



## STAFF REPORT

### Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

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Application: DR-2020-21 – 76 Fairbanks Avenue – Preservation Determination  
Subject Property: 76 Fairbanks Avenue (Assessor's Parcel ID # 36-46)  
Applicant: Patricia Quigley  
Property Owner: Patricia Quigley  
Date: Report prepared 7/9/2020 for 7/13/2020 Historical Commission Meeting  
Staff Contact: Dana Marks, Planner  
Staff Recommendation: **Preferably Preserved**

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#### APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On June 23, 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 June 24, 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 July 13, 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 built no earlier than June 15, 1931, when Building Permit No. 3835 was granted for the construction of a "Dwelling & Garage." This source proves that the dwelling at 6 Hastings Street is indeed Eligible and subject to a Preservation Determination pursuant to Article 46C of the Wellesley Town Bylaws.

The wood frame dwelling is built in a Colonial Revival style and sits two-stories tall underneath a side gable roof. There are three bays along the main structure with a central accentuated entry door. One-story wings on both sides of the house frame the main structure – a garage to the right and an enclosed porch (Building Permit 15586) to the left. The house is located within the Longfellow Estates, which was a neighborhood developed off of Walnut Street in the 1920s and 1930s. "One of the genuinely active home areas all through the depression years have been the Longfellow Estates, Wellesley Hills... The character of Longfellow Estates is mostly Colonial, with interesting types of the 'modern Colonial' style, Cape Cod, Georgian, double-wing, piled-gable, salt-box, Virginia and several variations of the straight Colonial and Garrison types."<sup>1</sup>

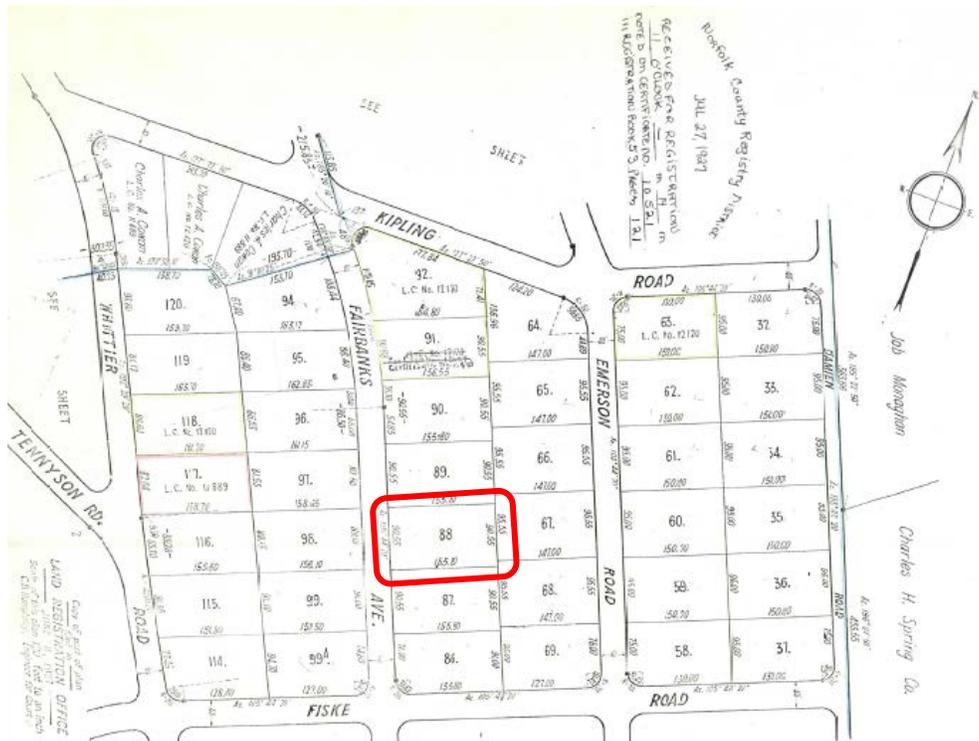
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<sup>1</sup> "Longfellow Estates A Model Community," *Wellesley Townsman*, November 2, 1934, page 6.



Image via Google Maps.

Within the Longfellow Estates, Nils S. Eng acquired a number of lots in 1931 (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 15287) with the intention of “erecting single houses for the market.”<sup>2</sup> Later that year, Eng sold Lot 88 to Pauline G. Davidson, which had a street address of 76 Fairbanks Avenue, and can be seen below (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 15535).



76 Fairbanks Avenue is located on Lot 88, outlined in red. (Detail of Plan No. 7129A, Sheet 4, from 1927, Norfolk County Land Court)

In 1932 the house and property went into foreclosure, and was acquired by Roscoe L. Davidson (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 16476). Later that year, Davidson sold the property to Marion Kaplan (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 16761). It was

<sup>2</sup> Wellesley Townsman, June 5, 1931, page 7.

reported in the *Wellesley Townsman*: “Henry W. Savage, Inc., reports the sale of the two-story, frame dwelling located on Lot No. 88 on Fairbanks avenue, Wellesley Hills. Title was given from R. L. Davidson to Simon Kaplan of Brookline, who purchased for a home.”<sup>3</sup>

Eleven years later in 1943, the property was sold to Catherine T. Fitzgerald (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 29342). The property transfer was again reported in the *Wellesley Townsman*: “The large colonial type dwelling at 76 Fairbanks avenue in the Longfellow Estates consisting of eight rooms, two baths, lavatory, two-car garage and 14,106 feet of land has been conveyed to C. T. Fitzgerald.”<sup>4</sup>

In 1963 Catherine T. Fitzgerald transferred the property to Robert and Shirley Zimmerman (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 73077), who moved into 76 Fairbanks Avenue from Hunnewell Street.<sup>5</sup> The Zimmermans sold the property to Jacob and Janet Best in 1969 (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 87224). The Bests arrival was announced in the *Wellesley Townsman*: “June 19 was moving day for Mr. and Mrs. Jacob H. Best, Jr., who came from Chicago to 76 Fairbanks ave. The Bests have three children, Jay, 9, and Peter, 7, who will attend Schofield School; and Julie, 3. Mr. Best is the manager of the new Marriott Motor Inn in West Newton which is expected to open around September 1.”<sup>6</sup>

The next year Joseph and Maryellen Civetta acquired 76 Fairbanks Avenue in 1970 (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 89813). In 1973 the Civettas transferred the property to James David and Cheryl E. Lister (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 94799). The property stayed with the Listers and was transferred into their Fairbanks Avenue 76 Realty Trust in 2014 (Norfolk County Land Court Document No. 1303086-1). The current owner acquired the property on June 5, 2020 (Norfolk County Land Court Document No. 1447395-1) and is 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

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<sup>3</sup> “WELLESLEY HILLS LOCAL NEWS,” *Wellesley Townsman*, October 21, 1932, page 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Wellesley Townsman*, September 23, 1943, page 6.

<sup>5</sup> “Neighborhood News,” *Wellesley Townsman*, August 29, 1963, page 9.

<sup>6</sup> “Newcomers to Wellesley,” *Wellesley Townsman*, August 7, 1969, page 13.

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 76 Fairbanks Avenue **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** (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.

With respect to standard (ii), 76 Fairbanks Avenue is located within the Longfellow Estates, which was developed in the 1920s and 1930s. The subject building has retained much of its original Colonial Revival character, which can also be found throughout the surrounding neighborhood with other revival styles interspersed.

Therefore, based upon the above, **Staff is of the opinion that the demolition of the subject building would be detrimental to the historical or architectural heritage of the Town and thus Staff recommends that the building should be deemed Preferably Preserved.**