



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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MAYOR

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE STAFF REPORT

Site:	32 Glen Street; 25-27 Cutter Street
Case:	HPC 2016.100
Applicant Name:	David Aposhian
Date of Application:	November 30, 2016
Recommendation:	Significant; Not Significant
Hearing Date:	January 17, 2017

I. Historical Association

Historical Context:

East Somerville is one of the oldest settlement areas in the City and, over time, has been expanded by filling in the Mystic and Miller's rivers. Dense residential development in this neighborhood dates from the early 19th century and was primarily constructed to provide housing for laborers who worked in nearby factories and brickyards.

The 1852 Draper map shows Glen Street as a dotted line street with only two houses on it.

Edward Cutter platted the area between Glen Street and Franklin Street from Broadway to Webster Street in 1849. Early subdivision activity concentrated between the Charlestown line and Cross Street; however, many of these streets were speculatively entered into plan books and not built for another 10-20 years. Cutter Street appears to be one of these streets.

Cutter Street and Glen Street are predominantly composed of 2½ story gable-end dwellings. However, the structures on either side of #35 are consistent in that they too are of the side-gable form. While 1½ story dwellings are interspersed, these are a mixture between side- and end-gable forms. Immediately across the street is a parking lot that extends across three lots for St. Benedict's Parochial School, c. 1933.

The house at 32 Cutter, located at the north east corner of a lot at the end of a long driveway Street appears first on the 1874 Hopkins map with two other houses on the lot with the ownership attributed to C. Horton. Calvin Horton who specialized in the construction of artesian wells and held numerous patents, may have never lived in the house. He is recorded as living at 4 Glen



Street in 1869 at a time when there were few houses on the street. By 1876, he and his family had moved to Everett Street a few blocks away. The 1870 Census does not list streets, making it difficult to ascertain exactly where he lived at the time or if 32 Glen Street was constructed and inhabited at that time. However, the 1869-1871 Directories show Elisha H. Snow living on Glen Street near Pearl, so it is likely that the Snows are living at #32. The 1880 Census shows Elisha H. Snow, provisions dealer living at 32 Glen Street with his wife, Lucy A.; daughter Annie H., seamstress; and his son Benjamin L. also a provisions dealer. The Snow family can also be found in 1884 City Directory. By 1892, Lucy A. Snow and Benjamin Y. Snow have moved to 66 Glen Street.

At some time between 1884 and 1895, 32 Glen Street was subdivided from the larger lot. The 1895 Bromley and the 1900 Stadly Atlases show the property as belonging to the heir of Calvin Horton, his wife Fanny A.

The 1900 Census has Holmes B. Clepfa, teamster, his wife Agusta and two children rent 32 Glen Street. By 1910, Josephine Erickson rented the house, her daughters Lillian and Annie, who work in a novelty shop, and a boarder, Peter Faro, painter and home decorator.

The 1920 Census also shows the property to be rented, this time by Arthur H. Curtin, a foreman at a rubber company and his family of wife and 4 children. They also have a boarder, William Burt who is a self-employed contractor.

The 1930 Census states that Andrew Landry is now the owner of 32R Glen Street. He lives there with his wife, Maria and five children: Hugh, foreman of a wood and machine shop; Edgar, cook on a steamship; Germaine, chemist assistant; and Leona, wrapper who both work in wholesale confectionary; Jeanette, an assembler in a razor blade factory; and Alban, unemployed. The family is originally from French-Canada.

The 1940 Census also shows the house to be owner-occupied this time by Willier Dufour who is a carpenter working in construction, his wife and eight children aged 18 and under. In 1947, W. Dufour enlarged the house by adding an 8' x 10' 1-story kitchen addition.

As to Cutter Street, there are several small lots. Historically a number of small 2- and 2 ½-story houses opened onto what was Sibley Court and Sibley Place. They have all been demolished. Currently, there is a c. 1950s 1-story metal garage at 25-27 Cutter Street and another has a small c. 1920 1-story concrete block garage. The metal garage building appears between 1950 and 1958 per Sanborn maps.

