



**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  
ERIC PARKES

**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, September 5, 2013**, 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**

*35 Cutter Street*

*Case HPC 2013.038*

Delay Period Ends:

*5/20/2014*

Building Description:

*c. 1858 workers cottage, single-family dwelling*

Significance:

*The structure is "Significant" as a representative of 19<sup>th</sup> century working class housing stock due to the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, massing and portions of the fenestration pattern. In addition, due to the location of the structure within the Cutter streetscape, this dwelling continues the unique rhythm of rooflines and, therefore, is significant within the context of a group of buildings which compose the Cutter Streetscape.*

*The structure is "Preferably Preserved" due to the earlier c.1858 construction date and intact existence of the original historic building context at the southern end of Cutter Street, which demonstrates early subdivision activity, and as a representative of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century working class housing.*

This was the first time for this case to come to a Public Meeting for Preferably Preserved Structures. The Commissioners first tried to determine if retaining this structure as a single-family dwelling was a potential option. Upon understanding this was not an option for the Applicant given the intent upon purchasing the property, the Commissioners moved forward to discuss modifications to the existing structure to accommodate one or two additional units on-site. Staff explained that due to the humble massing of this structure, alterations to add square footage would greatly alter the integrity of the existing structure; therefore, Staff encouraged the Applicant to move forward in the demolition review process. In addition, modifying the existing building presented compliance issues with regard to Fire Prevention and street front accessible units. Staff further explained that this lot is undersized, so a portion of the building would need to be retained, which could be the front nonconforming setback.

The conversation then discussed what type of building form would be appropriate. The Applicant explained that a triple-decker type structure had been designed for this site; however, after looking over the other building forms that compose



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Cutter Street and recognizing that triple-decker type structures are not located along this street, the Commissioners felt this building type would be inappropriate. The two-family dwellings on either side of the subject parcel are two-story side-gable structures that fit within the 1850-1870 historical context of the southern end of this streetscape. The Commissioners inquired if this form could be used with a rear ell, instead of the triple-decker building form. If two units are side-by-side and a third unit is located in the rear ell, Fire Prevention would have access, all units could be made accessible from the sidewalk, and the nonconforming front yard setback could be retained. Staff also encouraged the Applicant to think about demolishing the garage for more flexibility regarding parking, which could potentially allow more landscaping and pervious areas. The Applicant thought this building form could work and that they would be back next month to discuss this plan further.

The meeting concluded at approximately 7:10 p.m.

