

STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2020-20 – 6 Hastings Street – Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 6 Hastings Street (Assessor's Parcel ID # 16-11)
Applicant: Paragon Investments LLC
Property Owner: Paragon Investments LLC
Date: Report prepared 12/7/2020 for 12/14/2020 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Dana Marks, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On November 16, 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 November 16, 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 December 14, 2020.

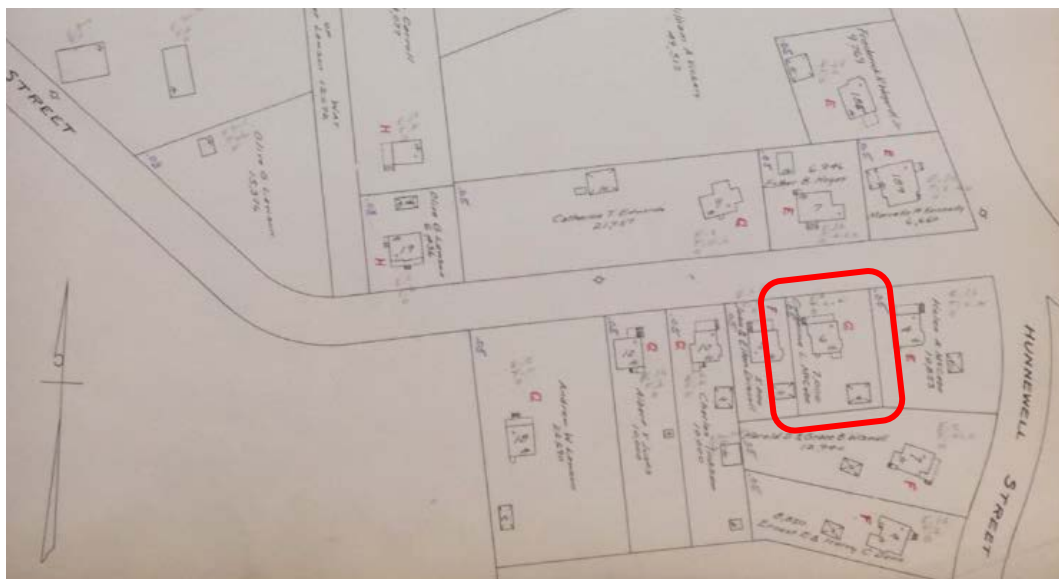
The previous owner submitted applications for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination on June 23, 2020 indicating the intent to demolish, in its entirety, a building located on the property and used as a dwelling. An Eligibility Notice was issued on June 24, 2020 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A Preservation Determination of Preferably Preserved was made by a unanimous vote at a meeting on July 13, 2020, following a public hearing. Based upon this determination, a Demolition Delay was put into effect until July 13, 2021.

On September 29, 2020, a deed was filed indicating that the property was transferred to the current owners (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 38404, Page 20), who are now seeking a new Preservation Determination based on the requirements of Article 46C, Part D, item 6, Transferability, which states in part: "Once a building is deemed Preferably Preserved, if, prior to the expiration of the Delay Period, ownership... in the Building or underlying property is transferred, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, by the Owner to any other person, irrespective of whether the Owner retains any ownership interest in therein or rights thereto, the transferee must submit a new Application pursuant to the procedures of this Article. During the period that such new Application is under review by the Commission, the existing Delay Period shall remain in effect. If the Commission determines that the Building is Preferably Preserved, a new Delay Period shall be implemented for a full twelve (12) months, commencing on the date that the Commission makes such new Preservation Determination; the previously-existing Delay Period shall thereafter immediately terminate."

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 as early as 1915 and no later than 1935, when it appears on Plate 85 of the 1935 Town of Wellesley Atlas. This 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.



Detail of Plate 85 of the 1935 Town of Wellesley Atlas with 6 Hastings Street outlined in red.

The dwelling is situated on the south side of Hastings Street on a 7,000 sq. ft. lot. It is a two-story wood frame structure with a front gable roof, small protruding dormers and a small cross-gable towards the rear. Described as being built in the “Old Style” according to the Assessor’s Property Record card, it has a simple front porch covered with a slanted shed roof and two bays along the front façade on both the first and second floor. There is a detached garage in the rear corner of the property that was built in 1923 (Building Permit No. 1332).



Image via Assessor’s Property Record Card.

The property was part of the premises owned by the McCabe family in the early 1900s, and this particular parcel was given to Catherine L. McCabe in two transactions in 1907 and 1911 from

Helen F. McCabe (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 1049, Page 70; Book 1173, Page 382). Arthur McCabe, Helen’s husband, was responsible for building a number of homes, particularly in this area of town, as a general contractor and builder.¹ Catherine McCabe worked in the Wellesley Public Schools for 25 years as a member of the cafeteria staff.²

The house stayed within the ownership of the McCabe family until 1955 when Catherine sold the property to Edward and Leona Marcin from Boston (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 3407, Page 169). Edward Marcin was a graduate of Northeastern University and a Korean War Veteran.³ Leona Marcin worked in the guidance department of the Wellesley Public Schools for 12 years.⁴

In 1993 Robert F. Murphy acquired the property (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 10306, Page 695), and previously sought a Preservation Determination. After receiving a Determination of Preferably Preserved and a Demolition Delay, Murphy requested a reduction in the Delay Period through the Commission’s Waiver process. Before the Commission voted to grant a Waiver, the current owners acquired the property at the end of September 2020 (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 38404, Page 20). They are now seeking a new 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 6 Hastings Street **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,

¹ Advertisements in *Wellesley Townsman*; “ABOUT TOWN,” *Wellesley Townsman*, September 22, 1911, page 8; Arthur McCabe Passed Away Last Week,” *Wellesley Townsman*, August 21, 1947, page 12.

² “Retires After Many Years Of Service In School Cafeterias,” *Wellesley Townsman*, December 23, 1943, page 1.

³ “Edward Marcin,” *Wellesley Townsman*, January 13, 1972, page 18.

⁴ “Leona M. Marcin,” *Wellesley Townsman*, August 1, 1985, page 6.

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.

The Historical Commission previously voted to deem this property Preferably Preserved on July 13, 2020. This determination imposed a Delay Period of twelve (12) months until July 13, 2020, and is valid for two (2) years after the expiration of that Delay Period, which is July 13, 2023.

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. **However, based on previous Commission action, Staff recommends that the building should be deemed Preferably Preserved.**