



*** AGENDA ***

Date: November 19, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89856831198?pwd=NkdmNmduLUplM2pseTdRTXltc29wUT09> or
+13017158592,,89856831198# PASSCODE: 816605

1. **22 Hobart Road – Partial Demolition Review (Ward 7)**
Request to add on to house, demolish garage

Owners of this house wish to demolish the detached garage and add on to the house.

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney S. Heath
Director
Planning & Development

Members

Doug Cornelius, Chair
Mark Armstrong
Nancy Grissom
Peter Dimond
Katie Kubie
Alan Mayer

Amanda Stauffer Park
Deborah Budd, Alternate
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt.

According to GIS, this Colonial Revival Style property was constructed in 1910, but there is no evidence of this property until c.1918 when Charles E. Abbott, landowner of the east side of Hobart, subdivided his holdings into house lots. The house features timbering in the front gable and is stuccoed throughout. In 1920, the Abbott Company of 3 Park Street pulled a permit for a small rear addition to the house and a detached garage. A second garage permit in the file suggest that the garage wasn't constructed until 1923, when one was constructed under the ownership of Loris U. Edgehill, a wool merchant from Utah. His family resided here until selling the property in 1941. No architect is listed on this permit. In 1965, Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Bernstein added a one-story rear entrance at the northwest corner and a screened porch at the northeast corner. This porch was removed in 1998 and replaced with a family room. This property is in a neighborhood of other Colonial Revival 1920s homes. Staff recommends this property preferably preserved for architectural integrity and historic context.

2. **43 Gray Cliff Road, NR – Partial Demolition Review (Ward 7)**
Request to replace porch, etc; demolish garage/pool house

The proposed project at this address is to restore and update portions of the house and demolish the detached garage/pool building behind the house.

Listed as a contributing element to the Gray Cliff National Register Historic District, this is the Robert Casson House and it was constructed in 1895 in the Shingle Style. The Gray Cliff National Register Historic District was listed in 1986 and at that time included eight properties, of which this is one. The district was later expanded to include The Ledges, which features homes built after 1900. The Gray Cliff Historic District contains examples of late nineteenth century architectural styles, and one of the city's few clusters of Shingle style residences. There is no building permit in the files for this structure and no known architect.

Robert Casson (1848-1931) was a physician who emigrated from England to Boston in 1867 but didn't become a US citizen until 1896. He was living in Malden in 1880 prior to purchasing this piece of land. When he bought the land from Robert R. Bishop in 1894, the deed stipulated that "no barn, stable, or outbuilding shall be erected or maintained therein within a distance of 30 feet from the easterly or southerly lines thereof..." In 1910 Casson appears to have switched careers and gone into furniture manufacturing and woodworking. He continued to reside here until his death in 1931.

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Charles and Mabel Thurston owned the property by the late 1940s but foreclosed on it in 1970. In that year John Briston Sullivan purchased the property at auction, and a year later pulled the permit for the pool over the garage, which is still extant. Two years later he sold the property to Elice and Marlowe Sigal, owner of a chemical company, who owned the property for many years.

There are only two building permits in the ISD file for this property: in 1911, Casson applied for a permit to build a two-story addition for the 'enlargement of chamber and sunroom, or open air chamber.' This appears to be the extension on the east side of the house. The second permit was pulled by Sullivan in 1971 for construction of the pool over the existing garage. McKinnon Associates designed it and a small rear addition to the rear of the garage. There is no building permit for the garage. Staff recommends preferably preserving the house for architectural integrity and historic context, where an 18-month delay is imposed. Staff does not recommend preserving the garage building.

3. **1062 Beacon Street – Demolition Review (Ward 6)**

Request to demolish buildings

This small Dutch Colonial house shows a construction date of 1935 on the Assessors database and has not been previously surveyed. This parcel was surveyed in 1924. Deeds for this property show that the land was sold to Alfred S. Albee, a carpenter, whose family lived at this address through the 1940s. When the property was sold in 1945 to Charles E. Downing, who worked in advertising, a portion of the premises was reserved subject to a lease to the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company. The property was sold in 1956 to Joseph T. Farry, who is listed in directories as a manager. The house has undergone little change over time, with the exception of replacement windows and siding. In the immediate neighborhood it is of later construction and has since become contextually isolated by Whole Foods and parking lots in the immediate vicinity. Staff recommends not preferably preserving this house.

