



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT

Site: 27-29 Meacham Road Edmund Sparrow House
Case: HPC 2016.089 Campbell Park/Meacham Road Historic District

Applicant Name: Ronald Cavallo, son of Owner
Applicant Address: 70 Victoria Street, Somerville, MA

Date of Application: October 25, 2016
Legal Notice: *Reconfigure exterior egress stairs; Add deck over bay; Replace window with a door; Remove rear chimney and install matching slate; Install snow guard; Alter front porch; Install a metal fence; Add a hitching post to yard.*

Staff Recommendation: *Conditional Certificate of Appropriateness*
Date of Public Hearing: November 15, 2016

Historic and Architectural Significance

See attached survey form.

Existing Conditions

The house has been very well-maintained but less so in recent years. The front porch has been shortened and deepened. There are fire escapes descend two sides of the building. The rear chimney, minimally visible from Meacham road is disused. The front chimney needs to be rebuilt. The letter slot does not meet Post Office standards. The yard is surrounded by a chain link fence.



Proposed Work and Recommendations

The son of the owner has determined that he would like to make several improvements, restoring the building and rationalizing some changes done to the building over time.

1. Proposal of Alteration:

1. Reconfigure exterior egress stairs;
2. Add deck over bay;
3. Replace window with a door;
4. Remove rear chimney and install matching slate;
5. Install snow guard;
6. Alter front porch;

7. Install exterior mail boxes;
8. Install a metal fence;
9. Add granite posts; and
10. Add a hitching post to yard.

See the final pages for details and photos.

II. FINDINGS

1. *Prior Certificates Issued/Proposed:*

There are no prior Certificates in the database. The applicant received the following Certificate of Non-Applicability for repairs.

1. Front porch shall be rebuilt as needed with exactly matched components as required.
2. Clapboard shall be replaced as required with in-kind materials to match existing dimensions and form.
3. Siding shingles shall be replaced as required with in-kind materials to match existing dimensions and form.
4. Gutters shall be re-installed to match the original gutter in profile, size, form, and material.
5. Downspouts shall be re installed to match the original in so far as it is possible.
6. The front shutters (original) shall be re-installed on the main Meacham Road façade. They shall be hung in such a way that they could be closed if the storm windows were not installed.
7. The center chimney shall be repointed or rebuilt as required. The mortar shall be consistent to the existing in color, texture, tooling, and vapor permeability.
8. The foundation shall be pointed as required. The mortar shall be consistent to the existing in color, texture, tooling, and vapor permeability.
9. Wood window sash shall be restored, puttied and painted.
10. The leaded glass window on the Locke Street side of the building shall be restored.
11. The front entry door on Meacham Road shall be restored.
12. The dwelling unit shall be prepared for new paint to be used in the colors of the Applicants choice.

1. *Precedence:*

Exterior egress stairs are rare in Local Historic Districts, the few there are pre-date the building's designations. The Commission granted Certificates of Appropriateness for new egress stairs at 419 Broadway (2005); 198 Central Street (2015) 55 Columbus Avenue (2005); and 46 Mount Vernon Street (2003 & 2014).

No bay window roofs have been altered to accommodate decks or porches.

Windows have been altered to become door openings only at the Durrell School at 245 Beacon Street (2005); 81 Eustis Street (2002).

Remove rear chimney. The request to remove disused chimneys has become more common. While the following do not meet HPC Guidelines, the Commission has granted Certificates of Appropriateness for reconstructed chimneys at the following locations: 178 Central Street (2004), 117 Washington Street (2011), 30 Bow Street (2013), 53 Columbus Avenue (2014), 56 Bow Street (2015), 140 Highland Avenue (2008) with Staff review to ensure that the size, texture, style and detailing match the originals. The distance from the street, the ability of a viewer to clearly see the alteration and the durability of the alteration were taken into consideration.

Install snow guards. These are traditional on slate roofed buildings. The Commission has approved Certificates for 45 Walnut Street and 1 Westwood Road among others.

Alter front porch. Usually porches have been altered when they have lost the original details and are being reconstructed.

New metal fences have been recently placed at 27 Chester Street, 47 Franklin Street and 45 Walnut Street. Granite posts were used at 27 Chester Street.

Considerations:

- *What is the visibility of the proposal?*

These changes would be visible from either Meacham Road or Locke Street.

