



**\* REVISED AGENDA \***

**Date:** December 17, 2020

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88931796987>

or +13017158592,,88931796987#

1. **345 Walnut Street, NR – Working session (Ward 2)**  
Request to update NHC on proposed plans

The Public Buildings Department will present an update for this building. This property was preferably preserved at the September 2020 NHC hearing.

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.

Staff reported in September that the Newton Senior Center, formerly Newtonville Branch Library was constructed in 1938 in the Classical Revival Style and is a contributing resource to the Newtonville National Register Historic District. Originally named the John R. Prescott library in honor of its largest local donor, this building has historically served as a visual anchor to the southern end of the historic district, which distinguishes the brick commercial village buildings to the north from the high school and largely residential development to the south. The City of Newton owned the building when it was constructed in 1938, and it was designed by the firm of Robb & Little of Stuart Street in Boston. The builder was Concrete Construction Company of Chelsea. Prior to the library's construction, this was the site of the Newton Club.

The library was the target of an arsonist in 1983, which resulted in heavy damage, but the library was renovated. After the closure of the Newtonville library in the early 1990s, renovations and additions to the building were completed in 1993 to adapt it for use as the city's Senior Center. From the city's webpage: 'What had been two large reading rooms on the main floor of the Newtonville Library became an activities room and a dining wing. What had previously been an auditorium and a children's room transformed into an art studio, a health maintenance suit, a library and project rooms. To the back of the main floor and basement were added areas of storage, bathrooms, kitchen space and an elevator.' Staff recommends preferably preserving this property as a contributing element to the Newtonville Historic District.

2. **Angino Farm (303 Nahanton Street), CR – Proposed new construction (Ward 8)**  
Request to install new greenhouse, exterior doors, electric fencing

Members of the Angino Farm Board will present their plan to construct a new greenhouse on the property, install an electrical fence, and replace doors. The conservation restriction on this property grants review jurisdiction to the Newton Historical Commission with respect to protecting historic features on the farm.

What is now known as Angino Farm, named for the owners from whom the City bought the property in 2005, this parcel of land has been farmed for over 300 years.

Sec. 7-92, Historical Commission Review of Farm Improvements. Proposed changes to the exterior of structures on the Site as well as any proposed new construction on the Site shall be subject to review by the Newton Historical Commission for consistency with the Farm's historic character. Prior to implementation of proposed improvements, the Farm Commission shall consider any recommendations of the Historical Commission and provide, in writing, to the Historical Commission, mayor, and city council its reasons for rejecting any such recommendations that are not accepted. The

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provisions of this paragraph will be superseded by any ordinance adopted to provide Historical Commission authority over city owned properties of a historic nature

3. **1 Chestnut Street, NR – Landmark designation hearing (Ward 3)**  
Request to designate local landmark

This property was nominated by a city councilor on January 2, 2020 for designation as a local landmark. At the January hearing, the Commission voted to authorize staff to prepare a landmarks report for this property. The Local Landmark ordinance was revised in June 2020, and this report was completed in accordance with the new ordinance language. Staff will present the report's recommendations.

Built as the Newton Trust Company in 1932, this Colonial Revival Style building is a freestanding brick structure that is a contributing element to the West Newton National Register Historic District. The Bank is now owned by the Bank of America.

**12. Recommendations**

The property has been maintained over time and adapted to modern use with accessibility improvements. The building has also retained the style and appearance of its most visible period of historic significance. This property continues to contribute to the West Newton National Register-listed historic district. However, in accordance with the newly drafted local landmark ordinance:

- this historic property does not stand alone as an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship. The design of the building is synonymous with the architectural context of the district, but as an example of Colonial Revival architecture, it does not stand alone;
- the property is associated with architect James H. Ritchie who contributed to the commercial development of West Newton Village, but in this individual instance did not significantly contribute to the cultural, historic, architectural or archeological aspect of the development of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the United States of America;
- this is a notable contextual example synonymous with a c.1930 local bank, but this building was not a signature building for Ritchie or for the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America; or
- there are no documented historical events or activities that occurred at the property that have made an outstanding contribution to, or which best represent some important aspect of, the history of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America.

4. **989-1003 Watertown Street, NR – Landmark designation hearing (Ward 3)**  
Request to designate local landmark

This property was nominated by a city councilor on January 2, 2020 for designation as a local landmark. At the January hearing, the Commission voted to authorize staff to prepare a landmarks report for this property. The Local Landmark ordinance was revised in June 2020, and this report was completed in accordance with the new ordinance language. Staff will present the report's recommendations.

Known historically as the Robinson Block, this commercial building was constructed c.1875 and is a contributing resource to the West Newton National Register Historic District. The current tenant is CVS.

