



## STAFF REPORT

### Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

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Application: DR-2018-16 – 15 Alba Road - Preservation Determination  
Subject Property: 15 Alba Road (Assessor's Parcel ID # 98-54)  
Applicant: Janis and Jennifer Voldins  
Property Owner: Janis and Jennifer Voldins  
Date: Report prepared 4/4/2018 for 4/12/2018 Historical Commission Meeting  
Staff Contact: Claudia Zarazua, Planner  
Staff Recommendation: **Not Preferably Preserved**

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#### APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On March 6, 2018, the Applicant submitted plans to the Planning Department to confirm the percentage of the existing exterior of the dwelling at 15 Alba Road to be affected by work that includes partial demolition and an addition. Planning Department Staff determined that the proposed work would affect more than 50% of the total existing exterior surface of the dwelling (57%), therefore qualifying as a Demolition under the Bylaw. Based on this determination, an application for Eligibility Notice was submitted on March 9, 2018. An Eligibility Notice was issued on March 12, 2017 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. An application for Preservation Determination was submitted on March 19, 2018. A public hearing before the Historical Commission is scheduled for April 12, 2018.

#### DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the dwelling was originally constructed in 1947 based on a Building Permit issued to owner Paul Jameson on November 6, 1947.

The original lot was created by Domenic Bernardi after the land was purchased from Isaac Sprague Jr., the first president of the Wellesley Historic Society and person of significance in Wellesley's history, in 1941. (See *Figure 1 & 2*).

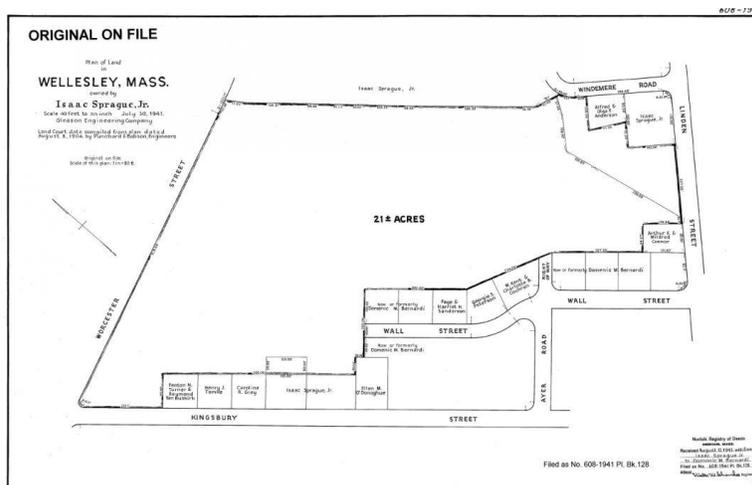


Figure 1. Isaac Sprague Jr's Plan, 1941 Wellesley. Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

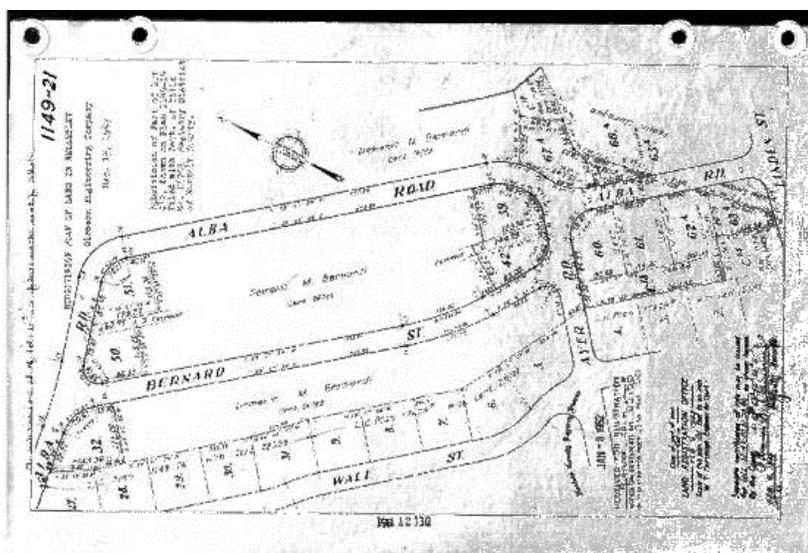


Figure 2. Subdivision Plan of Wellesley, 1947 by Gleason Engineering Co.. Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

According to the building permit, the house was built by Carl Danielson for Paul Jameson and Alba Bernardi, daughter of Domenic Bernardi. Carl Danielson was a prolific residential builder in town, totaling about 100 houses. Alba Bernardi was an active citizen as a member of the League of Women Voters and as a Wellesley College alumna, co-creating the Peace and Justice Studies Program at the College. The house was later sold to Rabbi Jacob and Dorothy Lantz in September 1964. Later the same year, they transferred the property to Temple Beth Elohim. The house was sold to Robert and Kathleen Lynah in 1969. The house was sold to the current owners, Jennifer Auer and Janis Voldins in 2005.

