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STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: February 11, 2021
DATE: February 4, 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

14 Ellis Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The modest circa 1870 house was originally sited on the road edge near the Charles River and probably served as housing for local millworkers. The house was moved after the Commonwealth of Massachusetts formed the Hemlock Gorge park in 1895; various records indicate that it was moved sometime between 1896 and 1907. Several other houses and structures were either moved or removed from the Hemlock Gorge park.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owner wants to replace the right-side double-hung window that is behind the bay with a paired double-hung window. The proposed window will match the other windows approved for the back of the house. **Staff approved the other changes in the application – windows and doors on the back and the window on the back side of the bay – as not visible from a public way. The drawings in the application that relate to the right-side window are highlighted in yellow.**

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Elevations

Photos

Product information

Decision approving work not visible from the public way

954 Chestnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The circa 1830 Federal style house was built by carpenter Luther S. Raymond. Given the similarity of the original house forms of 954, 960 and 966 Chestnut Street, it is likely that he built those houses.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owner wants to remove the left side window and fill the area in with clapboard to match the existing siding. The window appears to have been added in the 1950s.

Staff approved the other changes in the application – replacing two windows in-kind and adding a window not visible from the public way. The sections in the application that relate to the right-side window are highlighted in yellow.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Photos

Product information

Decision approving in-kind work and work not visible from a public way

MHC Form B

937 Chestnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The Second Empire house was built by Samuel A. Piper sometime between 1874 and 1881. Piper had a dry goods store and was later listed in City directories as a carpenter.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owner wants to replace the left-side nine-lite fiberglass door with a single-lite composite door with a fiberglass skin. The new door will be the same size and will be painted to match the other doors and trim on the house. There will be no changes to the outside trim.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Assessors database map

Photos

Product information

Project description

MHC Form B

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, move the main house block twelve feet forward, and build a new addition on the left side. **In the last working session, Commission members said the massing and rooflines were critical and the existing front façade needed to be kept as is. The building could be expanded to the back and additions to the rear needed to be inferior to the front house block so that the roofline was not higher than the existing front house block roof. Commissions members recommended good photos to give the context and information about the site and structures and submitting the plot or site plan if it was available. And recommended that the owner submit several different design options for review.**

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Proposed site plan

Proposed elevations and roof plan

Photographs

SF information

MHC Form B

959 Chestnut Street – Determination of Existing Violation

Determine if there is an existing violation regarding the building heights.

959 Chestnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violations)

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 applications for the following:

- To remediate the items that were determined to still be in violation:
 - The basement windows and exposed foundation area on the right side of the rear addition
 - The window program on the left side of the garage
 - The new retaining walls
- To get approval for the as-built items which were denied because of the existing violations:
 - The space between the top of the window molding and the frieze board on the main house block
 - The location of the garage lights and the dropped garage floor
 - The grade changes and exposed basement wall, the exterior walls, stairs and windows on the rear gable and elevation
- To get approval for the as-built vents and vent pipes, and the location of the electric panel

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Approved plans 10-2019

Photographs

Site plans

Elevations

Product information

Administrative discussion:

Minutes: Draft November minutes are included for your review.