



STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2019-09– 18 Fenmere Avenue - Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 18 Fenmere Avenue (Assessor's Parcel ID #190-95)
Applicant: Charles Merhib, Steven Merhib, Sandra Tessier, Paul Merhib,
David Merhib, & Keneth Merhib
Property Owner: Charles Merhib, Steven Merhib, Sandra Tessier, Paul Merhib,
David Merhib, & Keneth Merhib
Date: Report prepared 3/1/2019 for 3/11/2019 Historical Commission
Meeting
Staff Contact: Claudia Zarazua, Planner

Staff Recommendation: **Not Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Applications for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination were submitted on February 14, 2019 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 February 20, 2019 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A public hearing before the Historical Commission was scheduled for March 11, 2019.

DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the building was constructed no earlier than January 19, 1949 when the building permit "9858" for a dwelling was issued. Russell H. Chase, a local builder, filed the original building permit as the builder. A building permit for a garage was filed on September 18, 1950.

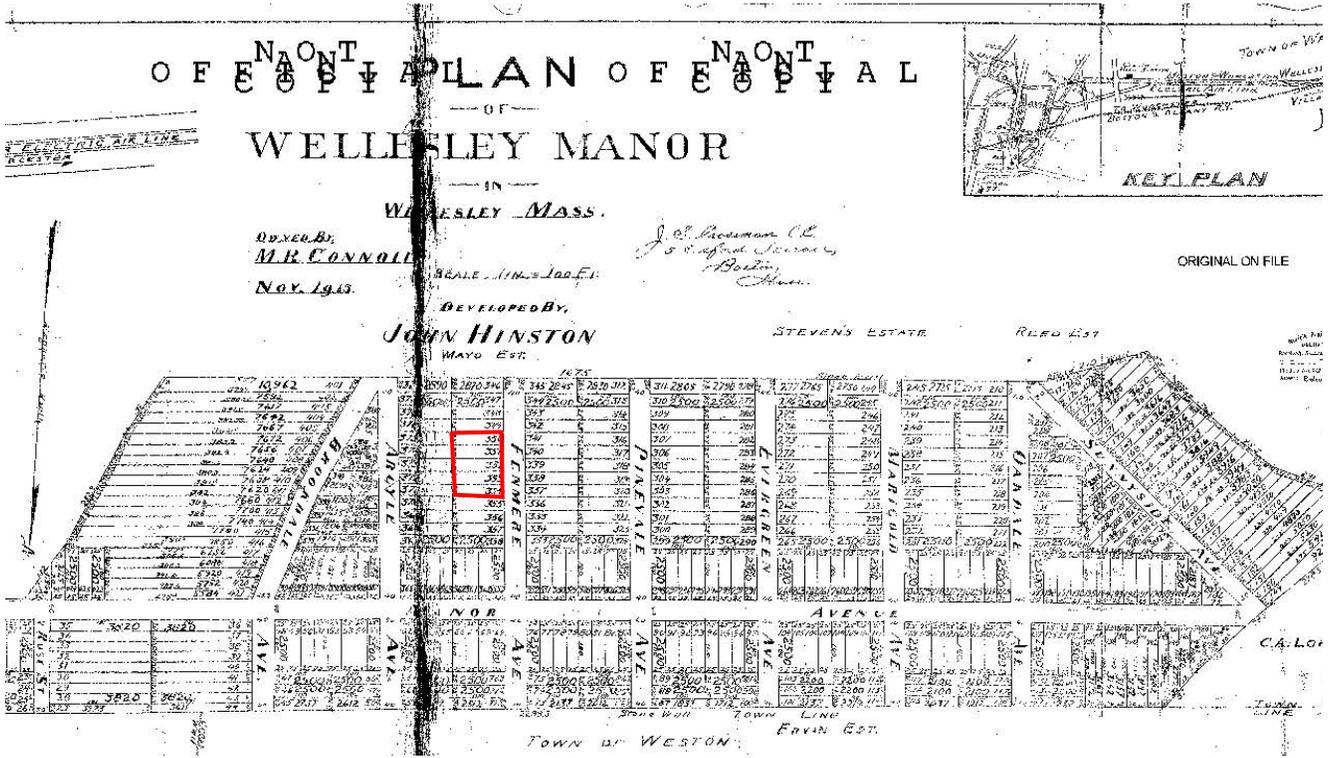


Figure 1. Plan of Wellesley Manor 1913, Plan Courtesy of Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

The land was originally owned by Michael Connolly. See Figure 1. Lots 350-354 were sold Daniel and Anette O'Neill in 1948. Mr. O'Neill served as a firefighter in the Wellesley Fire Department. The first building permit was filed under the ownership of Mr. O'Neill. The property was then sold to Bruno and Dorothy Hautaniemi in 1954. The property was later sold to Charles and Phyllis Merhib in 1956. Mr. Merhib was a physicist employed by the Army Materials and Mechanics Research Center in Watertown. The property remains under ownership of the Merhib family to this day.