Architectural Description:

The house at 32 Glen Street is a 2 ½ story 3 bay by 2 bay gable-end single-family workers cottage with a center entry enclosed in a square 2-story bay tower. The pitch of the roof and fenestration pattern strongly suggests that the building was once a Greek Revival but if so it would have been moved to the site from elsewhere around 1870. The south side rear bay was enlarged and the roof line altered from partway down the peak. A second entry into the building is located at the end of the wrap around porch into the enlarged portion. A large mud-room on the rear appears to attach to the the enlarged rear side. There is also a small bump out and a bulkhead into the basement on the rear of the house.

The porch has a concrete base and decorative metal railings and posts. The porch roofing materials is corrugated fiberglass. The windows are predominantly 1/1 sash. The front door is a modern metal replacement door with 2 high windows. The side door is a multi-paned French door. The rear door again is modern with 4 high windows.

25-27 Cutter Street is a 3 bay by 2 bay corrugated metal garage erected between 1950 and 1959.

Summary:

32 Glen Street is a small Greek Revival workers cottage that has been altered through time to meet the changing needs of its tenants and owners. Its ownership is associated with Calvin Horton and family from 1874-1900. Census information has shown that the residents were predominantly blue-collar and had large families.

25-27 Cutter Street is a 3 bay by 2 bay corrugated metal garage erected between 1950 and 1959.

Findings on Historical Association

*For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (a) **importantly associated with people, events or history** or (b) historically or architecturally significant (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B). Findings for (b) are at the end of the next section.*

(a) In accordance with the historic information obtained from *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlasses, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, such as *Somerville Past and Present*, Staff find 32 Glen Street to be importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth.

The subject building at 32 Glen Street is found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to its association with Calvin Horton, and its use as home to blue-collar families in a neighborhood composed of similar buildings.

The subject building at 25-27 Cutter Street is NOT found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to lack of information regarding the owners or the business.

II. Historical and Architectural Significance

The findings for historical and/or architectural significance of a historic property address the period, style, method of building construction and association with a reputed architect or builder of the subject property, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B).

The period of significance for 32 Glen Street begins with the c.1874 date of construction as a modest single-family dwelling and continues into the present day as the use of this structure remains consistent.

The period of significance for 25-27 Cutter Street begins with its construction during the 1950s as a garage and continues into the present day as the use of this structure remains consistent.

Integrity

The National Park Service identifies historic integrity as the ability of a property to convey significance. A property should possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant; therefore, the following is an identification and evaluation of these qualities and alterations as they affect the ability of the subject property to convey significance.

- a. Location: It is likely that the house at 32 Cutter Street was moved to its current location as the essential style of the building pre-dates the c. 1870 date of its current documented

location by around 20 years. An investigation of the basement would reveal the verifying information.

25-27 Cutter Street has not been moved and is located across the street from a schoolyard in a neighborhood of workers housing

- b. Design: The roof shape and fenestration of 32 Glen Street suggest that the house was originally a Greek Revival, altered to an Italianate form in the 1870s.

25-27 Cutter Street is a simple utilitarian structure intended for automotive use.

- c. Materials: The siding, windows, doors and porch of 32 Glen Street are modern overlays on a wood-frame construction.

25-27 Cutter Street is constructed in corrugated metal.

- d. Alterations: 32 Glen Street has been altered with a center tower c. 1870s and a raised and enlarged southeast corner. An 8' x 10' rear kitchen area was added to the building in 1947 by Willier Dufour. Changes in material are noted above.

25-27 Cutter Street has replacement doors.

Evaluation of Integrity: The house at 32 Glen Street located at the rear of the property in a dense neighborhood of workers cottages is not prominent in the streetscape. Although 32 Glen Street has been moved and altered, its size and form are consistent with its use and history.

The garage at 25-27 Cutter Street is located across the street from a schoolyard amid a neighborhood of workers cottages. 25-27 Cutter Street is a corrugated metal garage with few alterations.

Findings for Historical and Architectural Significance

For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (a) importantly associated with people, events or history or (b) historically or architecturally significant (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B). Findings for (a) can be found at the end of the previous section.

