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NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Staff Memo

Date: December 28, 2023

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Zoom: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/87456369132> or
+13017158592,,87456369132#

1. 122-124 Cabot Street

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This home is part of an in-tact 1925 development. Staff recommends finding the house preferably preserved.

Description: This 1925 home was built in a vernacular Colonial Revival style by owner and builder S.T. Seamans and architect John J. Smith. Seamans and Smith developed much of this section of Cabot Street, working together on 128-130 and 142 Cabot. Smith also designed 146-148 and 152-154 Cabot. All were built in 1925 in similar styles. 122-124 Cabot features an enclosed entryway that is offset to the right of the front elevation. The home is shingle-sided, and features a centrally-located brick chimney. Alterations include raising the roof line on the rear of the house to allow for interior remodeling in 1994, and reconstruction of the front stairs in 2003. This home is inventoried on MACRIS as part of the Towle Estate Residential District, a subdivision of homes laid out from the former estate of businessman Loren Towle. The area was developed in two parts, first around 1925 as a series of two-family homes, and later with single-family homes in the 1940s and 50s.

Recommendation: As this property has seen relatively little alteration, and belongs to a group of well-preserved homes built by the same developer and architect, staff recommends finding the house preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any replacement property should be reflective of the style and scale of the remaining 1925 homes on this block.

2. 50 Middlesex Road

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This 1968 gymnasium is a unique example of Modern style architecture. Staff recommends finding the building preferably preserved.

Description: The Thompson Gymnasium at the Brimmer and May School is a Modern style gymnasium built in 1968, designed by architect Daniel F. Tully Associates. The building most prominently features a hyperbolic paraboloid roof, a curved, thin shell structure framed with wood beams and connected with curved wood decking. Exterior walls consist of vertical wood siding and concrete piers with a pebble aggregate concrete facing. Daniel F. Tulley was a renowned architect, who won many awards for his designs. His firm specialized in athletic and religious buildings, many of which featured similar hyperbolic paraboloid roofs.

Recommendation: As a unique and well-preserved example of Modern architecture, staff recommends finding this building preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition and addition that would keep all or part of the hyperbolic paraboloid roof.

3. 20 Wachusett Road

Partial Demolition of Carriage House

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a well-preserved early 20th century carriage house. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved, and welcomes discussion about the proposed addition.

Description: The carriage house at 20 Wachusett Road is believed to have been constructed prior to 1926 when the property was subdivided from a large estate, although no permit exists in ISD records for its construction. The carriage house is a relatively small, one and a half-story structure, with a side gable roof, and a small shed dormer on the back side of the roof. Highlighted details include two ornate windows (one oval-shaped on the side of the building, and one circular on the front) and a large arched doorway on the front entrance. The applicant proposes adding a large shed dormer to the front-facing side of the roof, expanding the dormer on the rear side of the roof, and screening in the front porch.

Recommendation: Due to the age and condition, staff recommends finding the carriage house preferably preserved. Staff generally approves of the proposed design, but would prefer if the proposed porch did more to accentuate the arched doorway instead of hiding it.

4. 371 Cherry Street

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This ca. 1870 second-empire home fits in well with the age and style of the neighborhood. Thus, staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This second-empire home was built ca. 1870. Although no building permit exists for the property in ISD records, the house appears on the 1874 F.W. Beers atlas of the City of Newton. At that time, the property was owned by G.H. Haines. The house features a mansard roof, and a bay window topped with a turret. The building was converted into a two-family home via interior alterations in 1917. Further alterations on file include the addition of a front porch and back staircase in 1918, enclosing the front porch in 1963, and adding an awning over the back porch area in 1965. 371 Cherry is not individually inventoried on MACRIS, however many properties on Cherry Street are, including 1 on this block alone. All inventoried properties were constructed between 1850 and 1900.

Recommendation: Due to the age of this home, and the general sense of architectural unity created by the other houses of similar age and style on the block, staff recommends finding this house preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any replacement property should be reflective of the Second Empire style homes on Cherry Street.

5. **35 Village Circle**

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a 1954 modern ranch built by a known developer. Staff welcomes discussion of its historical significance.

Description: This 1954 modern ranch style home was built by owner and developer Alfred W. Halper and designed by architect Albert C. Rugo. Halper was a renowned developer in the Boston area, who created the "Wayside Acres" subdivision of over 200 modern-style homes in Sudbury. Halper also built 39 Village Circle, designed by Rugo as well, and developed the Country Club Estates subdivision on nearby Country Club Road. Halper won numerous regional and national awards for his designs and developments. This split-level home features a cross gabled roof, and an arched transom above the front door. A two-story addition on the left side, and an extension to the right of the garage were added to the home in 1992. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, nor are any other homes on the street.

Recommendation: This is a unique example of a mid-century home built by a known developer. However, the home has been altered, and all other houses on the street from the original subdivision have been altered. Staff welcomes discussion of the historic significance of this house.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. A replacement property should reflect the modern style of the original home and neighborhood.

6. **18 Fessenden Street**

Partial Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a well-preserved 1947 home in a neighborhood of similarly built houses. Staff recommends finding the home preferably preserved, and welcomes discussion of the proposed addition.