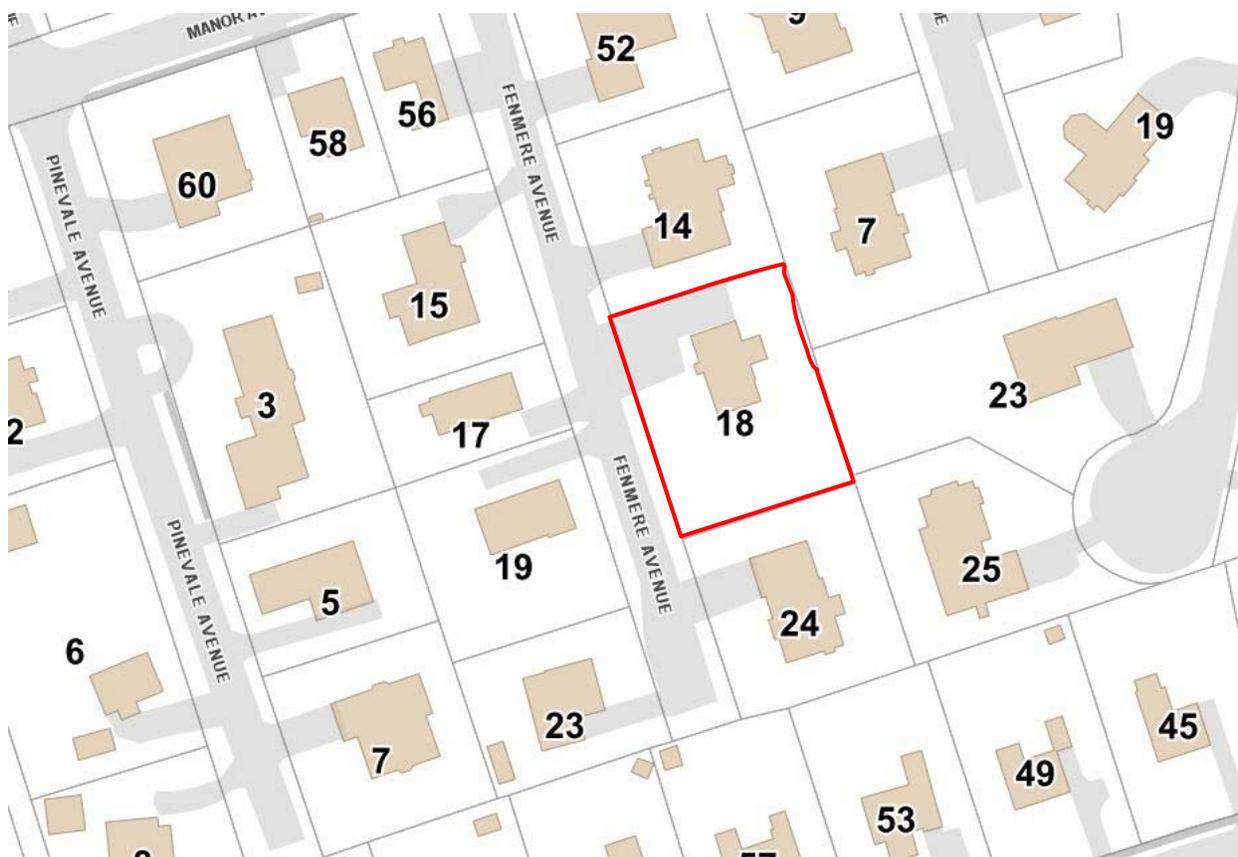


Figure 2. Neighborhood Context

The dwelling is a 1.25-story with a side-gabled roof, minimally altered with a screened porch, and an attached garage that is no longer functioning as such. Staff believes the original architecture of the house is best characterized as Colonial Revival in the Cape Cod Cottage style.

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, (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, 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.

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