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NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Staff Memo

Date: September 26, 2024
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Zoom: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/81128595919> or
+16469313860,,81128595919#

1. 19 Highland Avenue

Local Landmark Review
[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a ca. 1893 Gothic style church. The applicant seeks to renovate the church building and demolish the parish house for a residential development.

Description: The Swedenborgian Church is a ca. 1893 Gothic style church building designed by architect Ralph Adams Cram. The building is masonry construction with limestone trim. The building features arched window openings, as well as several unique stained-glass windows. There is a tower on the southwest corner of the building, and a parish house connected to the north of the building. The church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986, and was designated a Newton Local Landmark in 2023. The applicant seeks to renovate the church building for conversion into a multifamily residential building, and to demolish the parish house to allow for the construction of a new multifamily residential building behind the church.

2. 196-198 Sumner Street

Total Demolition
[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a 1923 American Foursquare style house in a well-preserved area, staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This is a 1923 American Foursquare style house, built by Greenwood Bros. developers and designed by architect Harry Morton Ramsay. Ramsay designed many homes in Newton and other Boston suburbs in the early-to-mid 20th Century, 193 of which are inventoried on MACRIS (60 of those are in Newton). This two-story home features a hipped roof, with a brick chimney on the right side of the building and a small, hipped roof dormer on the front side of the roof. There is a two-story bump-out on the front of the building, which may be an enclosed porch, and a very slight bump-out on the left elevation. This property is inventoried on MACRIS as part of the Newton Center Village Center area. The neighborhood retains a good sense of historic

context, with many original homes from a similar era on this side of Sumner Street.

Staff Recommendation: This is a well-preserved house in a well-preserved inventoried neighborhood. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale of the other houses on Sumner Street.

3. 283 Woodland Road

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a 1950 Cape style house in a well-preserved neighborhood and just outside of a Local Historic District. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This is a 1950 Cape style house built by developer Charles Train Inc. and designed by architect Harry Morton Ramsay. Ramsay designed many homes in Newton and other Boston suburbs in the early-to-mid 20th Century, 193 of which are inventoried on MACRIS (60 of those are in Newton). This house features a side-gabled roof, with large shed dormers on both the front and rear of the roof. There is an attached garage on the right side of the house, and a screened in porch on the left side of the rear of the house. The house also features a brick chimney on the left side of the house and a covered entryway on the front elevation. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, however it is situated directly across the street from the boundaries of the Auburndale Local Historic District, and properties further down Woodland Road are included within the district. As such, the neighborhood does retain a good sense of historic context, although there is a newly constructed home to the left of this house.

Staff Recommendation: This is a well-preserved house in a well-preserved neighborhood, part of which is in a Local Historic District. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale and architectural styles of the surrounding neighborhood.

4. 76 Lexington Street

Total Demolition of House and Garage

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a ca. 1880 vernacular style house in a neighborhood with mixed historic context. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This is a ca. 1880 Victorian-era vernacular style house. By 1886, the property was owned by a Mrs. Duggan. The two-story home

features a cross-gabled roof, with two brick chimneys. There is a covered entryway in the front of the house, an enclosed entry on the back of the left elevation, and an addition on the right side of the house. The building has been altered several times, including a two-room addition in 1914, and an alteration to a porch that appears to no longer remain in 1924. In 1965, additions were constructed on both the house and the garage, designed by architect Stanley Myers. Myers was a noted architect, who primarily designed Modern style homes in the Boston area. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, nor are any others in the immediate Lexington Street/River Street area, and historic context is mixed, with some recent new construction. This property was considered by the commission previously in 2014, at which time it was found preferably preserved and a one-year delay was placed on the property.

Staff Recommendation: This is a 19th century house in a neighborhood with mixed historic context. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.

5. **340 River Street**

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is an altered commercial building constructed in 1890 and subsequently added on to. Staff welcomes discussion of the historical significance of this property.

