

STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2020-08 – 15 Mayo Road – Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 15 Mayo Road (Assessor's Parcel ID # 190-78)
Applicant: J. Derenzo Properties LLC
Property Owner: J. Derenzo Properties LLC
Date: Report prepared 3/2/2020 for 3/9/2020 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Dana Marks, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Not Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On February 13, 2020, the Applicant submitted applications for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination 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 13, 2020 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. The Historical Commission will hold a public hearing on the application for a Preservation Determination on March 9, 2020.

DESCRIPTION

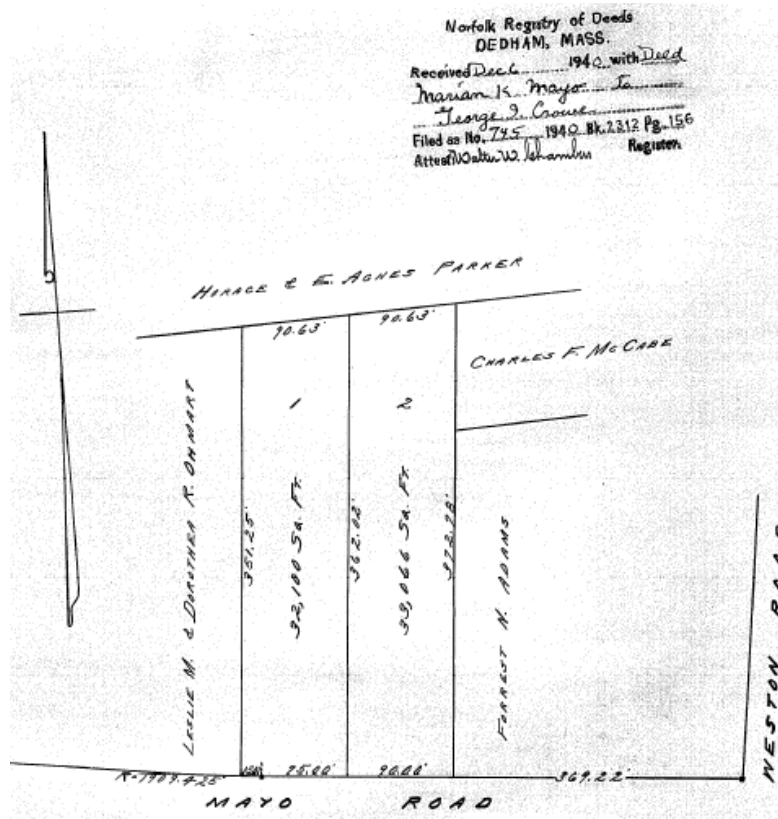
In consideration of the application for a full/complete demolition and in determining whether or not the dwelling should be deemed Preferably Preserved, it was determined that the original dwelling was constructed no earlier than March 18, 1941, when Building Permit 7601 was issued for a "Dwelling." This source proves that the dwelling at 15 Mayo Road is indeed Eligible and subject to a Preservation Determination pursuant to Article 46C of the Wellesley Town Bylaws.

This Colonial Revival dwelling with a second-story overhang has a side gable roof over the main structure as well as the front-facing garage to the right. The garage was built at the same time as the house (Building Permit 7602). It is clad in white synthetic siding and has a central front entry flanked by a bay window on either side. The second story has two six-over-six windows, one located above either bay window. All windows are framed with inoperable black shutters.



Image via Assessor's Property Record Card

George I. Crowe purchased two lots of land from Marian K. Mayo in 1940 (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 2312, Page 156), transferred them individually to his contracting company, George I. Crowe, Inc. the following year (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 2320, Page 298) and proceeded to build a house on Lot 2, which is now known as 15 Mayo Road. The two lots acquired by Crowe, seen below, were once owned by Lillian Shreve Mayo (Norfolk County Probate Case No. 94943), whose family homestead encompassed 43 acres in the Fells area of town.¹



This Subdivision Plan of Land in Wellesley, Mass. Owned by Estate of Lillian Shreve Mayo shows the two lots purchased by George I. Crowe in 1940. Lot 2 is the location of 15 Mayo Road (Dated November 21, 1940, by Gleason Engineering Company, recorded in Norfolk County Registry of Deeds as Plan No. 795 of 1940).

After completing construction on 15 Mayo Road, George I. Crowe, Inc. sold the property to Richard T. and Betty H. Fiske in 1942 (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 2379, Page 511). Richard was a Town Meeting Member, and Betty was an alumna of Wellesley College.²

Upon moving to Chevy Chase, Maryland, the Fiskes sold the property to Suzanne W. Bryson in 1955 (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 3399, Page 445). Suzanne and her husband Charles lived at 15 Mayo Road with their son Chucky who attended the Perrin School.³ Charles was an Army veteran of World War II, a graduate of Brown University, a divisional merchandise manager for Jordan Marsh Co., and a member of the Brae Burn Country Club.⁴

¹ *Wellesley Townsman*, September 1, 1939, page 3.

² *Wellesley Townsman*, October 21, 1948, page 1; "Local Alumnae Invited To Tea Next Thursday," *Wellesley Townsman*, November 2, 1950, page 4.

³ "Perrin First Graders Follow Charles Bryson's World Trip," *Wellesley Townsman*, April 25, 1963, page 3.

⁴ "Charles L. Bryson," *Wellesley Townsman*, December 5, 1974, page 21.

In 1963 the Brysons sold the property to Elizabeth W. and Walter F. Blaser, II. Elizabeth was a third grade teacher at the Hardy School from the 1950s until she retired in 1980.⁵ Walter was an Air Force veteran of World War II, past commander of Wellesley Post No. 71 of the American Legion, and a sales representative for Sears Roebuck and Company.⁶ After Walter's death in 1969, Elizabeth remained at 15 Mayo Road. Walter Francis Blaser, III later inherited the property through the Estate of his mother Elizabeth. Walter transferred the property to his sister, Margaret Campbell Blaser, in 1993 (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 10292, Page 13).

The property stayed within the Blaser family until November 2019 when it was purchased by J. Derenzo Properties, LLC (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 37391, Page 469). The current owner is now seeking a Preservation Determination.

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 when 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. Following such a determination, the Applicant may request a reduction in the length of the delay period through the Waiver Process.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is of the opinion that the subject building at 15 Mayo Road **is not** (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, **is not** (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 **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.

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

⁵ "Phillips School Personnel," *Wellesley Townsman*, September 4, 1952, page 4; "WTA to honor 15 retirees," *Wellesley Townsman*, May 29, 1980, page 22.

⁶ "Walter F. Blaser, II," *Wellesley Townsman*, May 8, 1969, Page 21.