- *What are the Existing Conditions of the building / parcel?*

This building has been rental property for over 40 years. The egress stairs on both sides of the building detract from the aesthetics of this large Queen Anne style house. Access to the stairs is through the windows on the top floor and the second floor. The front porch was altered at some time, exposing part of the foundation and was made deeper. There is a chain link fence around the yard. There is a large parking area to the north of the building and a smaller one on the rear. The chimney is disused, minimally visible from Locke Street and Meacham Road.

- *Is the proposal more appropriate than the existing conditions?*

Yes with the exception of the chimney removal and the alteration of an existing window over the bay into a deck for the egress stairs where he is trying to minimize the visual impact of the alteration, everything is in keeping with the Guidelines below.

- *Does the proposal coincide with the General Approach set forth in the Design Guidelines?*

GENERAL APPROACH

The primary purpose of Somerville's Preservation Ordinance is to encourage preservation and high design standards in Somerville's Historic Districts, in order to safeguard the City's architectural heritage. The following guidelines ensure that rehabilitation efforts, alterations, and new construction all respect the design fabric of the districts and do not adversely effect their present architectural integrity.

- A. *The design approach to each property should begin with the premise that the features of historic and architectural significance described in the Study Committee report must be preserved. In general, this tends to minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.*
- C. *Whenever possible, deteriorated material or architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.*
- D. *When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of the original or later important features.*
- E. *Whenever possible, new materials should match the material being replaced with respect to their physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. The use of imitation replacement materials is discouraged.*
- F. *The Commission will give design review priority to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or those portions which it can be reasonably inferred may be visible in the future.*

The alterations proposed are based upon the physical evidence and a desire to bring the building back.

B. Roofs

1. *Preserve the integrity of the original or later important roof shape.*
2. *Retain the original roof covering whenever possible. If the property has a slate roof, conserve the roof slates. Slate is a near-permanent roofing material, and deterioration is generally caused by rusted roofing nails.*

3. *Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material that matches the old in composition, color, size, shape, texture and installation detail.*
4. *Preserve the architectural features that give the roof its distinctive character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers and brackets.*

The integrity of the roof will be preserved. Snow hooks or stops will be installed to slow the fall of built up snow from the roof. These are a historic manner of dealing with this characteristic of slate roofs. The proposed chimney removal will be minimally visible.

C. Windows and Doors

1. ***Retain original and later important door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.***
2. *Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later important window elements such as sash, lintels, sill, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorative elements and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.*

The proposed alteration from a window to a door on the north side of the building is intended to provide added safety when emergency egress is needed. The proposed deck on the roof of the bay window and concomitant installation of the minimal railing is part of the safety. The egress stairs which are currently on the roof of the porch would be integrated with the deck which would have a generic and minimal railing system painted to disappear.

D. Porches, steps, trim and other exterior architectural elements

1. ***Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later important features, including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ornamental ironwork and other important decorative items. If new pieces are needed, they should match as closely as possible the style, shape, scale and materials of the old. Avoid replacing wood posts and railings with metal ones, or wood porch decks with concrete.***

The front porch retains a number of unusual and distinctive features. The Applicant intends to return the porch to its original configuration and where necessary replicate any missing elements.

2. Fire escapes are very conspicuous features and, as a rule, should only be placed on the rear of the building, or where they are least visible from a public way. If installation on the street or side façade cannot be avoided, fire escapes should be designed and constructed with the same attention demanded by other major alterations and repairs, and are subject to the review and approval of the Commission.

H. Landscape Features and Paving

1. *The general intent of this section is to preserve the existing or later essential landscape features that enhance the property.*
2. *It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the structure and its newer surroundings.*

3. The existing landforms of the site should not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the structure or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the structure.
4. *The original layout and materials of the walks, steps and paved areas should be maintained if significant grade changes constitute an important feature of the structure or site.* Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that improved site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will accomplish this without altering the integrity of the structure.

The current Guidelines do not take fences into consideration. However, it should be noted that walls, fences (and gates) are prominent landscape features and should be constructed in a manner and design that is sensitive to the character of the historic structure and district. Items to be considered might include:

1. *Natural materials should be used for fences and walls especially those that can be seen from the street. Appropriate materials are wood, brick, stone and cast iron. Aluminum or tubular steel fencing that mimics wrought iron is allowed.*
2. *Fences should not be used to screen front yards, rather front yard fences should be open and decorative in nature. The maximum height for front yard fences is 4 feet along all public rights-of-way. Fencing may be used to screen parking areas or mechanical systems.*

There will be no alteration of the landform or circulation pattern. The addition of a period appropriate metal fence, granite posts and hitching post are in-keeping with the above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Staff recommendation is based on a complete application and supporting materials, as submitted by the Applicant, and an analysis of the historic and architectural value and significance of the site, building or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture, material and color of the features involved, and the relation of such features of buildings and structures in the area, in accordance with the required findings that are considered by the Somerville Historic District Ordinance for a Historic District Certificate. This report may be revised or updated with new a recommendation or findings based upon additional information provided to Staff or through more in depth research conducted during the public hearing process.

