



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT

Site: 359-365 Broadway
Case: HPC 2015-043

Historic Name: Langmaid Terrace
District(s): Single Structure LHD at the border of the Winter Hill and Ten Hills neighborhoods and within the Somerville Multiple Resource Area

Applicant Name: John Murray
Applicant Address: 14 Thompson Pond Road

Owner Name: John Holmes
Owner Address: 110 School Street, Everett, MA

Date of Application: July 17, 2015

Legal Notice: Alter siding, and window on ells; replace and install decks.

Staff Recommendation: Denial of Certificate of Appropriateness; Conditional Certificate of Appropriateness

Date of Public Hearing: August 18, 2015

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the rear portions of the building in the following manner:

“Install pre-painted fiber cement siding on rear of building at 4” exposure and composite trim boards for all doors, windows and eaves and overhangs. Install new windows and through-the-wall a/c.”

II. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

1. Historical and Architectural Description:

a. Summary of Details

- Built between 1889 and 1893

- 1889 (Somerville LHD list)
- 1892-1893 (Form B / National Register descriptions)
- Queen Anne row house
- Single structure LHD (1985)
- National Register individual listing (1989)
- Added to the Nat'l Register as part of the Somerville Multiple Resource Area (1989)
- Housing of President Barack Obama in the 1980s during his Harvard Law School years
- **Main façade displays:**
 1. brick with a running bond
 2. brick corbeling
 3. decorative terracotta tiles
 4. brick banding
 5. granite window sills and lintels
 6. arched brick detailing over most windows
 7. terracotta plaque stating “Langmaid Terrace” on main facade
 8. gabled dormers, most with crenelated (stepped) parapets
 9. check patterned “quoins” decoration on corner posts
 10. simple parapets, likely firewalls, separate the main brick structures
 11. two wood-framed, 2-story (originally clapboarded) rear additions built around the same time as the main brick structure.
- **Two rear extensions display:**
 1. vinyl siding covering wood clapboarding until the time of the most recent violation
 2. brick foundation
 3. multiple window and a/c unit openings
 4. total of 4 roof decks which are later additions

b. Detailed Description

Main Structure

359 – 365 Broadway is historically known as “Langmaid Terrace”. Geographically, this property is located on the border of the Winter Hill and Ten Hills neighborhoods on the north side of Broadway on the corner of Fenwick.

Depending on the source cited (see “Summary of Details” above), the construction dates range from 1889 to 1893. Suffice it to say that the building was constructed during the last two decades of the 19th century in the Queen Anne style. This building is particularly notable as it is a rare example of a Queen Anne style row house in Somerville.

There are several architectural characteristics incorporated in the main brick building façade that are emblematic of the Queen Anne architectural style. First, there are several roof styles including Mansard and gable along as well as conical atop one turret and pyramidal atop another. The roof of the round turret is capped by a copper spire. Further, dormers of varying sizes display crenelated (stepped) parapets. As with the remainder of the main brick structure, all of the roofs retain slate roofing banded by copper gutter systems. Wooden, principal entry doors are recessed behind arched or squared entryways.

Rear Extensions

There are two identical wood-frame extensions to the property. As noted on the two figures below of Bromley Plate 012 from 1895, these two rear extensions were either built at the same

time as the main brick building or within a decade after. In either case, these rear extensions likely contained kitchen facilities and servant quarters as was common during this period.

Fig. 1 359-365 Broadway is indicated in the lower center of this image of Bromley Plate 012 from 1895 in a neighborhood/area context. Note the existence of the two extensions in the rear.