4. **27 Floral Street – Demolition Review (Ward 6)**

Request to demolish buildings

The Assessors date for this Colonial Revival house is 1927, but the building permits, the Engineering division, and atlases show a date of c.1885. This property has not been surveyed. This street, formerly known as Winchester Street, was first platted in 1870. The first owner to appear on the 1886 atlas is George D. Atkins, who resided here and worked in silks. At that time the address was listed as Floral Avenue. Atkins still resided there in 1895. By 1907, the Avenue changed to Street and James Atkins appears on the atlas as owner.

In 1916, the owner was Harry L. Gilman, a consulting engineer, who with his wife Ethel obtained a permit to build a poultry and tool house, in addition to an extant greenhouse. The Boston & Albany rail line ran behind the property. In 1918, the Gilmans pulled a permit for a summer house and in 1922 for a garage at the rear of the property. They lived here through at least 1936. By 1944, Ely Chiriboga, a photographer, and his family lived here through at least the 1960s. This house is in a neighborhood of similarly constructed, massed and designed houses, though this house has been extensively altered. The house next door at 33 Floral Street was surveyed as a well-preserved example of the Queen Anne Style, even though it was constructed ten years after the house at 27 Floral. Staff suggest that this house is too altered to preferably preserve.

5. **3 Bradford Road – Waiver Request (Ward 5)**

Request to waive demo delay

Babak Bina, owner of this property, will present clarifications to his plan to demolish the garage and add onto the house. The property was preferably preserved at the October 2020 NHC hearing.

Last month, staff reported that this Colonial Revival Style house was constructed c.1890, and the property has not been surveyed. The actual construction date is closer to 1905. The 1895 atlas shows this neighborhood as platted but there were no houses constructed at that time. An engineering survey for this street was completed in 1900, and by 1907 the house and a detached garage were standing here. By 1914, Herbert S. Virtue, who worked at Commercial Chemical Company, obtained a permit for a portable steel garage. An exterior chimney was added the same year. The Virtue family owned the property well in to the 1940s. At that point, the property had multiple owners who changed every year. There are no building permits in the file between 1914 and this year. The house was built at the same time as surrounding homes, in the same Colonial Revival Style, massing, and scale. At some point aluminum siding was added and the windows were replaced.

Commission members asked for the following information and clarifications:

- there was confusion over the dormer, the current one vs. the new one.
- Members wanted to see a more specific window plan with a muntin profile that matched the existing windows.
- The garage addition needed a roofing profile that mirrored that of the main house (slightly bell-cast, with deep overhang).
- Members also asked for an elevation of the existing house with a clear demarcation of what was to be removed from the house in preparation for the addition. It wasn't clear to the commission what was existing and what was proposed.
- 3-D images of the proposed addition and house were also requested.
- Members had a difficult time making sense of the proposed overall roof plan, and how each slope would be integrated.
- A list of proposed materials, and cut-sheets where necessary, was also requested.

6. **1488 Commonwealth Avenue – Demolition Review (Ward 3)**

Request to demolish buildings

11/12/20: This item was been withdrawn

Built in 1951, this Ranch Style house was owned and built by John Bossi, of Brookline, and designed by Joseph Selwyn, who was an architect living and working in Belmont who was also active in Newton designing capes and ranches after the war. The original building permit specifies a wood frame house with a stone and brick veneer. In 1953 Bossi sold the house to Charles I. Taylor, a judge, and his wife Rose. They continued to live there until the early 1980s. This house is one of a few located on large lots along this section of Commonwealth Avenue, which appears to have experienced little demolition activity. The house is also architecturally intact. Staff recommends preferably preserving this property for historic context.

