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STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: August 13, 2020
DATE: August 3, 2020
TO: Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission
FROM: Barbara Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner
SUBJECT: **Additional Review Information**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the members of the Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission (Newton Upper Falls HDC) with information about the significance of the properties being reviewed and the application process, which may be useful in the review and decision-making process of the Newton Upper Falls HDC. Additional information may be presented at the meeting that the Newton Upper Falls HDC can take into consideration when discussing a Local Historic District Review application.

Dear Newton Upper Falls HDC Members,

The following is additional information for the Local Historic District Review applications that you should have received in your meeting packet.

Applications

937 Chestnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The Second Empire style house is one of the few mansard cottages in the district and was built between 1874 and 1881 by Samuel A. Piper. The 1875 City Directory lists him as having his residence and a dry goods business on Boylston Street near Chestnut Street. The 1880 U.S. Federal Census lists his occupation as carpenter and living in the house with his wife Abby M., son Edwin D., and daughter Ethel M.

APPLICATION PROCESS: In 2005, the owners were approved to install the existing four-foot-tall closed board cedar fence at the front of the property. The Commission was concerned with closing off the property but agreed with the owners' concerns about privacy and screening trash barrels. The Commission did not approve the four-foot-tall closed board fence with lattice topper that was submitted in the application.

The owners want to move the fence location by two feet and to replace it with a taller cedar fence – a four-foot closed board fence with a lattice topper to match the design of the fences along the property lines. Closed board fences at the front of a property are not considered appropriate in the district because the typical streetscape has open front areas.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

MHC Form B

Photographs

Product information

2005 application and minutes

3-5 Summer Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The Colonial Revival house was built in 1949 for the Methodist Church as a single-family house. The builder was Kenteth E. Stata of Needham Heights. The building replaced a two-family house owned by the Methodist Episcopal Church that was rented out. The 1951 Newton City Directory listed Stata as a carpenter living at 18 Ohio Avenue in Upper Falls with his wife Lillian F. Stata.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to build a ten-foot-wide brick patio along the left side of the house and screened porch. They also want to replace the existing asphalt front and back walkways with brick.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Site plan

Photographs

13-19 Winter Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The circa 1840 Federal style house is one of the oldest surviving structures in Newton Upper Falls. The first owner appears to have been Elijah W.H. Trask who was a foreman at the rolling mill.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to demolish the existing building. They submitted a request for emergency demolition; however, the group that inspected the building did not recommend emergency demolition. The group determined that while the building needs considerable work, it does not pose an immediate threat to public health and safety (see letter from Commissioner John Lojek.)

If the Commission denies a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application, the Commission must consider a Certificate of Hardship within 60 days from receipt of the application unless the applicant agrees in writing to continue the review to a future regularly scheduled meeting.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Assessors database map

MHC Form B

Letter from structural engineer

Purchase and Sale agreement

Owner request for Emergency Demolition

Photographs

Letter from John Lojek re request for Emergency Demolition

Additional feedback from site visit

Letter from abutter

Administrative discussion:

Minutes: The draft June minutes were emailed to Commission members and are included in the packet.