



STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2018-27– 7 Sprague Road - Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 7 Sprague Road (Assessor's Parcel ID #121-79)
Applicant: Sprague Road Incorporated
Property Owner: Sprague Road Incorporated
Date: Report prepared 5/30/2018 for 6/11/2018 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Claudia Zarazua, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Applications for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination were submitted on May 17, 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 May 23, 2018 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A public hearing before the Historical Commission was scheduled for June 11, 2018.

DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the building was constructed no earlier than March 28, 1947 when the building permit "9072" for a dwelling and garage were issued. The property was originally part of the Abbott Estates and was later subdivided by Richard Magnanti, a trustee of Abbott Estates. See Figure 1. Mr. Magnanti filed a building permit with plans from architect Harry S. Ramsey in 1947. The property was sold to William and Mildred Anderson in 1948. It was sold soon after to Kathleen and Edward Donovan in 1949. Mr. Donovan was a World War I veteran and a manager at New England Confectionary Company (Necco). The house was sold to their daughter and son-in-law, Kathleen and Richard Surman in 1979. Mrs. Surman served in the Armed Forces Radio Service during World War II in Germany and later continued her public service with the Department of State at the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and Mexico City. Mr. Surman served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II and later joined the Department of State at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. The property was transferred to a trust by the name of Richard Surman Realty Trust in 1999. It is currently under ownership of Sprague Road Inc. since 2013.



Figure 1. 7 Sprague in 1946, Subdivision Plan Courtesy of Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

According to the Wellesley building permit database, a tool house was added in 1954, a rear one-bedroom addition was built in 1978 and an existing porch was enclosed in 1979.

The dwelling is a 1.5- story building with a side-gabled roof, cladding and various additions. Staff believes the original architecture of the house is best characterized as a Cape Cod Cottage of the Colonial Revival style.

The work of the architect Harry M. Ramsay can also be seen around Brookline, Boston, Newton and Watertown. His residential work was characterized as American Colonial, Tudor Revival, and Cape Cottage style. See Figure 2.

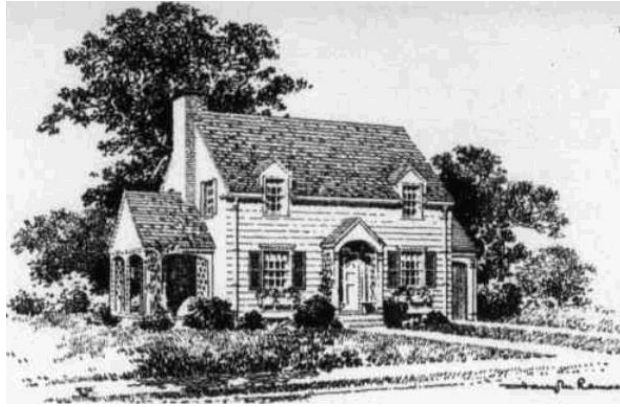


Figure 2. Architectural Illustration by Harry M. Ramsay for Boulder Brook Farms, Courtesy of Wellesley Townsman, June 28, 1936

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 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** (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, nor (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** (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), while the existing building has been altered, Staff is of the opinion that the dwelling still preserves architectural features of importance and representative of Harry S. Ramsay's renowned residential work.

Therefore, based upon the above, **Staff is of the opinion that demolition of the subject building would be detrimental to the historic or architectural heritage of the Town and recommends that the Historical Commission determine that the building not be deemed Preferably Preserved.**