



STAFF REPORT Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2018-17 - 7 Longmeadow Road - Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 7 Longmeadow Road (Assessor's Parcel ID # 115-22)
Applicant: Ken Soderholm
Property Owner: Brightside Investments, LLC
Date: Report prepared 5/4/2018 for 5/14/2018 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Claudia Zarazua, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Applications for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination were submitted on April 2, 2018 indicating the intent to demolish, in its entirety, a building located on the property and used as a dwelling. An Eligibility Notice was issued on April 4, 2018 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A public hearing before the Historical Commission is scheduled for May 14, 2018.

DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the main dwelling was originally constructed in September 10, 1936 based on the Building Permit No. 5453 issued to owner Olga Wenning.

The current house sits on a lot originally created by Grace Snell after the land, a former farm, was purchased from Col. Frank Stone in 1904. Mr. Stone was one of the founders of the Austin and Stone's Dime Museum in Boston, known for their "freak shows" and theatrical performances. In 1936, Emil and Olga Wenning purchased lot 1 from Mrs. Snell. See Figure 1.



Figure 1 Plan of Longmeadow Owned by Grace E. Snell

According to the building permit, the house was built by architect Haines for Olga and Emil Wenning. The house was repossessed by the bank and later sold to George R. S. Denton in 1938. The house was later sold to William and Sara Spencer in 1964. It was later acquired by August and Marion Haffenreffer in 1970. The Haffenreffer Trust purchased the property at the corner of Grove Street and Longmeadow Road (lot 2 & 3 in Figure 1) in 1984. The house at 7 Longmeadow was purchased by Peter and Joan Allegrini in 1992. While the house located at 3 Longmeadow Road was purchased by I.M.H. Realty in 1993. In 2001 Michael Fay purchased 3 & 7 Longmeadow Road to consolidate into one parcel. In 2013, the property was sold to Anthony and Carolyn Lemone. The current owner, Brightside Investments, purchased the property in May 2017.

The dwelling is a two-story building with hipped roof, moderately altered since its construction. It has an elaborate entryway with a curved underside portico, an element characteristic of original Colonial Revival architecture. The house sits on a triple lot and is located approximately 140' from Grove Street. The driveway is located on and accessed by Longmeadow Road on the southeastern boundary of the property. In 1988, a full bay window was installed to the rear elevation. In 1998, a two-story addition was constructed to the rear elevation. In 2003, the owner filed a permit to build a detached garage connected to the main building through a new underground gym, family room and basketball court.

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 central masonry chimney. The siding is perceived to be wood cladding and has a concrete foundation. The overall condition of the existing house is above average.

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, but **is** (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 (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.

Therefore, based upon the above, **Staff is of the opinion that the demolition of the subject building would be detrimental to the historical or architectural heritage of the neighborhood and Town and thus Staff recommends that the building should be deemed Preferably Preserved.**