



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
JILLIAN ADAMS

Public Meeting for Preferably Preserved Structures
Recommendations and Minutes

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held a public meeting at **6:30 p.m.** on **Thursday, February 6, 2014**, in City Hall, 3rd 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

8 Mt. Pleasant Street *HPC 2013.090*

Delay Period Ends: 10/23/2014

Building Description: c. 1841 suburban cottage, single-family dwelling

Significance: The structure is "Significant" due to the remaining historical integrity, location, retention of architectural details that note stylistic evolution, as an early example of the first subdivisions beyond the Charlestown Neck, and as a rare example that likely predates the division from Charlestown.

The structure is "Preferably Preserved" due to the level of integrity, association with the first wave of modest suburban expansion into Somerville, retention of several architectural details that note stylistic evolution, and as part of a collection of middle class workers housing.

This was the first time for this case to come to a Public Meeting for Preferably Preserved Structures. The Agent gave a brief overview of the building and its relationship to the adjacent permitted project. The intent is to move the historic dwelling approximately 10-14 to allow for a driveway between the permitted project and the historic dwelling. The Commissioner stated there are no objections to the slight relocation of the structure as the building is to remain on the original parcel. The Agent proposed that the c. 1874 rear ell would be demolished, but the structure would be maintained as a single unit and incorporated within the overall development project. The Commissioner agreed that, in general, their proposed addition delineated itself from the historic building without overpowering the original. The historic structure would be maintained along the streetscape and extend toward the rear of the parcel with a more modern tone. This middle section will be comprised of garages at ground level and residential units above. The rear structure will be composed of historically compatible materials, to be consistent with the historic structure, but will emulate the form and massing of the permitted project at 2-8 Broadway. The Commissioner asked the Agent to explain why they included a new masonry wall on the parcel. Staff and the Agent explained that in a TOD district, a masonry wall is required as the exterior wall. Staff explained that, possibly, a masonry wall that steps up as the wall extends toward the rear of the parcel could be an alternate solution that wouldn't detract from the historic fabric, but still meet the TOD requirement. The Commissioner requested more symmetry regarding the backdrop of the new building for the historic structure, but the Architect explained this view would not actually be visible. The Commissioner then suggested submitting renderings of actual views from the street, a photo overlay of the proposed project and a rear elevation without the fence. Materials need to be flushed out, such as hardi board,

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as well as differentiating the top floor from the cornice of the new middle structure. HVAC is noted to be located above the garage, which should sufficiently eliminate views of the mechanical equipment, and utility locations should be illustrated on the plans. The garage and rear door should be contextual in material to the historic component and, if possible, the horizontal line from the soffit of the historic structure could be incorporated visually into the new structure by continuing this linear line. The Commissioner also requested that the new building not cover the historic building at the roofline.

7:00 PM to 7:30 PM

53 Kent Street

Case HPC 2013.048

Delay Period Ends:

6/17/2014

Building Description:

c. 1850 workers cottage, single-family dwelling

Significance:

The structure is "Significant" due to the remaining historical integrity, the retention of several architectural details that continue to illustrate the Greek Revival style, as an example of working class housing specifically associated with the Middlesex Bleachery, and as part of an early to mid nineteenth century collection of housing associated with the early development and industry of Somerville.

The structure is "Preferably Preserved" due to the level of integrity, association with the Middlesex Bleachery, as an intact example of working class housing, and as part of a mid 19th century collection of buildings.

This was the second time for this case to come to a Public Meeting for Preferably Preserved Structures. The Agent explained the intent of the Applicant is to wait nine months and demolish the historic structure. The Agent then explained that the Applicant is unwilling to 1) take on the financial responsibility for relocating the building and 2) accept the delay of the redevelopment project that would occur waiting for city procedures and approvals for the relocation. The Agent finished by explaining that the Applicant would be willing to document the building according to National Register standards if the HPC is willing to lift the delay; however, the MOA would need to be executed soon to allow the structure to be documented in a timely fashion before the completion of the demolition delay. The Commissioner stated that this was a disappointment, but that more information regarding mid nineteenth century dwellings in Somerville with a high degree of integrity will help inform Staff and the Commission. The Commissioner suggested that further map and deed research for this property may yield additional facts about the buildings on Kent Court. The Agent explained that the Applicant would likely wait the duration and demolish the building without appropriate documentation, if the HPC is not willing to execute the MOA until the eighth month. Staff and the Commissioner suggested the Agent tentatively retain services of a qualified consultant, pending execution of the MOA and Staff approval, which may persuade the HPC to execute the MOA at their next meeting February 18, 2014.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40.