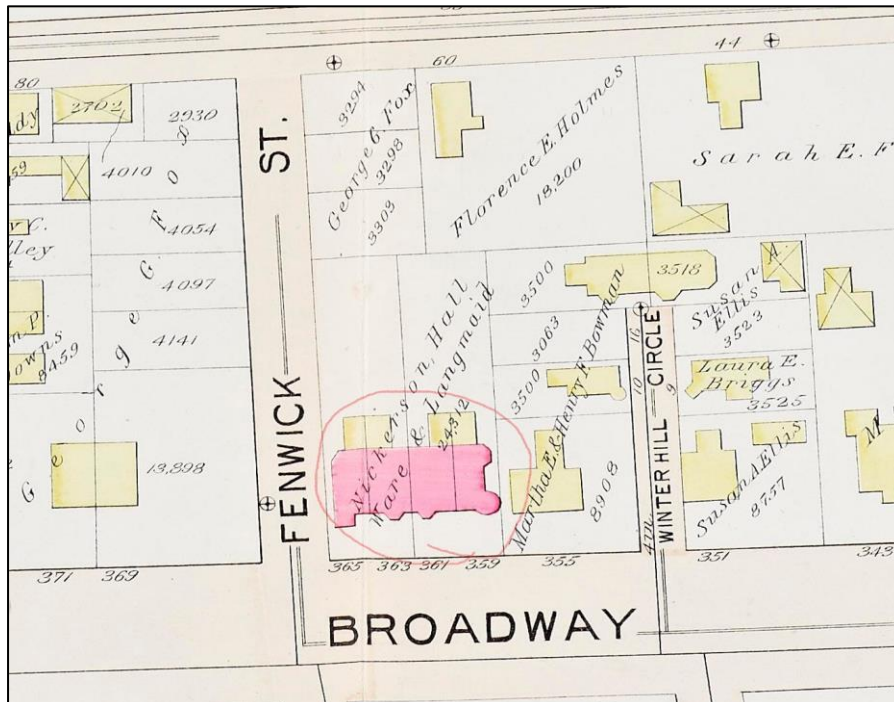
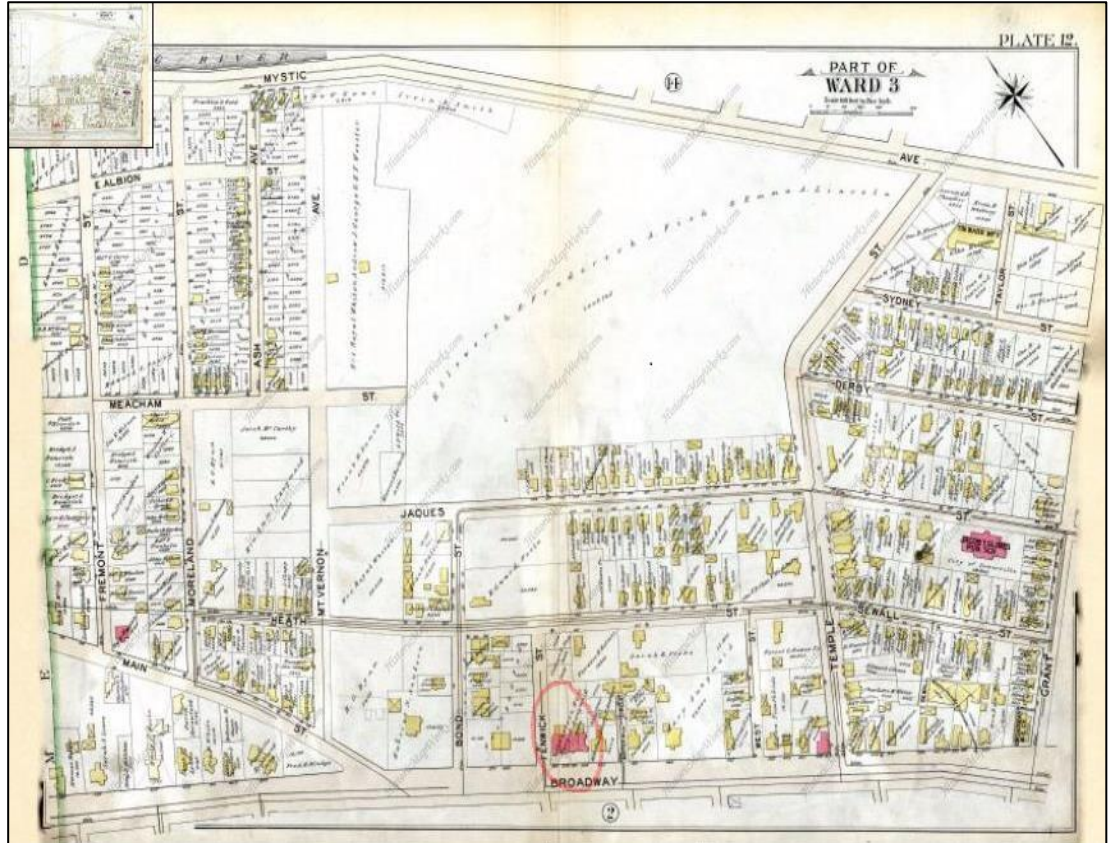
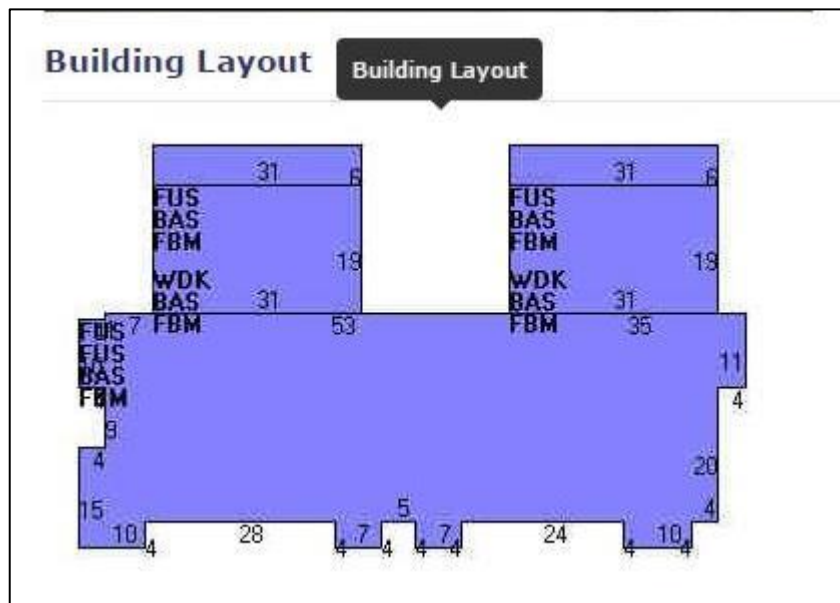


