



STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley - Planning Department

Application: DR-2018-09 – 680 Worcester Street - Preservation Determination
Subject Property: 680 Worcester Street (Assessor's Parcel ID #121-18)
Applicant: J. Derenzo + Associates, LLC
Property Owner: J. Derenzo + Associates, LLC
Date: Report prepared 3/9/2018 for 3/20/2018 Historical Commission Meeting
Staff Contact: Claudia Zarazua, Planner
Staff Recommendation: **Not Preferably Preserved**

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Applications for Eligibility Notice and Preservation Determination were submitted on February 12, 2018 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 14, 2018 determining the subject building to be an Eligible Building. A public hearing before the Historical Commission was scheduled for March 20, 2018.

DESCRIPTION

In consideration of the application for Eligibility Notice, it was determined that the dwelling was first identified in the 1919 Annual Town Report under ownership of Leroy and Mable Hart. It was sold soon after to Robert and Leonora List in 1925 (*See Figure 1*). Mr. List was active in the Community Club of the Sprague School, while Mrs. List was part of the Wellesley Hills Women's Club. The house then was sold to Wesley and Barbara Perry in 1946. Mr. Perry was the Chairman of the Cub Scout Pack 91 hosted at Sprague School. The property was then sold to Richard R. Kent in 1961. Their son attended Westpoint in 1964. The property then was purchased by Bernard and Margaret Caughlin in 1967. Mr. Caughlin was a Wellesley Police Officer and an advocate for pedestrian safety on Worcester Street. The house was then sold to Jeanne and John Sheppard in 1976. It was later sold to the current owner J. Derenzo and Associates in 2015.



Figure 1 680 Worcester in 1935 Wellesley Atlas

According to the Wellesley building permit database, a two-car garage was added in 1957 and a tool shed was built in the rear yard in 1996.

The dwelling is a 1- story building with a side-gabled roof, cladding and various dormer additions. Staff believes the original architecture of the house is best characterized as a massed-plan (two rooms deep), side-gabled house in National Folk. This light wooden frame construction method and the resulting houses were prominent due to a sudden availability of lumber brought by the railroad expansion in the late 1800s.

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 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.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is of the opinion that the subject building is **not** (i) 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,

With respect to standard (ii), while the publically visible facades of the dwelling are believed to be minimally altered, and the dwelling is likely consistent with the architectural style and scale of the immediate neighborhood, Staff is of the opinion that the dwelling has marginal historic or architectural importance on its own or when considered as part of a group of buildings .

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