**12. Recommendations**

The property has been maintained over time and adapted to modern use in part with

accessibility improvements and changes over time to the first story. The building has also retained the style and appearance of its most visible period of historical significance. This property continues to contribute to the West Newton National Register-listed historic district. In accordance with the newly drafted local landmark ordinance:

- this historic property stands alone as an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship. The building is synonymous with the architectural context of the historic district, even though it was constructed thirty years earlier than many of the brick building and edifices in the district.
- the property significantly contributes to the cultural, historic, architectural or archeological aspect of the development of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the United States of America;
- this is a notable contextual example synonymous with c.1880 Victorian Gothic architecture for the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America; or
- documented historical events or activities that occurred at this property have made an outstanding contribution to, or which best represent some important aspect of, the history of the City of Newton, Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America.

5. **10 Carl Street – Demolition Review (Ward 8)**

Request to demolish buildings

This house was constructed in 1948 in the Cape style as part of a surveyed neighborhood known as the Charlemont Subdivision, which consists of small, pre- and post-war houses on small lots. The house was designed by Joseph Selwyn and owned and constructed by Alfred P. Flibotte of Brighton. There are no other permits in the file aside from gas and electrical.

The Charlemont Subdivision is generally defined by Winchester Street to the east, Wallace Street to the south, and Carl Street to the north. The survey form for this area states the following: "The area was platted in 1920 with very small lots. Those around the oval formed by Carl and Charlemont Streets were developed fairly quickly and are characterized by small wood-frame cottages, many of which make few if any stylistic references. The other streets in the subdivision developed more slowly and include many houses from the 1940s, 1950s and later. All of the houses are quite modest, and most are one story cottages; many include detached garages at the rear of their lot. Somewhat varied terrain and large amounts of open space in the center of and surrounding the subdivision lend a rural air despite the density of construction."

In 1922, the development was advertised as "A new development where a man of moderate means may build a home in a neighborhood reasonably restricted to create and maintain an agreeable residential Community." The area was developed by Neil McIntosh, a trustee for the Suburban Real Estate Development Company of Boston, which had developed similar areas in Wellesley, Arlington Terrace, Revere and Lake Cochituate Park. A number of builders were active in this subdivision, but few architects. Houses were constructed between 1920 and 1950 and represented various styles. This house was not identified as a unique architectural example in the survey.

Two other homes in this neighborhood were proposed for full demo in 2012 and 2016, at 39 and 44 Carl Street. The house at #44 was not preferably preserved, and the other at #39 was found not to meet the criteria for historical significance. This house and the one to the north at #20 were constructed in the 1940s and are surrounded on three sides by homes constructed in the 1920s. The first owner of this house was Francis A. Mills, who worked in insurance. The Mills sold the house in 1952 to John P. Konvent, salesman, who lived at this address and put it in trust for the children until it was sold in 2018. Staff recommends not preferably preserving this house.

6. **176 River Street – Demolition Review (Ward 3)**

Request to demolish buildings

This item appeared on the October agenda but was removed by the owner. The property has a new owner who is proposing full demolition.

Built in 1883 according to the Assessors database, this cottage style house was constructed closer to 1870 as a two-story, single room-deep house with bay windows on either side and a farmers' porch in front. The property has not been surveyed. The 1874 atlas shows a house on this lot owned by William B. Taffe, a mason, with a large attached rear ell. He was still residing here in 1895. By 1897, another mason named James R. Gallagher resided here, and he obtained a building permit in 1916 for an addition on a barn wagon shed, which no longer appears to be standing. In 1920, he constructed a rear ell on the house (which must have replaced the earlier one). In 1949, a concrete block detached garage was constructed behind the house under the ownership of Pasquale Persico, listed as a gardener. Two years prior, Persico constructed a cold frame on the side of the tool shed, which also appears to be gone.

A plot plan from 1947 shows that behind the house there were three outbuildings: the tool house (built 1939), an outbuilding 'to be removed,' and a henhouse. None are currently standing. On his building permit for the concrete block garage, Mr. Persico listed the date of construction of this house as approximately 1870. This appears to be correct. In the early 1870s, there were dozens of homes built along the south side of River Street in this neighborhood, including this one. This was clearly part of a larger residential neighborhood of similarly massed and scaled homes. The exact construction dates of the bay windows and roof dormers are not known, but appear to date to 1880 and c.1925, respectively. Staff recommends this property preferably preserved for historic context.

