



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

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION*

**STAFF PRESENT**  
AMIE HAYES, PLANNER

**MEMBERS PRESENT**  
ALAN BINGHAM  
ABBY FREEDMAN

**Public Meeting for Preferably Preserved Structures**  
**Recommendations and Minutes**

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission held a public meeting on **Thursday, April 4, 2013, at 6:30 p.m.** in City Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA.

The purpose of the meeting was to seek alternatives to demolition for structures determined by the Historic Preservation Commission to be Preferably Preserved and to make recommendations to the Historic Preservation Commission at a future Commission meeting on the following Preferably Preserved structure(s):

**6:30 PM to 7:00 PM**

197 Washington Street      Case # HPC 2012.134

Delay Period Ends:      11/19/2013

Building Description:      c. 1860 Italianate style funeral parlor

Significance:      i. *“Importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and*  
ii. *“Historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures...”*

This was the first time for this case to come to a Public Meeting for Preferably Preserved Structures. Two letters were submitted prior to this meeting, which note the building would not be easily moved nor is the structure likely valuable to the potential new owner to renovate or refurbish. A survey of the existing lot and a new site plan were distributed to illustrate that the new building would be located along the street while the existing building would be razed for parking behind the building.

The idea to move the structure to an adjacent space was brought up early in the discussion. Moving the structure to a new parcel closer to Washington Terrace might be possible; however the Applicant did not seem to think this was a feasible option, due to cost, and there is a problem regarding the height of the existing grade. However, the Applicant made clear that they would be willing to essentially give the building away if someone were to move the building off the lot.

A majority of the following discussion revolved around how to retain the building where it currently stands and to relocate the parking elsewhere. The issues regarding this solution are not likely feasible due to the grade at which the existing structure is located, which rises 30 feet from the sidewalk to the front of the building. The new structure is proposed to be at



street level, so a majority of the hill will be removed for the new structure. This identifies another issue regarding access to the historic structure located at such a high grade. In addition, parking is currently being accommodated at the rear of the lot through the help of a parking structure. This rear structure also complicates retaining the structure on site; however, the Applicant does have the option of a payout, per parking space, and to not supply parking on site; however, the price (approximately \$8000/per space) did not seem feasible.

There was also discussion regarding the marker currently located near the sidewalk along Washington Street and how to incorporate this piece of history.