(b) In accordance with the *Finding on Historical and Architectural Significance*, which addresses period, style, method of building construction, and association with a reputed architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, as well as integrity, which assess the ability of the property to convey significance, Staff find 32 Glen Street historically or architecturally significant.

The subject dwelling at 32 Glen Street is found historically significant as a representative of 19th century working class housing stock due to the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, massing, and pattern of fenestration. In addition, due to the location of the structure within the streetscape, this dwelling continues the unique rhythm of rooflines and, therefore, is significant within the context of the group of buildings which compose the streetscape despite the removal of several small houses located on Sibley Court and Place of Cutter Street.

The subject garage at 25-27 Cutter Street is NOT found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to lack of information regarding the owners or the business.

III. Recommendation

Recommendations are based upon an analysis by Historic Preservation Staff of the permit application and the required findings for the Demolition Review Ordinance, which requires archival and historical research, and an assessment of historical and architectural significance, conducted prior to the public meeting for a Determination of Significance. This report may be revised or updated with a new recommendation and/or findings based upon additional information provided to Staff or through further research.

For a Determination of Significance, the structure must be either (A) listed on the National Register or (B) at least 50 years old.

32 Glen Street is a pre-1874 Greek Revival workers cottage that has been altered through time to meet the changing needs of its tenants and owners. Its ownership is associated with Calvin Horton and family from 1874-1900. Census information has shown that the residents were predominantly blue-collar and had large families.

25-27 Cutter Street is a 3 bay by 2 bay corrugated metal garage erected between 1950 and 1959.

(A) The structures are NOT listed on or within an area listed on the National Register of Historic Places, nor is the structure the subject of a pending application for listing on the National Register.

OR

(B) The structure at 32 Glen Street, circa 1874, and the structure at 35-37 Cutter Street, circa 1959 are at least 50 years old

AND

For a Determination of Significance under (B), the subject building must be found either (a) importantly associated with people, events or history or (b) historically or architecturally significant.

(a) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlas, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission find 32 Glen Street importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth and do not find 25-27 Cutter Street importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth.**

The subject building at 32 Glen Street is found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to its association with Calvin Horton, and its use as home to blue-collar families in a neighborhood composed of similar buildings.

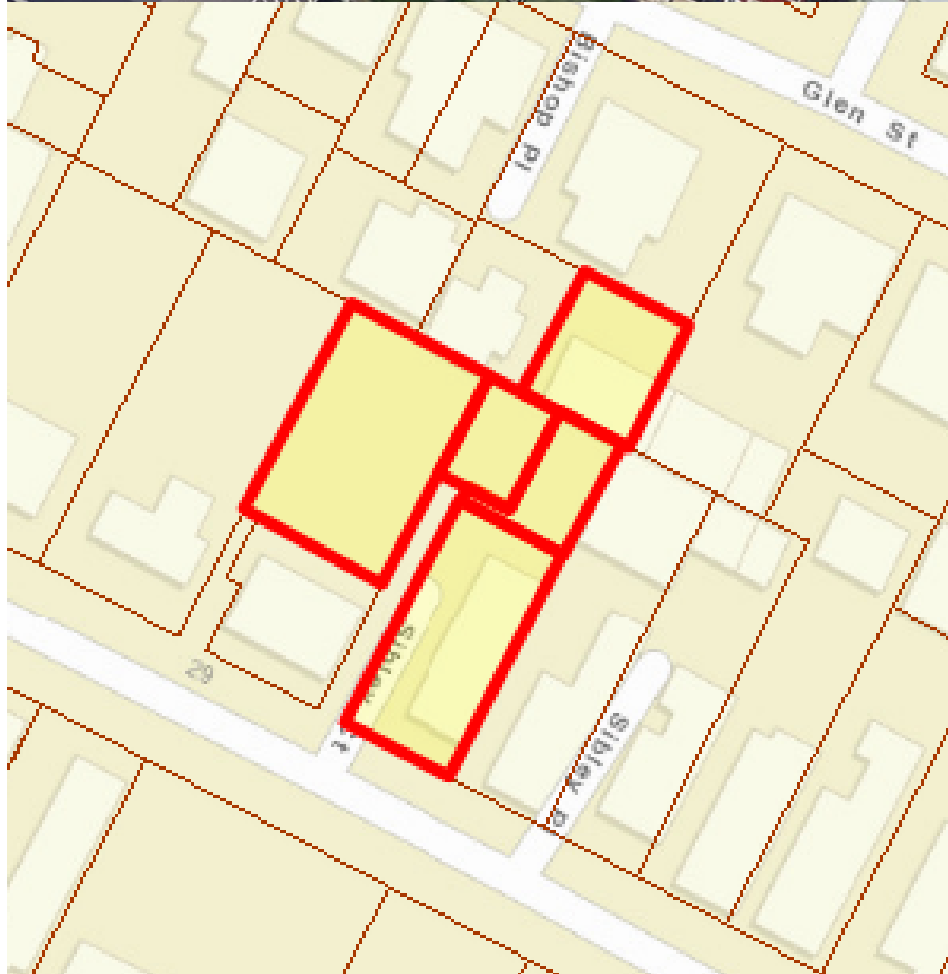
The subject building at 25-27 Cutter Street is NOT found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to lack of information regarding the owners or the business

