



STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2019-24– 98 Brook Street - Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 98 Brook Street (Assessor's Parcel ID #89-34)
Applicant: James Kane
Property Owner: James Kane
Date: Report prepared 5/13/2019 for 5/15/2019 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 10, 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 April 16, 2019 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A public hearing before the Historical Commission was scheduled for May 15, 2019.

DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the building was constructed no earlier than 1923 when a house was first reported for tax purposes under this address. The house was first reported under ownership of James Coughlan. It was later acquired by John and Lois Fowler Skeelee in 1930. The house was sold to Jean and Edward Palmer in 1944. The property was later acquired by Hall and Evelyn Nichols in 1945. Mr. Nichols was the chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission and a member of the Massachusetts Building Congress. Lanier and Cora Greer acquired the property in 1965. Mr. Greer was a city planning at the firm of Kelcey and Edwards (currently under ownership of Jacobs Engineering. The house was later sold to Glen and Lorraine Snowden in 1971. The property was acquired by Douglas Langenberg and Rowland Moriarty in 1975. The house was sold to Linda and Douglas Woodacre in 1985. The property was sold to the current owner James P. Kane in 2013.

The dwelling is a two-story building with a gambrel roof with its most visible façade not significantly altered since its construction. It has a detached two-car garage accessed from the rear. A sun room was added to the left side of the house, subsequently a two-story addition was built on the right side of the house. Staff believes the architecture of the house is best characterized as Colonial Revival with elements representative of such style like small-paned windows, shutters, and heavy window frames, as well as two side chimneys. The siding is perceived to be wood cladding. The overall condition of the existing house is above average.

The property has been listed for sale for more than a month and has a pending offer.

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), Staff believes that the most publically visible facade of the dwelling is original in their form, and the dwelling is consistent with the period and scale of the majority of the homes in the immediate neighborhood. Staff is of the opinion that the dwelling is mostly architecturally important in the context of the neighborhood.

Therefore, based upon the above, **Staff is of the opinion that demolition of the subject building would be detrimental to the historic or architectural landscape of the Town and recommends that the Historical Commission determine that the building be deemed Preferably Preserved.**