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STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: January 14, 2021
DATE: January 5, 2021
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

13-19 Winter Street – Working Session

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 owner wants feedback on a proposal to demolish the rear addition, to expand the main house block three feet front and back by moving the existing front and back walls out to a new foundation, and to build a “T”-shaped addition on the left side of the house. Staff has sent the owner links to the City of Newton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Site plan with sketch
Elevations
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: The owner submitted two applications for the items that were found to be in violation, except for the building heights which still need to be surveyed by the City Engineering Department.

If items are determined NOT to be visible from a public way, the owner is entitled to a Certificate of Non-Applicability for those items. Trees, plantings, and fences are not considered obstructions; items that would be visible from a public way if there were no trees, plantings, or fences are determined to be visible.

The items for the first application are:

1. Exposed basement with windows on the rear addition which is not shown on the 10-2019 approved drawings. The submitted drawings show this change.
2. Installed windows which appear wider than what was shown on the 10-2019 approved drawings. The submitted drawings show the windows which were approved in 10-2019.
3. Changed window program on the left side of the garage. The submitted drawings show this change.
4. There is a space between the window headers and the frieze board on the front elevation which is not shown on the 10-2019 approved drawings. The submitted drawings show this change.
5. There is additional space between the garage light fixtures and the top of the garage door which is not shown on the 10-2019 approved drawings. The submitted drawings show this change.
6. There are changes to the rear gable elevation and back of the addition which are not shown on the 10-2019 approved drawings. These include more of the foundation is exposed, addition of a basement door, changes to the trim details, removal of a window, addition of stairs and retaining walls, and grade changes. The submitted drawings show these changes.
7. It appears that there will be some grade changes, at least at the back. The submitted drawings include grade points and contour lines and there is a Newton GIS topo map included at the end of the list of violations to review.

The second application for the new retaining walls, which were not reviewed or approved by the Commission, was submitted separately.

The building heights still need to be verified.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Assessors database map

Decisions from 12-10-2020 emergency meeting
Jay Walter 12-3-2020 letter re violations
Photographs
List of violations to review
Revised elevation drawings
Basement window specifications
Civil plan submitted for drainage plans
Proposed site plan
Proposed site plan with grade points along the property line
Retaining wall plan
Retaining wall specifications
Mortgage inspection plan
Drawings approved 10-2019
MHC Form B

Administrative discussion:

Minutes: Draft November and December minutes are included for your review.