Description: This 1947 Colonial Revival style home was built by owner and developer E.J. Corrigan and designed by architect C.C. Crowell. The house features classic colonial revival stylings, and has a brick chimney and an attached porch on the left side of the house. In 2013, the original attached garage was demolished and replaced with the current garage and second story addition, which is set back slightly from the front of the house. This home is inventoried on MACRIS as part of the Albemarle Village #2 Residential District. This district includes 81 homes, the vast majority of which are two-story, three-bay wide Colonial Revival homes like 18 Fessenden. Most of the houses on Fessenden Street were developed by Corrigan and designed by Crowell. The applicant is proposing a partial demolition, removing the porch, chimney, and a portion of the left side exterior wall, in order to build a two-story addition and a new porch.

Recommendation: Due to the age of the home, and architectural unity of the neighborhood, staff recommends finding the house preferably preserved. Staff welcomes discussion about the proposed addition, but generally looks favorably on the plans.

7. **6-8 Jaffrey Circle**

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This 1928 home fits in well with the style and scale of the neighborhood. Staff welcomes discussion of its historic significance.

Description: This 1928 vernacular style home was built by owner and developer John A. McLeod and architect Robert Jackson. The two-story house has a hipped roof and a garage that leads below street level. The home features an enclosed entrance on the left side of the house, and a gabled dormer on the roof above the side entry. There are similar houses in the area, including 7-9 Jaffrey Circle, 3-5 Jaffrey Circle, 25-27 Cotter Road, and 31-33 Cotter Road. 6-8 Jaffrey Circle is the most unique of these homes, however, as it features decorative shutters and window boxes facing the street. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, nor are any on Jaffrey Circle.

Recommendation: This home features unique architectural details, and fits in well with the neighborhood. Staff welcomes discussion of the historic significance of this home.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any replacement property

should remain in unity with the size and style of the surrounding neighborhood.

8. **329-331 River Street**

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This 1915 home is representative of the age, size, and style, of much of this section of River Street. Staff recommends finding this property preferably preserved.

Description: This 1915 Victorian eclectic style house was built by James B. McGrath. The two-and-a-half story house has an end gable roof, with two gabled dormers on the right side and one gabled dormer on the left. There is a two-story bay window topped with an end gable roof on the front side of the building. The only alteration on file for the property is the addition of the dormer on the left side of the roof, completed in 1999. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, nor are any buildings nearby on River Street. The home fits in well with the massing and style of many of those nearby on River Street.

Recommendation: Due to the age and style of this home, as well as the intact nature of the surrounding neighborhood, staff recommends finding this property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any replacement property should be reflective of the style and size of this house and surrounding homes in the neighborhood.

9. **74 Bowen Street**

Partial Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary:

Description: This house was built ca. 1916 in a Victorian eclectic style. The house features an end gable roof and an open front porch. A large two-story addition was constructed to the rear and left of the house in 1967. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, and only one house on the street, 35 Bowen, has been. The street still however shows general unity in architectural style and size of homes. The house is presently wrapped in Tyvek and under construction for replacement of siding, windows, and roof. The applicant is proposing a partial demolition of the right-side exterior wall and the construction of a two story addition.

Recommendation: Due to the age of the home and the stylistic unity of the neighborhood, staff recommends finding the home preferably preserved. Staff welcomes discussion of the proposed addition.

10. **48 River Avenue**

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This ca. 1962 cape is well preserved. Staff welcomes discussion of its historical significance.

Description: This cape style home was likely built ca. 1962, although no building permit could be found in ISD files. It is a typical one-and-a-half story cape, and features two gabled dormers on the front of the house and a large, shed dormer on the rear. There is a brick chimney on the right side of the house, as well as a side entry door leading to the basement. This property is not inventoried on MACRIS, although the house across the street, constructed in 1855, is inventoried. The surrounding neighborhood, on Keefe Avenue, features a mix of late 19th and early 20th century homes with some more modern construction.

Recommendation: Although this is the only home of its style in the neighborhood, this is a well-preserved example of a mid-20th century cape. Staff welcomes discussion of the historical significance of the home.

Proposed Finding, if found preferably preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any replacement property should be reflective of the size and style of homes found on Keefe Avenue.

11. ~~235 California Street~~

~~Partial Demolition of House and Total Demolition of Garage~~

~~[View House Application Here](#)~~

~~[View Garage Application Here](#)~~

~~**Summary:**~~

~~**Description:**~~

~~**Recommendation:**~~

12. 115 Windsor Road

Waiver of Demolition Delay

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Description: This two-story home and matching garage were built in 1908 in an eclectic style. The property has retained some early 20th century features, such as the center gable on the front façade and its windowed portico. The roofline draws some inspiration from a carpenter Gothic style, though it lacks the scrollwork that would have set it apart. In 1975 this property sustained a large amount of damage from a kitchen fire. This resulted in a large amount of alteration to the home, not all of which is completely documented in the ISD permit file. Most of the second floor appears to have been rebuilt. It is particularly obvious when noting the middle window on the second story of the front façade, which is off center and mars the otherwise

historic home. This home is in the Windsor Road National Register District.

13. **109 Harwich Road**

Waiver of Demolition Delay

[View Application Here](#)

[View Original Application Here](#)

Description: This 1960 split-level home is constructed in the “flying eave” style, characterized by its asymmetrical front gable, low pitched roof and short, wide windows in the rooms over the garage. Staff has recently reviewed several applications for demolition in developments of these “flying eave” homes, like the Esty Farm Rd June Lane Residential District and homes along Dedham Street. While this street and neighborhood is certainly in transition, there are still approximately half of the homes on it built in a variety of midcentury split-level styles. Of those homes in the immediate area, this is one of the better examples of the style.