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STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 8, 2020
DATE: September 28, 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

22 Cliff Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The circa 1840 stone building was built by Otis Pettee at the same time the stone barn on the adjoining parcel was built. It served as a shop, and later as the residence of the caretaker of the silk mill.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to extend the existing wood fence approximately 35 feet along the left property line toward Cliff Road.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Fence Plan
Photographs
MHC Form B

33-35 Sullivan Avenue – Certificate of Appropriateness

Note: Sullivan Avenue is a private street; the Commission has jurisdiction over elements that are visible from the surrounding public ways.

Note: At the April 2019 meeting, the owners were required to replace the diamond front entry porch lattice with vertical lattice per what the Commission approved, and to change the entry stair fascia and trim. Staff asked the owners to provide an update on those changes. If the changes have not been addressed, the Commission may deny new applications pending resolution and the owners can resubmit the current application once they comply.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The circa 1855 Greek Revival house was the home of William Sullivan who worked as a machinist and as a teamster.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to renovate the three-season porch on the left side of the house. The windows and doors will be replaced, and the porch will be resided.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

MHC Form B

Photographs

Product and material information

Information about the front entry porch lattice and stair fascia requirements: the April 2019 minutes and photographs of the lattice and stair fascia conditions in 2019

959 Chestnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violation)

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The Federal/Greek Revival style house was built circa 1825 and is located within an important cluster of early 19th century houses on Chestnut Street. (Number 954 (circa 1830), 960 (circa 1830), 965 (circa 1825), 966 (circa 1830), 969 (1843), and 970 (circa 1820). 959 Chestnut Street is representative of the housing type that was common to the period when Rufus Ellis was establishing mill buildings and factories. In 2019, the owner was approved to keep and restore the main house block, to remove and replace the front porch, demolish the rear additions, and build new additions and a garage.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The review of the demolition of the main house block and left-side bay violation is continued from the September meeting. The owners were approved to reinforce the existing foundation and to build the rough framing with the requirement that the dimensions be reproduced exactly as they were. They were required to come back to the Commission with detailed drawings for all the trim details which need to exactly match the existing historic details.

The Commission must review and approve all the trim details before other work can start on the main house block and left-side bay. The Commission may require mock-ups. The required trim details included the porch, the bay, fascia, soffit, corner board, casing, barge board and water table.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

September 2020 decision

Drawings

Photographs

14 Ellis Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violation)

Note: When determining what is visible, the Commission does not take vegetation into account.

Note: In the January 2019 working session with the previous owner, Commission members indicated that raising the roof on the existing house could be considered depending on whether the design was appropriate.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The circa 1870 house is typical of single-family mill worker housing built in the 1860s and 1870s. When the property was moved in 1907 from the original location near the river, it was owned by Walter Chesley. Chesley owned this property and three others on the hill. Several houses were moved from the riverfront area after the park at Hemlock Gorge was formed in 1895.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to demolish the existing chimney and raise the rear roof to create a flat roof at the back. **Work was started on the property without approvals or permits.**

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Assessors database map

Photographs

Product and material information

MHC Form B

Drawings

Plans

January 2019 meeting minutes

Administrative discussion:

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