

STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2020-52 – 32 Boulder Brook Road – Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 32 Boulder Brook Road (Assessor's Parcel ID # 180-104)
Applicant: Dorothy C. Haussman
Property Owner: The Haussman Nominee Trust
Date: Report prepared 12/7/2020 for 12/14/2020 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Dana Marks, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Not Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

On November 23, 2020, the Applicant submitted an application for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination indicating the intent to demolish a building located on the property and used as a dwelling. An Eligibility Notice was issued on November 23, 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.

DESCRIPTION

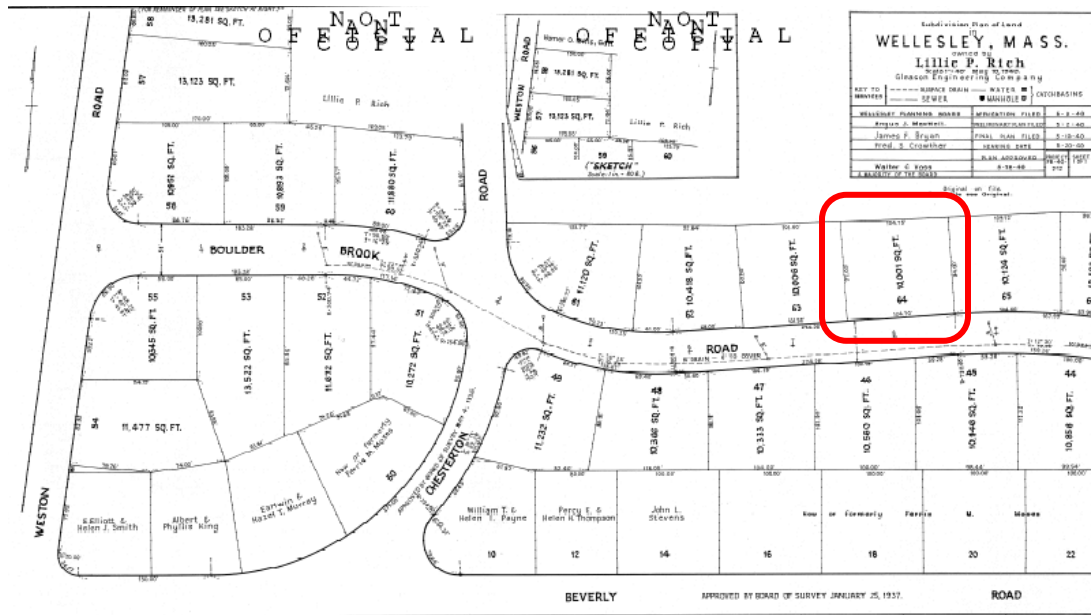
In consideration of the application for a full/complete demolition and in determining whether or not the dwelling should be deemed Preferably Preserved, it was determined that the original dwelling was built no earlier than April 8, 1941, when Building Permits No. 7646 and 7647 were granted for the construction of a "Dwelling" and "Garage attached" respectively. These sources prove that the dwelling at 32 Boulder Brook Road is indeed Eligible and subject to a Preservation Determination pursuant to Article 46C of the Wellesley Town Bylaws.

Built in 1941 by George I. Crowe, Inc., the subject building is a simple 1.5-story Colonial Revival house in the Cape Cod subtype. It is clad in wood shingle siding and has a side-gabled roof. A central entry door is flanked by a window on either side with louvered shutters. The symmetry of the main structure, which is a character-defining feature of the Colonial Revival style, is emphasized by two one-story wings, one situated on either side of the main structure. The wing to the right features an attached garage. The roof was replaced by the current owner in 2002 (Building Permit No. 34089).



Image via Google Maps, 2013.

The subdivision where 32 Boulder Brook Road is situated, as well as the nearby Boulder Brook Reservation, were at once all owned by Lillie P. Rich, whose husband, Chester F. Rich, operated Boulder Brook Farm on the premises that reached all the way to Weston Road.¹ An alumna of Wellesley College, Lillie Rich subdivided a portion of her land north of Beverly Road in 1940, as illustrated in the plan below.²



32 Boulder Brook Road is situated on Lot 64, outlined in red. Plan No. 417 of 1940 showing a subdivision on land owned by Lillie P. Rich. Accessed via Norfolk County Registry of Deeds.

In 1941, Lillie Rich transferred two lots on the above plan – Lots 63 and 64 – to George I. Crowe, Inc. (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 2340, Page 62). After constructing a dwelling and attached garage on Lot 64 (Building Permit Nos. 7646 and 7647), George I. Crowe, Inc. sold the property to George and Harriett Flynn of Arlington later that year (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 2355, Page 488).

¹ “WELLESLEY’S LARGEST FARM PROJECT,” *Wellesley Townsman*, May 20, 1927, page 2.

² “Reunion Weekend At The College,” *Wellesley Townsman*, June 7, 1956, page 16; Legal notice in *Wellesley Townsman*, May 10, 1940, page 8.

In 1945, the Flynns sold the property to Ada Briggs of Cambridge (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 2537, Page 213). Later known as Ada Briggs Smythe, she sold the property in 1951 to Herbert and Marie Schmidt (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 3025, Page 90).

The Schmidts' arrival was announced in the *Wellesley Townsman*: "Mr. and Mrs. Herbert D. Schmidt and family moved to their recently purchased home at 32 Boulder Brook road from Great Notch, N. J., on August 30. Mr. Schmidt is associated with Stowe & Woodward, Inc., rubber manufacturers of Newton Upper Falls... The couple have two sons, Harold 14, who attends Junior High School, and Edward, 10, a pupil at the Sprague School."³

In 1961, 32 Boulder Brook Road was purchased by Theodore and Dorothy Haussman (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 3917, Page 689). It has remained under Haussman ownership ever since, most recently by The Haussman Nominee Trust, in which Dorothy is named Trustee (Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 15585, Page 229). They are 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 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 32 Boulder Brook 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.

³ "Newcomers to Wellesley," *Wellesley Townsman*, September 27, 1951, page 13.

With respect to standard (ii), while the surrounding neighborhood includes other Colonial Revival and Cape Cod style homes, the character of the neighborhood has evolved over time with a number of additions and new construction, which has significantly altered the overall character of the neighborhood.

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.**