Description: This is a brick commercial building built in three sections, beginning in 1890, with further additions added in 1933 and 1965. The 1965 addition was designed by noted architect Stanley Myers, although this is not an example of the Modern design he is known for. This is a one-story building with a flat roof, and large storefront windows facing River Street. There are many alterations on record for this building, nearly all of which are sign permits for the three storefronts. This building is not inventoried on MACRIS, nor are any others in the immediate Lexington Street/River Street area, and historic context is mixed, with some recent new construction. This property was considered by the commission previously in 2014, at which time it was found not preferably preserved.

Staff Recommendation: This is an altered commercial building in an area with mixed historic context. Staff welcomes discussion of the historical significance of this building.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.

6. **123-125 Waban Street**

Total Demolition
[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a 1950 Colonial Revival style house on a well-preserved street. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This is a 1950 Colonial Revival style house built by developer George Dessoders. This two-story house features a front-gabled roof with a brick chimney. There is a covered front entryway, attached garage below the home, and a two-story deck to the rear. There are no major alterations on file for this property in ISD records. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, however several homes on Waban Street are, and the street generally retains a good sense of historic context.

Staff Recommendation: This is a well-preserved house on a well-preserved street, staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale of the neighborhood.

7. 45 Bonnybrook Road

Total Demolition
[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a 1940 Garrison Colonial style house in a neighborhood with mixed historic context. Staff welcomes discussion of its historical significance.

Description: This is a 1940 Garrison Colonial style house, built by Gordon Construction Company and designed by John C. Ringer. The house features two brick chimneys, one on the left and one on the right side of the house. There is an attached two-car garage on the left side of the house, and a one-room bump out on the right rear of the home. The house features a unique siding pattern, with brick on the first story of the front façade and clapboard on the second story of the front façade and all other elevations. There are no alterations in ISD records. Bonnybrook Road has mixed historic context, with some new construction and a few original homes.

Staff Recommendation: This is a well-preserved house in a neighborhood with mixed historic context. Staff welcomes discussion of its historical significance.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale of the neighborhood.

8. 56 Parsons Street

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a ca. 1880 Queen Anne style house in a well-preserved neighborhood. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This is a ca. 1880 Queen Anne style house. The property appears to have originally been owned by a G. Fuller. The house has a unique, cross-gabled “jerkinhead” style roof, with two brick chimneys. There is a rear ell on the right side of the rear elevation, and a small bump out extending from that, both of which appear as if they may be additions, although there are no records in ISD files to confirm this. The house has two porches on the right side of the building. This building is not individually inventoried on MACRIS, however five other houses built in a similar era on Parsons Street are. While there is some new construction on the street, overall the neighborhood retains a good sense of historic context.

Staff Recommendation: This is a well-preserved house, with some unique architectural details, in a neighborhood with a good sense of historic context. Staff recommends finding this property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale and Victorian-era detailing of the neighborhood.

9. **383 Cherry Street**

Total Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is an inventoried ca. 1884 Queen Anne style house. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This a ca. 1884 Queen Anne style house. The house is believed to be originally owned by Henry C. Sheldon, a Methodist theologian and professor at Boston University. The house has a cross-gabled roof, with two brick chimneys and two dormers on the left side of the roof. The house features two-story bay windows on both the front and left side elevations. There are porches on both the front and rear of the house. This house is individually inventoried on MACRIS, as are eleven others on Cherry Street, and the neighborhood retains a good sense of historic context, with primarily original Victorian era homes.

Staff Recommendation: This is an inventoried 19th century house in a neighborhood with many other extant inventoried properties built in a similar era. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale and Victorian details of the neighborhood.

10. 58 Bourne Street

Total Demolition of House and Garage

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a well-preserved, ca. 1900 house on a well-preserved street. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Description: This is a ca. 1900 vernacular farmhouse. The two-story home features a hipped roof, with a centrally-located brick chimney. The house has a front porch and a one-story bay window on the left side of the home. The detached garage was constructed in 1928. There are no alterations to the home on record in ISD files. There has been some new construction on Bourne Street, however the street generally retains a good sense of historic context, with many original homes from the late 19th Century and early 20th century remaining. This home is not individually inventoried on MACRIS, however four other houses on this side of Bourne Street, all built between 1850 and 1905, are inventoried.