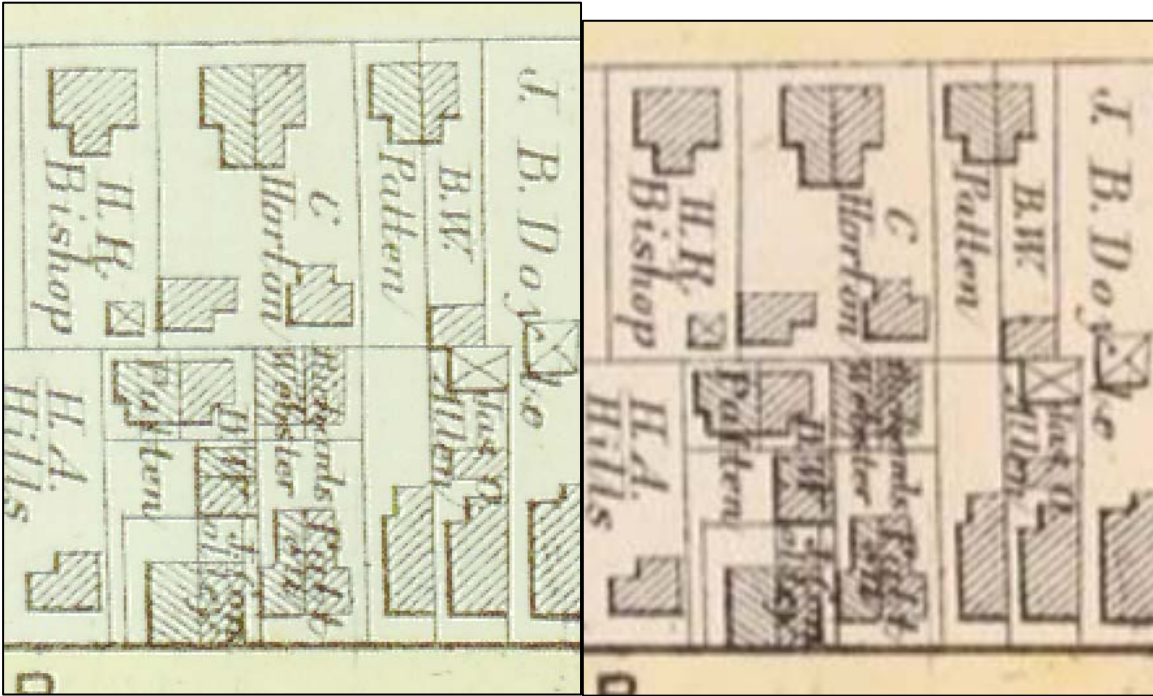
OR

(b) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical and Architectural Significance*, which addresses period, style, method of building construction, and association with a reputed architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, as well as integrity, the ability to convey significance, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission find 32 Glen Street historically and architecturally significant and do not find 25-27 Cutter Street historically and architecturally significant.**

The subject dwelling at 32 Glen Street is found historically significant as a representative of 19th century working class housing stock due to the remaining integrity of the structure with regard to original form, massing, and pattern of fenestration. In addition, due to the location of the structure within the streetscape, this dwelling continues the unique rhythm of rooflines and, therefore, is significant within the context of the group of buildings which compose the streetscape despite the removal of several small houses located on Sibley Court and Place of Cutter Street.

