwelling is found in a few neighborhoods throughout the City and has minimal architectural detail typical of buildings of its age and purpose. Therefore, Staff found the potential demolition of 35 Moreland Street detrimental to the heritage of the City</p> <p>In accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (2003-05), Section 4.D, Staff found the potential demolition of the subject structure detrimental to the heritage of the City, and consequently in the best interest of the public to preserve or rehabilitate. Therefore, due to the rarity of this type of residential dwelling within the City, its association with laborers and the early development of Winter Hill, and its ability to convey the life of 19th century</p>



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



	workers by the representative character of the housing stock and through the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, and massing and through its location, the early development of that section of Winter Hill. Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission find 35 Moreland Street Preferably Preserved.
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance section 7.28, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits
Discussion:	The Commission discussed whether conditions that did not present an imminent public safety hazard were sufficient reason to not preferably preserve a significant building. Precedence suggests that it was not. The estimated cost of repair from Caisson suggested that while costly to rehabilitate the whole building, it was possible to retain it.
Decision:	The Commission voted ((Dick Bauer, Heather Davies*, Eric Parkes, Mark Sternman) 4-2 (Todd Zinn, Ryan Falvey) to determine 35 Moreland Street 'Preferably Preserved.' Per Section 4.2.D, "If the Commission determines that the demolition of the significant building or structure would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City, such building or structure shall be considered preferably preserved." The Commission found demolition detrimental due to the rarity of this type of residential dwelling within the City, its association with laborers and the early development of Winter Hill, and its ability to convey the life of 19 th century workers by the representative character of the housing stock and through the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, and massing and through its location, the early development of that section of Winter Hill.

14 Kent Court (HPC 2015.004)	
Applicant:	Shangzhe Xuyu
Property Owner:	Shangzhe Xuyu
Application Date:	December 31, 2014
Legal Notice:	<i>Determination of Preferably Preserved</i>
Recommendation:	Preferably Preserved
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday March 17, 2015
Presentation:	Diane Miller, architect for the owner presented. They do not contest the significance or the value of preserving the building. They look forward to the next step in devising a Memorandum of Agreement.
Public Comment:	There was no public comment.
Staff Report:	<p>The Commission found the subject building Significant per <i>Criteria (ii)</i>, listed above, the subject dwelling is found historically and architecturally significant as a representative of mid-19th century working class housing stock, due to the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, massing, and visible side fenestration patterns. In addition, due to the location of the structure within a small collection of buildings that represent the same cultural context, this dwelling is significant within the context of the group of buildings which, together, represent the early development and industry of Somerville.</p> <p>The side-gable orientation, size, date of construction, and context of associated structures raise this building to a higher level of significance and integrity than other buildings in a similar condition. Therefore, Staff found the potential demolition of 14 Kent Court</p>



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



	<p>detrimental to the heritage of the City.</p> <p>In accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (2003-05), Section 4.D, Staff found the potential demolition of the subject structure detrimental to the heritage of the City, and consequently in the best interest of the public to preserve or rehabilitate. Therefore, due to the level of integrity, its association as an intact example of working class housing, and as part of a mid-nineteenth century collection of buildings, Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission find 14 Kent Court Preferably Preserved.</p>
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance section 7.28, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits
Discussion:	It was noted that the building is located on a very small lot and that it was important that the fabric of the neighborhood be retained.
Decision:	The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to determine 14 Kent Court 'Preferably Preserved.' Per Section 4.2.D, "If the Commission determines that the demolition of the significant building or structure would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City, such building or structure shall be considered preferably preserved." The Commission found demolition detrimental due to the location of the structure within a small collection of buildings that represent the same cultural context, this dwelling is significant within the context of the group of buildings which, together, represent the early development and industry of Somerville as well as the level of integrity, its association as an intact example of working class housing, and as part of a mid-nineteenth century collection of buildings.

Other Business

- 63 Hudson Street – Memorandum of Agreement

This was not ready for review due to on-going discussions with the owners.

- 315 Broadway – Memorandum of Agreement – Update

Not all the materials requested for salvage have been preserved in so far as can be determined with snow on the ground. It appears to be somewhat less than what can be seen in the photographs of the original door surround intended for salvage. The demolition contractor was unclear as to what had been retained. No receipt from a salvage company as specified in the Memorandum of Agreement has been received. The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to request the appearance of the owner and the contractor to appear before the Commission at the regularly scheduled April 21, 2015 HPC Meeting to detail their compliance with the Memorandum.

- 58 Sycamore Street – Susan Russell House – GLX/Section 106 Review Letter of Support

The Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to support the proposed Memorandum of Agreement between the MassDOT, MBTA and the Owner concurring that sound-inhibiting storm windows would have no negative impact on the Susan Russell House unlike the proposed sound wall that would alter the relationship of the house to the railway line.

- Electronic transfer of documents

The Commission enthusiastically endorsed the idea of having all the documents pertaining to the cases, with the ordinances, guidelines and other necessary materials in an electronic form available during meetings. Heather Davies asked whether a computer linked projector and screen system could also be made available for presentations.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



Minutes:	November 6, 2014 – Preferably Preserved
Minutes:	November 18, 2014 – HPC
Minutes:	December 11, 2014 – CPA Advisory
Minutes:	December 16, 2014 - HPC
Minutes:	January 13, 2015 – CPA Advisory
Minutes:	February 12, 2015 – CPA Advisory
Minutes:	February 17, 2015 – HPC
Minutes:	February 26, 2015 – HPC CPA Preservation Plan Meeting
Decision:	The February 17 and 26, 2015 minutes were unanimously approved by those attending the meeting. The other out-standing Minutes were not complete and therefore not reviewed.

Reports and plans are available on the City of Somerville website at www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation-commission/hpc-cases-and-decisions and on the third floor of City Hall at 93 Highland Avenue. Cases may be continued to a later date(s); therefore, check the agenda on the website 48 hours in advance of the meeting or call (617) 625-6600 x2500 to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertized, but will be listed on the agenda. Interested persons may provide comments to the Historic Preservation Commission at the public hearing, by email to historic@somervillema.gov, by fax to (617) 625-0722, or by mail addressed to the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission.



**CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722**

www.somervillema.gov