Staff Recommendation: This is a well-preserved house on a well-preserved street with many inventoried houses. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Proposed Finding, if Preferably Preserved: Staff would welcome plans for a proposed partial demolition. Any new construction should retain the scale of the neighborhood.

11. 399 Waltham Street

Partial Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a ca. 1735 Georgian style house listed on the National Register. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved, and approves of the proposed plans.

Description: The Dr. Samuel Wheat House is a ca. 1735 Georgian style house. The two-and-a-half-story house is five-bays-wide, with a gambrel roof that has three gabled dormers on the front side and two brick chimneys on the rear. There is a one-and-a-half-story, gambrel roofed ell that extends to the rear from the right side of the building, and a two-car garage that extends further from that. There is also a one-room addition on the left side of the house. This property was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. This is an application for partial demolition, the applicant seeks to raise the pitch of the roof of the rear ell for additional second floor space, and to build a small addition to the rear of the garage. Additionally, on the one room addition to the left of the house, the roof will be changed to a hip roof, and window openings will be made slightly smaller to match the window size on the rest of the home.

Staff Recommendation: This is a National Register listed 18th Century house. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved, and approves of the proposed plans for partial demolition.

12. 471 Washington Street

Partial Demolition

[View Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a 1948 Garrison Colonial style house. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved, and generally approves of the proposed partial demolition.

Description: This is a 1948 Garrison Colonial style house built by developer Ervin N. Birchall. The two-story, three-bay-wide house has a side gabled roof with a brick chimney on the left side of the house. There is an enclosed entryway centrally-located on the front elevation. This house is not individually inventoried on MACRIS, however many nearby buildings on Washington Street are, and the street retains a good sense of historic context. This is an application for partial demolition, and the applicant seeks to demolish the existing detached garage, to build an attached garage with living space above.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved, and generally approves of the proposed design.

13. 148 Waverley Avenue

Waiver of Demolition Delay

[View Application Here](#)

[View Original Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a landmarked ca. 1830 farmhouse.

Description: The James Riker-Edwin W. Gay House is a ca. 1830 landmarked farmhouse with Federal and Italianate style details. The two-story home features a cross-gabled roof, two ornate porches and two brick chimneys. There is a two-story ell extending back from the left side of the building. This property was originally owned and occupied by James Ricker, and was owned by Edwin W. Gay by the time of the ca. 1880 renovations that included the Italianate details.

14. 28 Chandler Place

Waiver of Demolition Delay

[View Application Here](#)

[View Original Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a ca. 1890 Victorian eclectic style house on a well-preserved street.

Description: This is a ca. 1890 Victorian eclectic style house. The house appears to have originally been owned by Michael J. Pendergast. The two-and-a-half-story house features a front gabled roof, centrally-located brick chimney, and a small front porch. There is a small bump-out on the right side of the house, and a screened-in porch at the rear, each of which appear as if they may have been added on to the original home, although there are no permit records in ISD files for either. This house is not individually inventoried on MACRIS, nor are

any others on Chandler Place, however there are many original homes remaining, and the street retains a good sense of context. Historic maps indicate that the street was developed between about 1880 and 1915.

15. **10 Crescent Street**

Waiver of Demolition Delay

[View Application Here](#)

[View Original Application Here](#)

Summary: This is a ca. 1900 Queen Anne on a street with some similar existing houses.

Description: This is a ca. 1900 Queen Anne style house, built on land owned by F. Murdock. By 1907, the house was owned by Jane Wright. The two-and-half-story house features a front-gabled roof, which is slightly asymmetrical, and slopes further downward on the left side. The home also features a bay window on the right elevation, a stone foundation, and a centrally-located brick chimney. The front porch appears to have been enclosed at some point after the home was built, however there is no record in ISD files for this alteration. This house is not inventoried on MACRIS, nor are any other on the street, however there are a number of original homes on the street that are built in a similar style and time frame.

Administrative Items

16. **Approval of Minutes**

Approval of meeting minutes for August 22, 2024, NHC meeting