The dwelling is a two-story building with side-gabled roof, not significantly altered since its construction. In 2000, a three-season porch addition on the northern side elevation. Staff believes the architecture of the house is best characterized as Colonial Revival with elements representative of such style like small-paned windows and heavy window

frames, as well as a large chimney. The siding is perceived to be wood cladding and has a concrete foundation. The overall condition of the existing house is above average.

The house sits on a double lot and is located approximately 40' from Alba Road. The driveway is located on and accessed by Alba Road on the southwestern corner of the property.

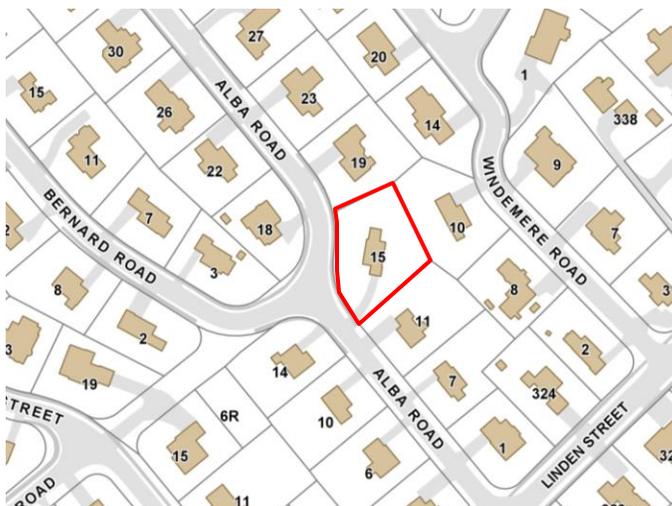


Figure 2. Neighborhood Context

As a partial Demolition, the Applicant has submitted architectural drawings to preserve the original building, build a two-story addition with a two-car garage, build a one-story rear addition to expand the kitchen and enclose the existing porch to create a new family room.

## **PRESERVATION DETERMINATION STANDARDS**

In consideration of a Preservation Determination for the building, the Historical Commission is to determine whether or not the building should be Preferably Preserved, a term defined as a building “the demolition of which that is proposed...would be detrimental to the historical or architectural heritage of the Town because such Building is (i) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America, (ii) historically or architecturally important by reason of period, style, method of building construction or association with a particular architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of Buildings, or (iii) located within one hundred fifty (150) feet of the boundary line of any federal or local historic district and contextually similar to the Buildings located in the adjacent federal or local historic district.”

If the Commission determines that the Building should be Preferably Preserved, then no Demolition Permit with respect to such Building shall be issued until twelve (12) months after the date of the Preservation Determination.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is of the opinion that the subject building **is not** (iii) located within one hundred fifty (150) feet of the boundary line of any federal or local historic district and contextually similar to the Buildings located in the adjacent federal or local historic district, but that the building is (i) associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America, **and** (ii) historically or architecturally important by reason of period, style, method of building construction or association with a particular architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of Buildings.

With respect to standard (i), Staff is of the opinion that Alba Bernardi's involvement in the creation of Wellesley College's Peace and Justice Studies Program is notable in terms of the history of the Town, the Commonwealth, and the United State of America. With respect to standard (ii), Staff is of the opinion that the existing dwelling is architecturally important by reason of period and style, by itself and in the context of the neighborhood. However, based upon the scope of the proposed work, Staff is of the opinion that the partial demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural heritage of the Town.

Therefore, based upon the above, **Staff recommends that the building not be deemed Preferably Preserved based on the scope of work identified in the submitted plans.** Staff recommends that action by the Historical Commission concluding the same be based on the submitted plans, therefore requiring any alterations to the scope similarly impacting 50% or more of the existing exterior of the dwelling to be reviewed as a new application prior to the issuance of permits from the Building Department.