Staff determines that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed **is appropriate for and compatible** with the preservation and protection of the Campbell Park/Meacham Road Historic District; and would not cause substantial detriment or derogation to the District therefore Staff recommends that the **Historic Preservation Commission grant a Certificate of Appropriateness** with the following conditions:

1. All appropriate building permits shall be obtained prior to the start of any work.
2. If changes are necessary to the proposed design for which this Certificate of Appropriateness was issued, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work.
3. A deck shall be placed on the roof of the bay to evenly distribute the weight of the assemblage.
4. The deck shall be fenced with an inconspicuous simple rail, post and baluster system.
5. The egress stairs shall be reconfigured to descend from the side bay and turn away from the corner bay.
6. The window over the bay shall be replaced with a door with the same configuration and light pattern.
7. The rear chimney shall be removed.
8. The resulting hole in the roof shall be covered with slate matching in size and color.
9. Snow guards shall be installed.
10. The front porch shall be returned to its original dimensions.
11. Exterior mail boxes may be installed.
12. A metal picket fence with a spear head design shall be erected as shown on the plans submitted.
13. Granite posts shall be erected where needed to support the new fence.

14. A hitching post may be added to the forecourt of the stable.
15. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that it was executed in accordance with this Certificate and approved plans.









Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SMV.116
Historic Name:	Sparrow, Edmund House
Common Name:	
Address:	27 Meacham Rd
City/Town:	Somerville
Village/Neighborhood:	Davis Square
Local No:	1057; 152
Year Constructed:	c 1890
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Queen Anne
Use(s):	Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture
Area(s):	SMV.ay: Somerville Multiple Resource Area
Designation(s):	Local Historic District (3/11/1985); Nat'l Register DOE (9/18/1989); Nat'l Register MRA (9/18/1989)
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Asphalt Shingle Wall: Wood Clapboard; Wood; Wood Shingle



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on:

Tuesday, August 09, 2016 at 2:44: PM

ARMRA/DOE

9/18/89

(2C)

MHC#
1057OFFICE COPY
DO NOT REMOVE

LHO-3/11/85 (2C)

RM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
BOYLSTON STREET
STON, MA 02116

AREA

FORM NO.

Davis
Square

152 116

PI-DAVIS SQ
USGS-BOST,N

Somerville MRA

27 Meacham Road

SECT A

c Name Edmund Sparrow

Present residential

Original residential

PTION

ca. 1890

map research

Queen Anne

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings rear stable converted to

residential use

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition excellent

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage less than one acre

Setting city lot , on Cambridge/Somer-
ville line, near Mass. Ave., one and
two family late 19th century dwellingsRecorded by Betsy Friedberg, Preservation
Planner

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date June 1986



Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location
in relation to nearest cross streets and/or
topographical features. Indicate all buildings
between inventoried property and nearest
intersection(s).
Indicate north

See Attached Assessor's Map

MAP REFERENCE 19 - 324/950 - 4695/720
USGS QUADRANGLE Boston North

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The pretentious Queen Anne-style house at 27 Meachan Road retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is a stylish and well-detailed example of a popular late 19th century Somerville building type, and fulfills Criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places on the local level.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The house at 27 Meachan Road occupies an ample corner lot on the Somerville/Cambridge border. It is one of the most pretentious examples of the Queen Anne style in the Campbell Park subdivision. The 2 1/2 story house is based on a cross-gable plan, and exhibits typical Queen Anne variety in the size and placement of windows, dormers and bays. The wall surfaces are covered with clapboards, several patterns of wood shingles, and half-timbering. The gabled entrance porch contains robust Queen Anne turned posts and spindle frieze.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