7. **15 Ruane Circle – Demolition Review (Ward 3)**

Request to demolish buildings

This Ranch Style house was constructed in about 1952 on land that was subdivided in 1951. This house appears to be in original condition, at least from the exterior. The ISD file for this property was missing so it's not clear what permits may have been pulled for the property over time. The first owners were Grace and Antonio Farina, listed as a vice president, but Anthony died in 1957. By 1963 the house was owned by Allstate Finance Corporation. Joseph Dellipriscoli, a machinist, bought the house from the bank that year and his family continued to own it through the early 1990s. This cul de sac has two homes on it: #12 and #15. The house at #12 came before this commission in 2015 and was preferably preserved for historic context. Since this is the only other house on the circle that could provide context, staff recommends the property at 15 Ruane Circle preferably preserved for historic context.

8. **180 Allen Avenue – Demolition Review (Ward 5)**

Request to demolish buildings

Built in 1960, this house was designed in the Contemporary Style by Stanley Myers, who resided at 21 Manet Circle in Chestnut Hill. The house was built for Raymond Wolfson, a merchant who moved here from elsewhere in Newton. The builder was Charles D. Train of Waban. Aside from roof repairs due to tree damage, no permits for structural work were pulled for this property. About 30 buildings in the Boston area designed by Myers have been surveyed, including the Valley Spring Road/Dorr Road historic district in Newton, and his own house on Manet Circle. Several of his Brookline buildings were also surveyed and one (57 Chatham Street) is included in the Longwood Historic District, which is listed on the National Register.

From the survey form for his house at 21 Manet Circle: "Stanley Myers was born on December 5, 1923 in Brookline Massachusetts. He attended the Cambridge School of Weston graduating in 1941 and went on to study violin. From 1943-1945, he served as an infantry soldier in the U.S. Army in France, Germany, and Austria earning a Purple Heart and Bronze Star. After the war Myers attended Harvard College and later the

Graduate School of Design at Harvard graduating in 1951 after having studied with Walter Gropius...Myers largely focused on residential properties and designed many ranch and contemporary homes in Newton and neighboring communities as well as homes on Cape Cod and in New Hampshire. His practice includes roughly 150 residences (including neighboring buildings on Manet Circle), numerous institutional buildings and many remodel projects throughout the Boston area.”

The Wolfsons bought the land from Bertha J. Richardson and before building their house on the lot had to comply with the following deed provision: “No building shall be erected or placed on the granted premises other than a single family dwelling house and accessory buildings, the cost of constructing which shall be not less than \$20,000, and the plans for which shall have been approved in writing by the grantor.”

Staff recommends this property preferably preserved for architectural integrity and historic context.

9. **509 Auburn Street – Demolition Review (Ward 4)**

Request to demolish buildings

This bungalow Style house was constructed in 1924 under the ownership of Berenice Gray, of Newton. The architect was listed as ‘private.’ Gray owned the property until 1946, when it was sold to a succession of owners until 1953 when Santa G. Walazek purchased the house, whose family owned the home for many years. Directory information could not be found on his occupation. The ISD file contains few permits, but much has clearly been done to the house. This property is located on an historic road in Newton and houses in the immediate vicinity date from the 1860s to 1920s, representing a mix of styles. This house likely had a front porch, which has been lost, as have original windows and siding. Staff recommends not preferably preserving this property.

10. **1488 Commonwealth Avenue – Demolition Review (Ward 3)**

Request to demolish buildings

This item was withdrawn from the November hearing due to ownership issues. The new owner plans to present this property as a full demolition.

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 and who was 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.

11. **304-306 Walnut Street – Demolition Review (Ward 2)**

Request to demolish building

Constructed c.1937, this one-story commercial brick building stands just south of the Masonic Temple in the Newtonville Historic District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Newtonville South Village Center is a small, cohesive grouping of one-story commercial blocks dating from the 1920s and 1930s. Located entirely on Walnut Street, the district is roughly bounded by Austin Street to the north and Highland Avenue on the south. In the National Register nomination that was prepared in 1988, this building is listed as a non-contributing resource to the district.



c.1940s



2020

This portion of Walnut Street, just south of the railroad tracks, was first developed with one-story commercial buildings in 1922, with the construction of 323-335 Walnut Street (Wash & Dry). Adjacent buildings were constructed in the mid-to-late 1920s. This era culminated in the demolition of the building that was once at this address, which was owned by Star Market owner Stephen Mugar. The building standing there now was designed by architect/builder L.C. Titus and housed the first Star Market in the neighborhood, as well as an F.W. Woolworths Five and Ten. The building at this address is described in the National Register nomination as “a heavily altered one story block dating from c.1936-38.” With the exception of what may have been crenelated brick roof trim, there is no evidence of the original sign rail, retail windows, entryway, or original siding. Though the massing and scale of the building fit with the remainder of the district, there is no visible historical evidence of the original building. Staff contacted the Homestead with the hope that an original photo may be available.

**Administrative Discussion:**

**a) Minutes from November hearing**