Fig. 2 Close-up of 359-365 Broadway is indicated in the lower center of this image of Bromley Plate 01 from 1895. Rear extensions are clearly visible.

The Somerville Assessor's 2015 building layout depicts these rear extensions as well below:



2. Context/Evolution of Structure or Parcel:

Research shows that Langmaid Terrace has overall been altered little since its construction. In particular, the main brick structure retains much integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with the late 19th century development of residential Somerville. Late 19th century residential construction in Somerville took the form of apartment houses to accommodate the rapidly increasing population. Many were constructed in brick and displayed a variety of architectural details. The pattern of development was cast by the establishment in 1889 of the City Beautification Society, a group of Winter Hill residents who lobbied for trees, parks, boulevards, and ordinances prohibiting cheap construction on insufficient lots.

At one time, the rear extensions had vinyl siding placed over existing wood clapboards (see Fig. 3). Current windows are not original and new openings have been created to accommodate them. Openings have been created in the exterior walls for air conditioning units.

3. Proposal

From the HPC application: Install pre-painted fiber cement siding on rear of building at 4" exposure and composite trim boards for all doors, windows, and eaves and overhangs. Install new windows and in-wall a/c unit.

III. FINDINGS

The applicant is applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness after already having performed the work described in the application. The applicant has also performed all of the work without building permits. These activities appear to have occurred gradually over the last couple of years. The applicant was issued a violation and a stop work order by Building Inspector, John Driscoll, earlier this summer. Please see the Addendum to this Staff Report to view the evolution of the changes made without permit and/or without HPC approval over the last few years. Please see the Addendum for the



Fig 3. Vinyl siding covers wood clapboards. Early sheathing visible.

violation and stop work order issued by the Inspectional Services Department (ISD).

