

STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2020-23 – 78 Arnold Road – Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 78 Arnold Road (Assessor's Parcel ID # 108-30)
Applicant: Richard F. McCarthy
Property Owner: Richard F. McCarthy
Date: Report prepared 10/8/2020 for 10/13/2020 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Dana Marks, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On July 15, 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 July 16, 2020 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. The Applicant withdrew the application for Preservation Determination before a public hearing was held on August 10, 2020. On September 16, 2020, the Application resubmitted an application for Preservation Determination. The Historical Commission will hold a public hearing on the application for a Preservation Determination on October 13, 2020.

DESCRIPTION

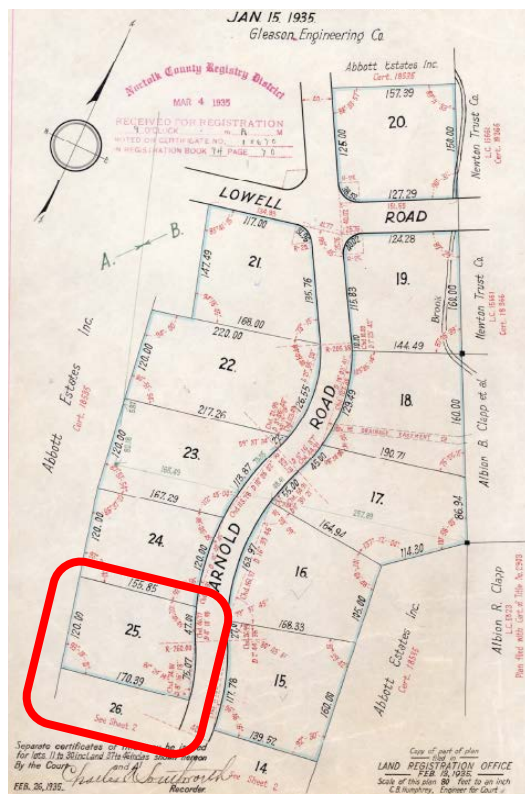
In consideration of the application for a full/complete demolition and in determining whether or not the dwelling should be deemed Preferably Preserved, it was determined that the original dwelling was built no earlier than September 19, 1938, when Building Permit No. 6480 was granted for the construction of a "Dwelling." This source proves that the dwelling at 78 Arnold Road is indeed Eligible and subject to a Preservation Determination pursuant to Article 46C of the Wellesley Town Bylaws.

The dwelling at 78 Arnold Road was built in 1938 in the Colonial Revival style by A.M. Brown and Son, Incorporated, of Boston. Character defining features of the Colonial Revival style that are present on this side-gabled dwelling include an accentuated front entry door with its own vestibule and symmetrical window placement along the main front façade. Those windows are double-hung sashes with operable black shutters. The main structure is flanked by two wings – the one on the left is a small one-story room, and the one on the right is a two-car garage with a shed dormer.



Image via Assessor's Property Record Card.

The subject building is located on the woodland and garden grounds of the old Abbott Estate in Wellesley Hills, which was acquired in the 1930s by Abbott Estates, Inc., and subdivided into the neighborhood found today characterized by large Colonial Revival homes.¹ After subdividing lots along Arnold Road, Abbott Estates, Inc., sold Lot 25 to A.M. Brown and Son, Incorporated, in 1938 (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 22643). After constructing the dwelling and garage (Building Permits No. 6480 & 6481), Arthur P. Young purchased the home the following year in 1939 (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 23504).



Plan showing subdivision of land by Abbott Estates, Inc. with Lot 25 and a portion of Lot 26 being the current site of 78 Arnold Road (Plan No. 15672B, Sheet 1, via Norfolk County Land Court)

¹ "ABBOTT ESTATE WILL BE TURNED INTO HOME SITES," *Wellesley Townsman*, June 22, 1934, page 1.

In 1946, Young acquired a portion of Lot 26, which had been further subdivided (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 33573). This resulted in 78 Arnold Road's current lot configuration. Arthur Young was a dentist with offices in Boston and later along Washington Street in Wellesley Hills.² The Youngs resided at 78 Arnold Road until 1951 when Eugene H. and Maud Millicent Clapp acquired the property and moved in from Kirkland Circle (Norfolk County Land Court, Certificate of Title No. 43939).³

Eugene H. Clapp, II was the president of the Penobscot Chemical Fibre Company of Boston and Great Works, Maine, and associated with many professional organizations and boards of directors, including the American Mutual Liability Insurance Company of Boston, the New Jersey Rubber Company of Taunton, and the Associated Industries of Massachusetts.⁴ Clapp was also involved in Town affairs, sitting on school building committees, Advisory Committee, and acting as a Town Meeting Member for a number of years.⁵ Millicent Clapp was an artist and member of the Wellesley Society of Artists. She studied at Stanford University and the California School of Fine Arts.⁶ The Clapps resided at 78 Arnold Road for 26 years with their daughter Candace and son Eugene, III.

The current owner acquired the property in 1977 (Norfolk County Land Court, Document No. 376330-1). Under their ownership a sunporch was deconstructed and a deck was built in the rear in 1987 (Building Permit Nos. 22529 & 22552). The entry vestibule was reinforced and underpinned in 2003 (Building Permit No. 35212). The current owner is currently 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

² "Dr. Arthur P. Young In New Dental Offices On Washington Street," *Wellesley Townsman*, December 13, 1951, page 9.

³ "Neighborhood News," *Wellesley Townsman*, September 27, 1951, page 14.

⁴ "Young Presidents Elect New Area Vice President," April 28, 1955, page 7; "Neighborhood News," October 18, 1956, page 7; "Allen N. Clapp Is President Of N.J. Rubber Co." January 24, 1957, page 2; "Eugene H. Clapp Chosen Chairman," February 27, 1958, page 7; "Wellesley Men Officers A.I.M." *Wellesley Townsman*, October 29, 1959, page 7.

⁵ "Building Committee Named For Albion Road Site School," May 20, 1954, page 1; "Advisory Committee Appointments," September 29, 1955, page 1; "Background Information On Candidates For Public Office In Wellesley," *Wellesley Townsman*, February 20, 1958, page 24.

⁶ "Mrs. Clapp Shows Oils at Local Bank," *Wellesley Townsman*, December 5, 1958, page 11.

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 78 Arnold 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** (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), 78 Arnold Road is an example of Colonial Revival architecture that is prevalent within the surrounding neighborhood and maintains much of its integrity from when it was built in 1939.

With respect to standard (iii), 78 Arnold Road is located within 1,000 feet of the Tufts House Local Historical District at 38 Lowell Road.

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.**