



*** AGENDA ***

Date: June 25, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/288490607> or
+16465588656, 288490607#

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney S. Heath
Director
Planning & Development

Members

Nancy Grissom, Chairman
Mark Armstrong
Peter Dimond
Katie Kubie
Doug Cornelius
Amanda Stauffer Park
Ellen Klapper, Alternate
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1. 22 Esty Farm Road – Waiver Review (Ward 8)

Request to waive demo delay

Frank Utano, owner of this property, will present his plan to demolish this house. The minimum four-month period since the property was preferably preserved has elapsed.

At the January 2020 NHC hearing, staff reported that constructed in 1958, this property was included in a surveyed historic district of mid-century, split-level houses. This house and its neighbors were owned and built by Sunny Lane Homes Inc. of Christina Street in Newton and designed by Ralph I. Williams. An inground pool was installed in 1972, and by that time a rear porch had been added to the house. Charles Dana, a manager at Raytheon, was the first recorded owner of the house. He and his family still lived here in 1970. The architectural details of this Modernist house appear to be intact, with few exceptions.

2. 43 Sharpe Road – Waiver Review (Ward 8)

Request to waive demo delay

At the May 2020 hearing last month, the owner of this property presented his plan to replace this house with a new one, but the plans were not approved. This property was preferably preserved on August 22, 2019 and a one-year delay was imposed. The required four-month waiting period for a waiver request expired.

Last August, staff reported that the house was constructed in 1954, this Mid-Century Modern house was designed by A.C. Rugo, and owned and built by Ben Shaffer of Brookline. The only other permit in the file is from 1982, when a one-story rear addition was constructed. A.C. Rugo also worked with Fox Meadow Corporation at about this time but there is no evidence that he did so here. Rugo also designed the house at 44 Sharpe Road. By 1959 the owner was Maurice Sheinfeld, a salesman, and he continued to own the property through at least 1970. Unlike other neighborhoods in Newton where this house style is replicated on entire blocks, this house is somewhat of an anomaly in this neighborhood. The vertical board siding and triplicate windows are original features of this style, and its massing and scale have not been altered.

The owner presented revised drawings to the Commission that had not been included in the online packet of project information. The Commission was not prepared to review the changed design, and both the owner and Commission agreed to a continuance. Not vote was taken.

3. 125 Lincoln Street – Demolition Review (Ward 5)

Request to demolish buildings

This house was constructed in 1927 and designed by W.J. Pendergast for its first owner, Winthrop Tirell, a private school teacher and his family. The two-story house is somewhat Federal in appearance with no detailing around the front entrance, and Craftsman-esque exposed rafter tails along the main roof line and the attached porch. When the National Register district was created in Newton Highlands in the late 1970s, this property, and the few other Colonial Revival style buildings in the vicinity, were deemed to be non-contributing to the historic district. When the nomination was

revised in 1988 to include properties constructed post-1907 and into the 1920s, this property was redefined as a contributing resource to the district. Two other Colonial Revival properties in its vicinity also became contributing resources: 126 Lincoln Street (1910), and 130 Lincoln Street (1911).

Reportedly the last house to be built on Lincoln Street before #99 was built in 2003, this is one of the few Colonial Revival style homes from the 1920s in the district, and it was completed just after the Post Office building at 55-65 Lincoln Street was constructed (also a contributing resource to the district). All but four houses on the street were built between 1874 and 1889. The Robert Perlman family resided here from 1962 until this year. Perlman submitted a petition for a variance to change the house from one-family to two, but it was withdrawn a month later. Staff recommends preferably preserving this property as a contributing resource to the Newton Highlands National Register Historic District.

4. **2072 Washington Street – Partial Demolition Review (Ward 5)**

Request to demolish barn and ell

Built c.1838, this early farmhouse was historically surveyed twice, in 2011 and 2013 for its historical significance and recognition that this property met the criteria for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed demolition on this property is of the rear ell and the barn.

Where the ell attaches to this late-Federal period house, on the west side, is a rear entrance-porch leading into the house. Attached perpendicularly to this three-bay ell on the east side is a one-story, two bay backhouse with a gabled roof. Behind a portion of this backhouse to the south is a two-story gabled barn, which stands on a stone foundation.

Ellis C. and Rebecca Stedman bought this lot in 1837 from Elisha Bartlett and the house was subsequently built. Born in England c.1784, Ellis Stedman first appears in Newton census data in 1840. Stedman was one of the paper makers who developed Lower Falls into an important paper manufacturing center. Luther E. Leland, a teacher and later principal of the Lower Falls school, who also was active in social and political life in the community, obtained this house in 1869 from George Stedman. The Leland family continued to own the house for several more decades. The footprint of this house changed little over time; in 1904, the footprint was the same as it is now. In 1981, this house had 2/2 sash windows. All have since been replaced with 1/1 sash. In 1951, Norman Duehring was the owner when a permit was obtained to replace clapboards, add new steps to the front entrance, and install two new windows in the kitchen. In 1950 he was unsuccessful in his attempt to convert the house to a two-family. By the 1980s, this property was owned by Newton Wellesley Hospital and used for apartments.

Summary from the 2013 B Form: The house at 2072 Washington Street was found to be a rare and distinctive example of rural domestic architecture that predated planned suburban development in Lower Falls. The farmstead was built ca. 1838 in the late Federal style which included arched attic windows in the gables. Later in the 19th century, the front façade was updated with bay windows flanking a center entrance. Of particular note was the rare, surviving connected barn, which is diminutive in scale and once typical of rural properties on the fringes of industrial villages such as Lower Falls. The property was subdivided from a larger farm associated with the Bartlett family, and the house was constructed by Ellis Stedman. The property is significant enough to be individually eligible for the National Register despite the added siding and replaced windows. Staff recommends this property preferably preserved for architectural integrity and historic context.

