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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

June 21, 2012

Peter Lee
477 Concord Ave
Cambridge, MA 02138

Re: HPC 12.063 – 315-321 Broadway, Somerville

Dear Mr. Lee,

On Tuesday, June 19, 2012, the **Commission** voted unanimously (7-0) to determine **the 1925 brick commercial block at 315-321 Broadway** is '**significant**' because the building is (Section 2.17) "at least 50 years old, and is or has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure after a finding that the building or structure is either:

- i. *"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 of Massachusetts, or*
- ii. *"Historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished."*

Specifically, the significance is particularly strong in terms of its associations with the period in which it was constructed and the economy of the time when 1920s commercial development in the City and the new automotive era began. The building has integrity with its copper covered parapet, arched doorways and many other details.

The Commission will be holding a public hearing on July 17, 2012 to review the SHPC's initial determination of "significance" and whether the building should be "preferably preserved" as per section 7-28 b "that it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished." While the ordinance requires the Applicant to submit photos and building descriptions, these materials have been prepared by the HPC Staff to aid in the initial determination of 'significance.' A copy of these materials were given to you at the



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meeting. Should you have additional information that you believe could effect the determination, the Commission requests their submission for Staff review within two week of the public hearing which would be by Tuesday, July 3, 2012. Public testimony will be taken at the hearing, followed by discussion and a vote by the Commission.

It should also be noted as per sec 4.7 that “anyone who voluntarily demolishes a significant building or structure without complying fully with the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$300” per violation levied daily, and that “no building permit shall be issued for a new building or structure on any premises where a significant building or structure is voluntarily demolished in violation of this ordinance for a period of two (2) years after the date of demolition.”

According to the Demolition Review Ordinance, demolition (sec. 2.9) means “the act of pulling down, destroying, removing, or razing a building or structure or commencing the work of total or substantial destruction with the intent of completing the same. For the purposes of this ordinance, the term “demolition” shall not include routine maintenance, interior renovations, or other types of renovations for which Commission approval is generally not required.” And that voluntarily (sec. 2.19) means “any act(s) done by design or intention, which is proposed, intended, or not accidental. An Act of God is not considered voluntary, but rather is regarded as an act done without the will or choice of the applicant (or owner, if different from applicant). For the purposes of this chapter, the destruction of a significant building or structure for failure to properly secure it shall be considered voluntary.”

If you have any questions about this letter, please feel free to contact me at (617) 625-6600, x 2500.

Sincerely,



Kristi Chase
Preservation Planner

Cc: Paul Nonni, Sr. Building Inspector, Inspectional Services Division.
John Long, City Clerk
George Proakis, Director of Planning
Dick Bauer, Chairman, SHPC
J. Brandon Wilson, Executive Director, SHPC