



STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2019-06 – 183 Walnut Street - Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 183 Walnut Street (Assessor's Parcel ID # 28-21)
Applicant: Fardad Farahmand
Property Owner: Fardad Farahmand and Motiee Pakizeh
Date: Report prepared 3/8/2019 for 3/11/2019 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Claudia Zarazua, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On January 22, 2019, the Applicant submitted an application for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination along with plans of proposed work that includes partial demolition and addition at 183 Walnut Street. Planning Department Staff determined that the proposed work would affect more than 50% of the total existing exterior surface of the dwelling, therefore qualifying as a Demolition under the Bylaw. An Eligibility Notice was issued on February 1, 2019 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A public hearing before the Historical Commission is scheduled for March 11, 2019.

DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the dwelling was originally constructed no later than 1927 when a property at 183 Walnut Street was first reported under the ownership of Mark Connors. The house as it exist today is composed of two dwellings (the original 185 Walnut and 183 Walnut). The properties were connected by a kitchen addition around 1975 but were under same ownership starting in 1951.

According to the Registry of Deeds, the properties were sold o Charles and Loring Gleason in 1950. The properties were sold to Italia and Vincent Pignanello later that same year. As a consolidated property, the building was sold to Josephine Tiberi in 1961. The property was later acquired by Gerald Butterworth in 1985. The current owners acquired the property in 1995.

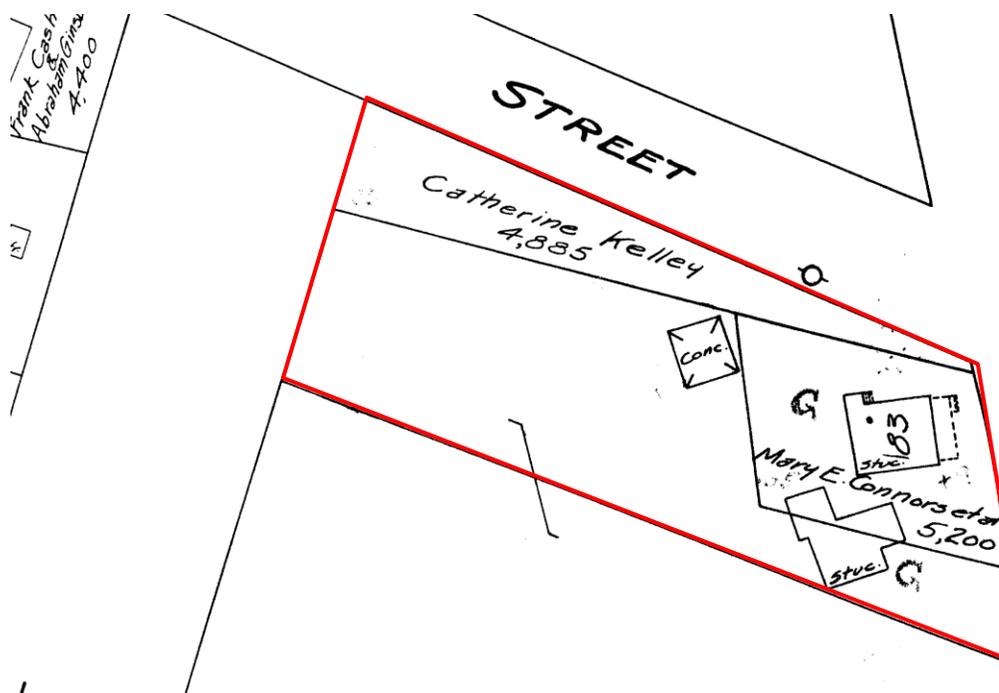


Figure 1. Walnut Street and Prospect Street, 1935, Town Atlas of 1935

The main dwelling is a two-story American Foursquare house with overhanging hipped roof. Remnants of the typical wrap around porch are still visible although it is now completely enclosed. Staff believes the original architecture of the house is best characterized as part of the Colonial Revival family with minimal modifications. The siding is perceived to be stucco and has a concrete foundation.

According to the Assessor's record, the overall condition of the existing house is average. The first building permit associated to this address was for the enclosure of the sunroom in 1993. For the attached structure, formerly 185 Walnut, an addition to the kitchen was built in 1975.

The house sits on a conforming lot but the proposed addition will require a special permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals due to pre-existing nonconformities of the dwelling.

The Planning Board's recommendation for the ZBA hearing was to continue or deny the application due to unclear drawings and lack of responsiveness to the neighborhood architectural context.

As a partial Demolition, the Applicant has submitted architectural drawings to preserve the original building, build a two-story side addition to expand the family room on the first floor and a new master bedroom on the second floor.

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** (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 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, and (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.

With respect to standard (ii), Staff is of the opinion that the existing dwelling is architecturally important because of period and style, by itself and in the context of the neighborhood. The proposed addition diminishes the visibility and architectural character.

With respect to standard (iii) the property is less than 150 feet in proximity to the Sudbury Aqueduct, listed in the National Registry of Historic Places.

Therefore, based upon the above, **Staff recommends that the building 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 affecting 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.