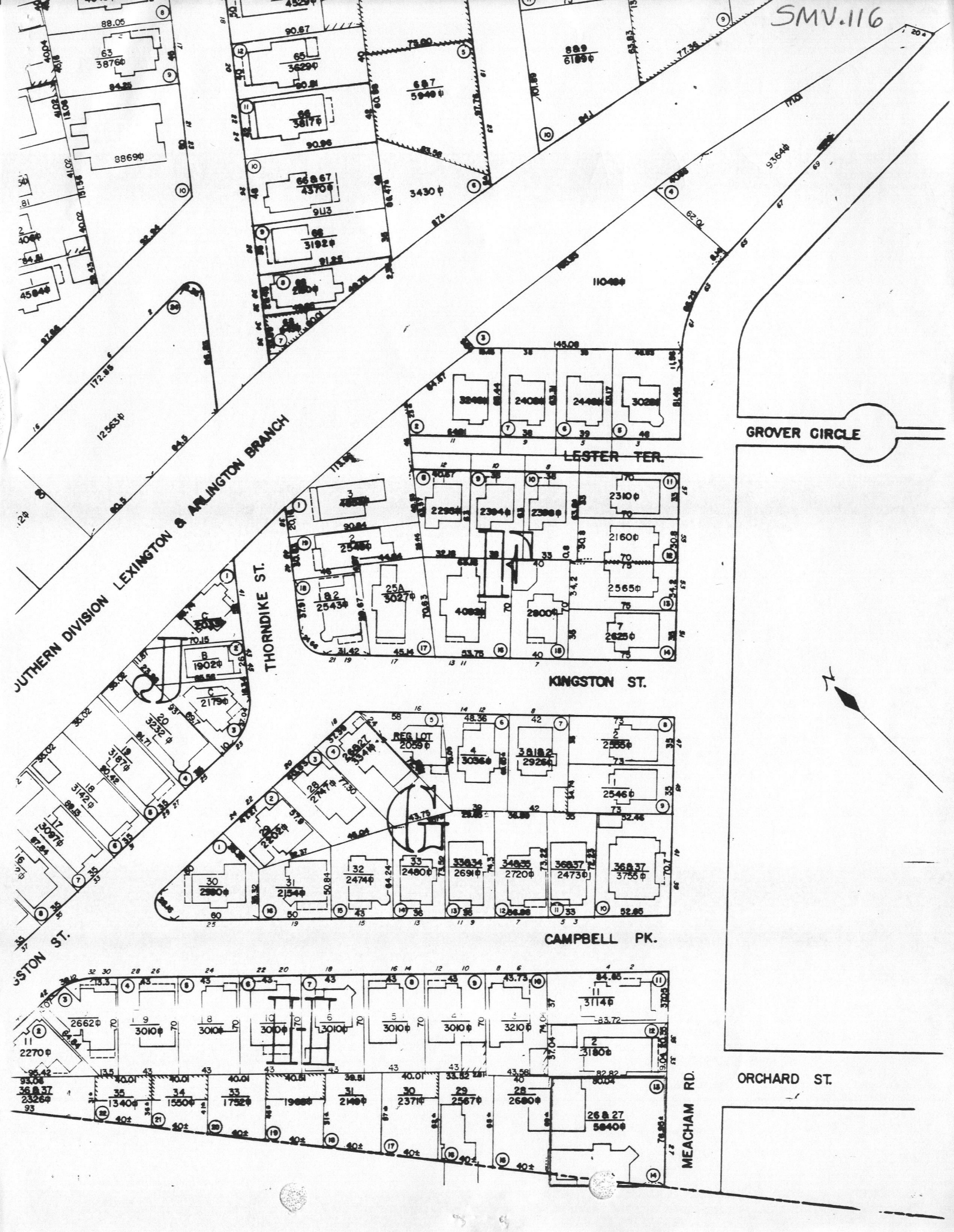
Campbell Park was a neighborhood developed at the close of the 19th century. Located adjacent to Davis Square, the area was convenient for middle-class workers employed in Boston who commuted daily on the nearby horsecar and steam rail lines. This stylish single-family residence may have been a "show" house for Campbell Park speculator Henry Glover. It is one of many one-and-two-family residences in Campbell Park built between 1885-1895.

Edmund Sparrow and wife, Merriah lived in this house near Davis Square where Sparrow maintained a hardware store in the E.S. Sparrow Hardware Building built in 1874 and demolished in the 1930s.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Bromley, G. W., Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1895
1904 City Directory

