



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**  
Department of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone  
(617) 796-1120  
Telefax  
(617) 796-1142  
TDD/TTY  
(617) 796-1089  
[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)

Barney S. Heath  
Director

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## STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: September 10, 2020  
DATE: August 31, 2020  
TO: Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission  
FROM: Barbara Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner  
SUBJECT: **Additional Review Information**

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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.

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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

#### ***347-349 Elliot Street – Certificate of Appropriateness***

**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE:** The circa 1850 house was owned by the Elliot Manufacturing Company and built as workers' housing. In 2018, the owners were approved to replace the windows and put in window casings and sills that were appropriate to the age and style of the house.

**APPLICATION PROCESS:** The owners want to replace the siding with cedar siding and replace the corner boards with primed pine. The asphalt shingle roof will be replaced with Timberline fiberglass asphalt shingles and the chimneys will be repointed. **The Commission should confirm that the design/dimensions of the proposed siding and cornerboards are appropriate to the age and style of the house and advise if there are other trim elements that should be considered.**

**MATERIALS PROVIDED:**  
MHC Form B

Photographs

Product and material information

### ***109 High Street – Certificate of Appropriateness***

**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE:** The Greek Revival house was probably built by Oren Colburn circa 1840 shortly before he died. His widow Mary Colburn and son William H. Colburn lived in the house at least until the 1870s. William H. Colburn, and later his son William O. Colburn, maintained a dry goods store on Chestnut Street near Winter Street. The house is distinguished by the heavy Greek Revival columns and wide entablature on the front porch. Between 2016 and 2019, the owners were approved to renovate the existing house, install solar panels, and install hardscaping. The owners were also approved to demolish an existing workshop/shed with the requirement that the shed would be rebuilt in-kind in a location of the owners' choosing.

**APPLICATION PROCESS:** The owners want to rebuild the workshop/shed that was required to be rebuilt as a condition of demolishing the historic outbuilding as a smaller structure with a different door and window program and HardiePlank clapboard siding instead of beveled shiplap siding. The original/approved structure was 18'-6" by 15'-4" with a 7'-6" wall height and 3/12 roof pitch. Proposed is 13'-6" by 10' with a 7' wall height and 8/12 roof pitch. **Note: the 2018 decision required the owners to come back with details about the doors, windows, trim, etc., before starting construction of the structure. We still need those details.**

They are also requesting approval for the boulder retaining/landscaping walls that were installed behind the house and along the driveway without Commission review and approval.

**MATERIALS PROVIDED:**

Site plan

Drawings

Photographs

Previously approved workshop/shed drawings and decision

MHC Form B

### ***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:** On August 19<sup>th</sup>, the main house block and left-side bay were demolished without the necessary Commission approvals when the structure collapsed. It was determined at a site visit on August 26<sup>th</sup> that nothing from the historic wood structure could be salvaged and that the structure needed to be demolished and removed for safety reasons. The owners were

required to protect the existing foundation. No new work should start until the Commission issues its findings. Staff directed the owners to submit a plan for remedial action to reconstruct the main house block and left-side bay in-kind, detailed drawings, and the drawings of the original house and advised that the Commission might require additional information.

**MATERIALS PROVIDED:**

Violation letter

Letter to Commissioner Lojek

Previously approved drawings and decisions

Photographs

**Administrative discussion:**

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