5. **176 Highland Avenue – Partial Demolition Review (Ward 2)**

Request to demolish buildings

This house was constructed in 1959 in the Mid-Century Modern Style and had one owner, the Bloom family. Paul and Phyllis Bloom bought the property in 1960. There was no garage on the property when they purchased it. This property was never historically surveyed and represents a gap in the city's documentation of resources dating from this period. Compton & Pierce of Mass. Ave. in Cambridge are listed on the permit as designers of this house, and Pinerock Corporation (Rothenberg), of 50 Valley Spring Road, was the builder and owner. The original building permit describes this house as a split-level on slab that stands 16' in height.

Under the ownership of Paul Bloom, insurance agent, the two-car garage was constructed in 1960, with a decorative connector constructed the same year. The roof was stripped and re-roofed in 2002 under the same owner.

As it happens, this house-style developed a local name based on five neighborhoods and subsequent NR-listed historic districts in Lexington, MA developed on what was historically known as Peacock Farm. This narrative comes from the National Register nomination for these districts: "The Peacock Farm Historic District is a grouping of Mid-Century Modern houses located in the southeast corner of Lexington, Massachusetts, just north of MA Route 2. Most of the houses were built from a standard split-level design by the architectural firm Compton & Pierce. Known as the "Peacock Farm House," this design is characterized by a shallow-pitched, asymmetric gable roof with wide overhangs at the gable and side eaves; large expanses of glass, including horizontal bands of windows; vertical wood siding; and a hearth-centered open plan for the living and dining areas. Generally set into modest slopes, the houses have multiple levels, but nevertheless their overall form is horizontal in appearance..."

This Mid-century modern home exhibits all the tenets of Compton & Pierce's work and the style, which tends to forego decorative detail that alludes to historic periods. Form, proportion, function and a natural setting were used here to pursue the aesthetic effect for which these architects are noted. Symmetry was anathema, and the main entry became de-emphasized in the design to take the focus away from the individual. Windows also had no muntins to create the illusion that inside was out and vice versa.

Walter S. Pierce and W. Danforth Compton were classmates at the MIT graduate program in architecture, receiving masters' degrees in Architecture in 1947 from a school that had become a hot-bed for Modernist ideas. Compton and Pierce began their work at Peacock Farm in Lexington in 1952. Compton died suddenly three years later. Though both names appear on the building permit for this property, Walter S. Pierce was the architect.

Staff believes this to be an important example of Mid-Century Modern architecture in Newton and recommends that it be preferably preserved for architectural integrity and historic context.

6. **26 Lincoln Road – Partial Demolition Review (Ward 1)**

Request to demolish house and barn

A report on the historical significance of this property was prepared by Epsilon Associates of Maynard, MA. This property was historically surveyed in 1976 as having been built in 1892 but was given no historic name (NWT.1561) and was defined as having no style. Extensive alterations to the exterior of the house were also noted, including enclosed porches, replaced siding, windows, and altered fenestration. Thomas M. Waters, an Irish immigrant and clerk for the railroad industry, and his wife Margaret were the first occupants of the house in 1893 and still resided there in 1907. By 1910, they were living here with eight children. By 1916 the owner was F.A. Scott, who in that year obtained a permit for an addition for use as a bath and pantry. In 1929, the owner was listed as Bridgett Concidine. In 1963, under the ownership of Thomas Concidine, an existing porch was enclosed, and window added. A rear bedroom and den addition were constructed in 2000. During that same year, windows, doors, roof were replaced, and the house was vinyl sided.

Of more historical interest is the barn, which appears at this location on the 1907 atlas. Only a handful of other residences on this densely developed neighborhood had a barn in that year. The barn is not post-and-beam, but rather balloon framed, and very likely stored hay in the upper story. The barn stands on piers of brick, stone and concrete and lacks any discernable architectural detail. Staff was given the opportunity to tour the barn. The staff recommendation is not to preferably preserve the house or the barn.

7. **99-101 Crafts Street – Demolition Review (Ward 1)**

Request to demolish buildings

Known as the John E. Lothrop House, this end-gable, vernacular-style house was constructed c.1900 and described on the historic survey form as having no style. Lothrop was a real estate developer who purchased three land tracts in this vicinity in 1903, one of which had buildings on it, and owned this house

and the one next door at 89-91 Crafts Street. By 1901 this house was rented. In 1916 the owner of #101 was John E. Blanchard, who owned his own painting company. From 1919 to 1927, John A. Farrell, city water inspector, and his wife Bridgett owned the property and lived at #99. In 1919, two dormers were constructed, and in 1922 a two-car steel garage was constructed. Jeremiah F. Lucey, an elevator operator, bought the property in 1927 and ten years later sold the property to Paul G. and Carmela Farina, who lived here well into the 1980s. Farina was listed as a blacksmith and a foreman. In 2004 the NHC allowed a two-story side porch, which was constructed in 1962, to be removed. The date of construction for this house fits contextually into the neighborhood, but its style and level of alteration do not contribute to the visual cohesiveness of this Crafts Street neighborhood. The National Register-listed stables across the street, and two residential properties located south of this property, are better representations of the historic development of Crafts Street. Staff recommends not preferably preserving this property.

Administrative Discussion:

a) Minutes from May hearing