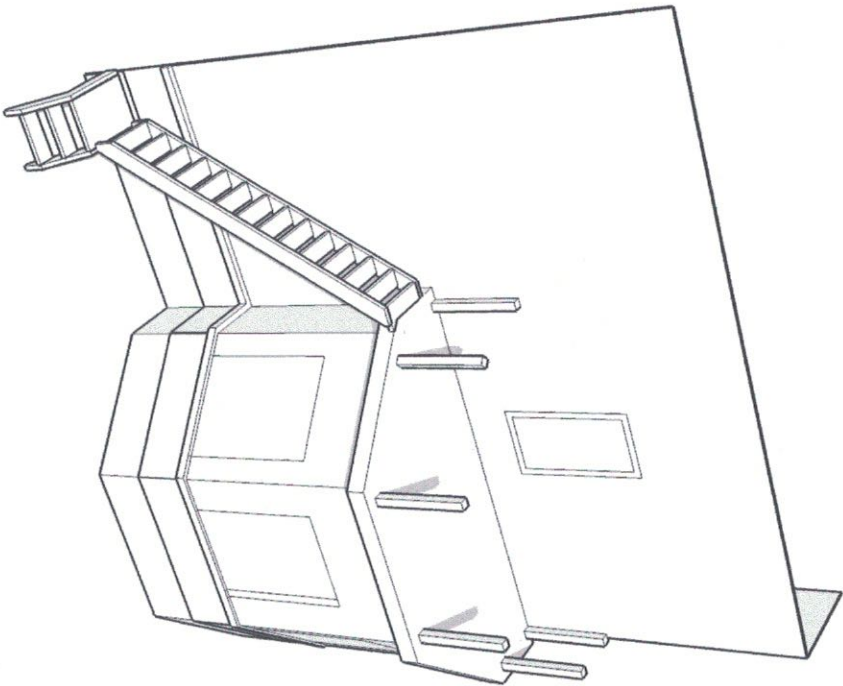
SMV.116



27 MEACHAM ROAD

BENEFITS TO REDESIGN OF RIGHT FIRE ESCAPE AT 27 MEACHAM ROAD

- reconfigured egress door would be in greater compliance with egress codes.
- redesign eliminates the steel "cat walk" which is damaging the historic bay
- reconfiguration of the staircase creating a landing brings the stair system into substantially greater compliance with current codes which require a landing every 12 feet.
- makes the whole stair system safer in that the stair changes directions, greatly reducing the possibility of someone being injured in an emergency situation by hitting the bay window.
- the redesign eliminates an awkward, tight, triangular shaped space between the stair system and the bay window and enhances the appearance of the front bay which has very beautiful brick detailing.
- the new stair system would be built out of wood, would be lighter and supported off the ground taking stress off the existing building and would be in an unobtrusive design plan with a streamlined wooden railing system, all of which would be painted the color of the body of the building, having minimal visual impact on the historic structure.





Order By Phone: 1-877-313-8901



Home

Contact Us

Help

Gates & Fence

Gate Automation

Access Controls

Customer Gallery

Get an EasyQuote

Installer Help Center

Gates & Fence

Swing Driveway Gates Popular

Swing Driveway Gates Classic

Spring Driveway Gate and Opener Sale

Sliding Driveway Gates

Security Wrought Iron Fence

Wrought Iron Fence

Custom Gate Designs

Infill Panels

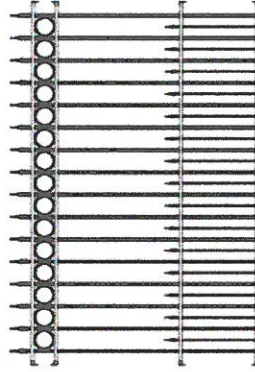
Pool Fence

Quality Guarantee

Garden Gates

Home > Gates & Fence > Wrought Iron Fence >

CONCORD WROUGHT IRON FENCE PANEL 4 RAIL



LARGER PHOTO

List Price: \$564.00

Sale Price: \$350.00

Product Code: 11-FN-LEXCON 8 4R

Add To Cart

About Our Product

The Concord Deluxe Fence Panel features consecutive rings, 4 horizontal frame members, 3 dimensional spear point finials (not flat or punched), 8 universal mounting brackets (sold separately, straight or swivel available), and pre-welded joints. Panel is 7'-6" by 5 ft. 5.5 in. Discounts available for large quantities. Call us for a quote for your project.

Fence posts are ordered separately and include a ball top finial. We offer 2 x 2 in. fence posts and 2.5 x 2.5 in. fence posts (the larger size is recommended for corners).

Installation is designed to be as easy as possible. Simply set our posts in concrete 7'-6" apart, slip the mounting brackets into the horizontal frame at the ends and tap screw into the steel post. The fence panel also mounts easily to masonry pillars or other suitable mounting surface.

The Concord Deluxe Fence Panel style makes a very attractive complement to our Concord Driveway Gates.

Browse for more products in the same category as this item:

Gates & Fence > Wrought Iron Fence

About Us

Helpful Links

Contact Us

Stay Connected

About Us

Login / Register

Display Store

Join our Monthly Newsletter