1. Considerations:

- What is the visibility of the proposal?

The alterations done to the rear extensions of this property are visible from public ways on all sides.

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

Overall, the main structure and rear extensions appear in good condition.

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

No. See Comments following General Approach

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 affect 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.
- B. Changes and additions to the property and its environment that have taken place over the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected (LATER IMPORTANT FEATURES will be the term used hereafter to convey this concept).
- 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.

Staff comments: By performing the work described, the applicant has violated, at a minimum, items C, D, E, and F as described in the General Approach above. The application of fiber cement and composite trim, are in violation of LHD guidelines and standards as are the creation of new façade openings for a/c unit and change of windows.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the materials submitted by the Applicant, the above findings and subject to the following conditions, Staff recommends a approval of the certificate of appropriateness sought by the applicant *only* if all of the conditions below are met:

Condition 1 – Applicant shall obtain appropriate building permits for the following retroactively. Applicant is subject to any fines or other methods of remuneration as determined by the ISD:

- a. Construction of roof decks
- b. Removal of vinyl siding
- c. Removal of clapboard siding
- d. Enlargement of window openings
- e. Creation of wall opening for a/c units

Condition 2 – Applicant shall obtain appropriate building permits for the following:

- a. Remove cement board siding and replace with wood clapboarding
- b. Remove composite trim and replace with wood trim

Condition 3 – Applicant shall use wood clapboarding that is similar to late 19th century wood siding in reveal, thickness and contour. Pine will not be considered an acceptable siding material.

Applicant shall work with and provide samples to HPC Staff for their *prior to* the application of these materials to the facades of the 359-365 rear extensions.

Condition 4 – Applicant shall use wood trim that is similar to late 19th century wood trim in terms of thickness and contour. Pine will not be considered an acceptable trim material.

Applicant shall work with and provide samples to HPC Staff for their approval *prior to* the application of these materials to the facades of the 359-365 Broadway rear extensions.

Condition 5 – Should there be any delay between the removal of the cement board and composite trim and the installation of the wood trim and clapboarding, the applicant shall ensure that the structure is properly protected from any adverse impact from the elements.

Condition 6 – Applicant shall contact HPC Staff upon completion of the work for sign-off that the work was done in accordance with the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and approved plans.

IV. ADDENDUM



Fig. 4 Image from 2007. Vinyl siding extant and there is not opening in the façade for a/c unit and the opening for the large first floor window is smaller and of different shape than that shown in 2015 in Fig. 5.



Fig. 6 Image from 2013.



Fig. 5 Image from summer, 2015 shows project in-process with vinyl siding and wood clapboards removed and large portions of extension covered with cement board and composite trim. A/c unit opening, and large first floor window opening are new and altered in size and shape respectively.

IV. ADDENDUM

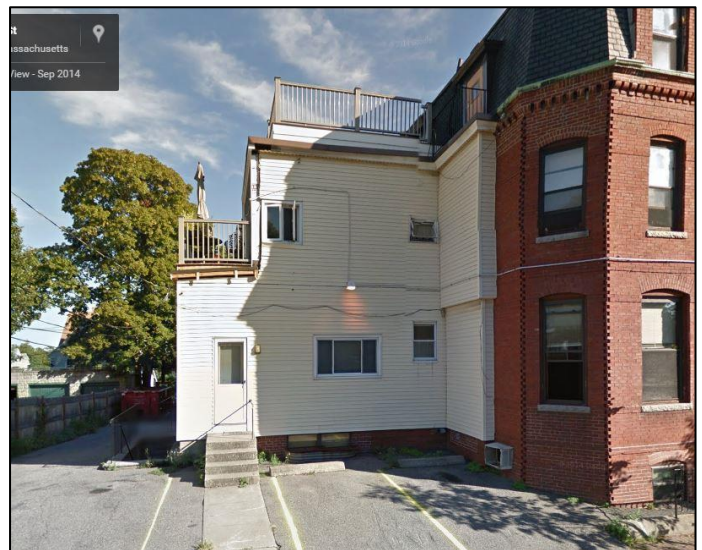


Fig. 7 Image from 2014 shows the construction of one of the unpermitted roof decks.