The subject garage at 25-27 Cutter Street is NOT found historically and architecturally significant although it a good example of the pre-fabricated metal garage constructed in the 1950s.





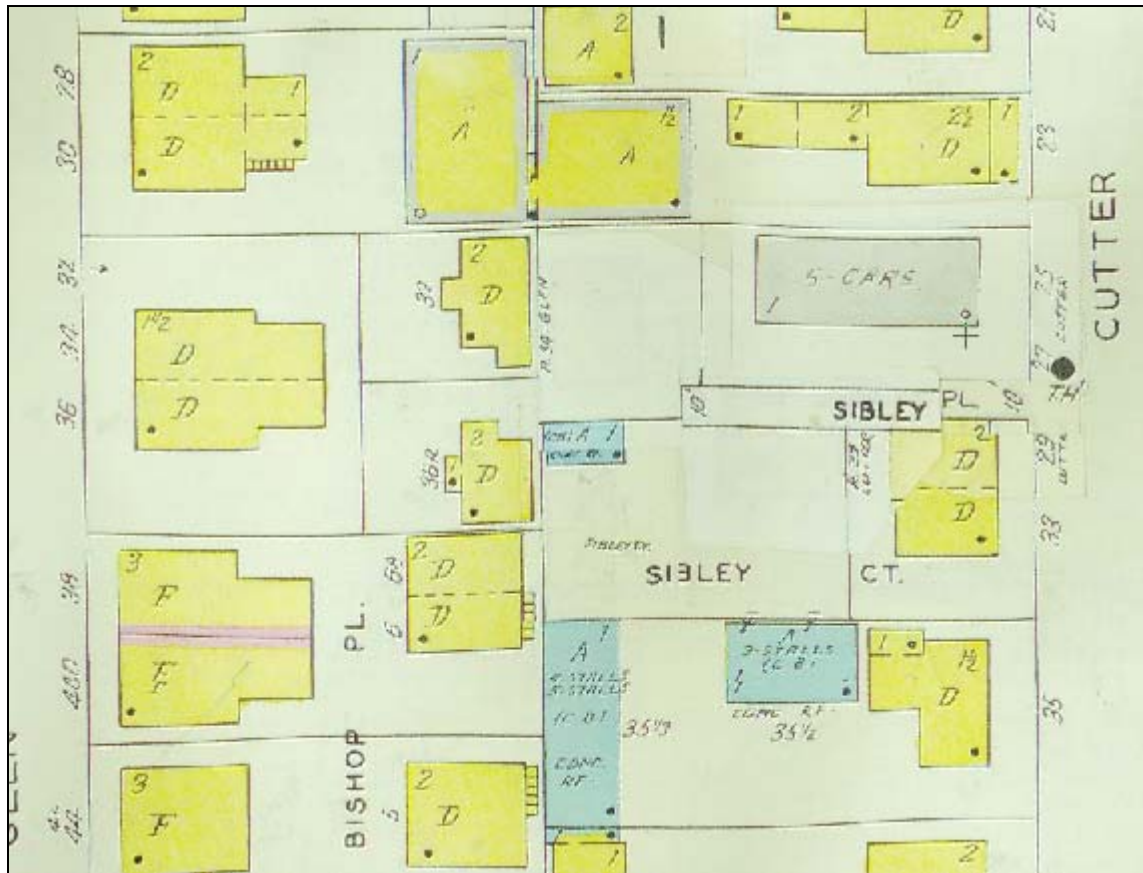
1874 Hopkins Plate 14-15

1884 Hopkins Plate B



1895 Bromley Plate 10

1950 Sanborn Plate 51



1959 Sanborn Plate 51



32 Glen Street



32 Glen Street



25-27 Cutter Street