7. **60 Temple Street, NR – Partial Demolition Review (Ward 3)**

Request to add on to house, demolish detached garage

Constructed c.1852 in the Italianate Style, this house is known historically as the William R. Babcock House for its first recorded owner and has a survey form on file with the state. He served in the militia prior to his marriage in 1859. An addition on the south side was constructed c.1900.

This two-bay house has its end gable facing the street with a side door, and the house is noted for its bracketed eaves, paired side bay windows, long first-floor windows, the doorway transom and sidelights, and small-paned sash windows. The front veranda is probably an addition that dates from the late 19th or early 20th century. This house was constructed prior to the influx of commuter-generated development in West Newton and is noted stylistically as marked contrast from the more elaborate Queen Anne and Revival houses in the late-19th century neighborhood. This property had more square footage but was sold off to create new house lots.

The house was owned by W.R. Babcock in 1855 and acquired by E.F. Davidson prior to 1874. By 1868 Babcock no longer appeared in Newton directories, and in 1874 the house was owned by E.F. Davidson, who appears to have constructed the addition off the rear. Davidson continued to own this house and another to the west of it on the same lot. By 1895 this lot was subdivided off and the owner was listed as Richard W. Buntin, who worked in insurance. He was still there in 1917. In 1929 it was Rudolph F. Koops, listed in directories as a manager. The rear addition is still visible on maps, and there continue to be no outbuildings. The Koops lived here until selling their house to Gerald C. Garcelon, a physician, in 1946. The Garcelon family lived here through the 1970s. This house is a unique and intact example of the Italianate Style and staff recommends that it be preferably preserved.

8. **23 Smith Court – Demolition Review (Ward 3)**

Request to demolish buildings

Built c.1900 on land owned by James H. Richardson, a local landowner, this end-gable house was constructed as a rental property. In 1916 a rear ell was filled in order to construct a sleeping porch. By 1918, the owner was Joe Beneghi, who in that year sought to sell the house to owner/occupants. In 1922, Virginia and Carlo Castoldi resided at this address and added on to the pantry in that year. By 1932 the owner was Pasquale Marrazzo, who cut in a new door opening and covered over the old one. By 1952 the owner was J. Gentile, who changed a window to a door on the first story and added a bigger window to the bathroom. Over time this house lost its siding, windows, architectural detail, front porch, and doors. Though the massing and form of the house are generally evident, the house has lost too much original fabric to be considered historically significant. Staff recommends not preserving this house.

9. **176 Highland Avenue – Waiver Request (Ward 2)**

Request to waive demo delay

The new owner of this property wishes to obtain a waiver of the demo delay to replace the current house with a new single-family home. This property was unanimously preferably preserved at the June 2020 hearing.

In June, staff reported that 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 happened, 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 believed this to be an important example of Mid-Century Modern architecture in Newton.

Commission members discussed the architectural merits of this design and that it was well preserved and clearly from a distinct time and era. Councilor Danberg told the Commission she appreciated the Modern Style, and that if the new owners wished to replace the house in similar design, they should add on.

10. 29 Dalby Street – Demolition Review (Ward 1)
Request to demolish buildings

This house shows an Assessors date of 1950 and has not been surveyed. Further research shows that this parcel, known as Lot 37, was platted by 1886 on land of Mary Boudrot but no house was built that year. A 1949 deed for this property refers to it as land, with no buildings mentioned, and atlases from all prior years

show this as a vacant lot, so the 1950 construction date appears to be correct. The lot changed hands twice in the 1940s and a Boudrot family member appears to have bought it back in 1949. In 1960, Boudrot sold the house and lot to John Tomaski, alternately listed as a technician and driver, who sold it in 1967 to Joan and Peter Calabro. Joan Calabro was a long-time Newton city employee in the ISD office. This property is on the agenda because it appeared older than it was. But it isn't. Staff recommends not preferably preserving this house.

Administrative Discussion:

- a) Minutes from October hearing
- b) Appoint member to Farm Commission
- c) Working Group inquiry: post-1945 buildings