Fig. 7 Rear portion showing new window and a/c openings, new roof decks and newly-applied cement board and composite trim.



Fig. 8 View of rear extensions from Fenwick Street showing new window and a/c openings, roof decks, and in-process installation of cement board and composite trim.

Fig. 9 Violation letter issued to property owner from Inspectional Services Department (ISD)

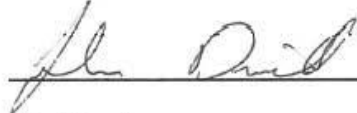
	<p>CITY OF SOMERVILLE INSPECTIONAL SERVICES - BUILDING DIVISION 1 Franey Road Somerville, MA 02145 (617) 625-6600 Ext. 5600</p>
<p>VIOLATION NOTICE</p>	
<p>JOHN K. HOLMES 110 SCHOOL ST EVERETT, MA 02149</p>	
<p>Date: June 18, 2015 Subject: Doing work without Building Permit Site Address: 359-365 BROADWAY File #: 15-003664</p>	
<p>Dear Mr. Holmes:</p>	
<p>On 04/07/2015, acting under the authority of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 143 section 3A and Article 1 of the Massachusetts Building Code and/or the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the Inspector of Buildings has caused an inspection to be conducted at 359-365 BROADWAY.</p>	
<p>According to the records of the municipal assessor's office, this property is owned by you.</p>	
<p>The Inspection revealed the following violations of the International Building Code (IBC), State Building Code (780 CMR) and/or Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO):</p>	
<p>780 CMR 1 Section 105.1 Building Permit Required. A building permit must be obtained prior to starting any work to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of a building. Work has commenced on the rear building siding and rear second floor porch without a building permit. We received an application for a building permit for the work on the rear building siding on December 18, 2014 from John Murray of JMC Construction. I advised Mr. Murray via email on January 13, 2015 the building permit could not be issued until outstanding taxes were paid on the property and the work received approval from the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission. Our office never received follow up and a building permit was never issued.</p>	
<p>780 CMR 1 Section 115.1 Stop Work Order. A stop work order has been posted on the premises for the work without a permit. Any work shall immediately cease. Any person who shall continue any work after having been served with a stop work order, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law pursuant to M.G.L. c. 143 s. 94(a).</p>	
<p>You are hereby ordered to abate these violations immediately. You must obtain any applicable permits prior to performing any work.</p>	
<p>If you fail to comply with this violation notice, the Inspector of Buildings may invoke the following procedures to compel you to correct the violations: 1) the issuance of a ticket; 2) an application for criminal complaint; 3) a complaint for injunction from a Court of competent jurisdiction; and/or 4) any other remedy allowed by law.</p>	
<p>If you are aggrieved by this Order relative to the State Building Code, you have the right to appeal within 45 days to the State Building Code Appeals Board pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 143 Section 100.</p>	
<p>If you are aggrieved by this Order relative to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, you have the right to appeal within 30 days to the Zoning Board of Appeals pursuant to Somerville Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.9 and 3.2.3.</p>	

With respect to zoning violations, Somerville Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.8 provides that any person who violates any provision of this Ordinance or who fails to perform any act required hereunder or does any prohibited act, shall upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$500 for each offense and every day that a violation continues to exist shall constitute a separate offense and shall be punishable thereas.

With respect to the State Building Code, General Laws Chapter 143 Section 94(a) provides that "[w]hoever violates any provision of the state building code ... shall be punishable by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both, for each such violation. Each day that a violation exists shall constitute a separate offense."

Please feel free to contact me at 617-625-6600 x5621 to discuss this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Driscoll", written over a horizontal line.

John Driscoll
Local Building Inspector
617-625-6600 x5621