



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT

Site:	178 Central Street	c.1840 Adams-Locke House
Case:	HPC 2016.027	Single Building Local Historic District
Applicant Name:	Serge Roy, Owner	
Applicant Address:	178 Central Street	
Date of Application:	April 25, 2016	
Legal Notice:	<i>Replace windows</i>	
Staff Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness	
Date of Public Hearing:	May 31, 2016	

I. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The Adams-Locke House is significant as one of the first non-vernacular houses built on Winter Hill. Built ca. 1840, this well-preserved grand side-hall plan Greek Revival-style house. It has a three-bay facade sited with its gable end to the street. Other notable features include the broad entablature at the cornice, wide corner boards, and full-width Doric porch (to which a ca. 1910 roof railing has been added). The entrance is flanked by full-length sidelights. The interior retains most of its original doors, door and window enframements, baseboard moldings, and decorative moldings. Recent interior demolition work for the kitchen has revealed post and beam construction with brick nogging.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT/EVOLUTION OF STRUCTURE OR PARCEL:

Originally a farmhouse, the house stands on land the boundaries of which one extended south to Medford Street and north to Broadway. The house was built by Charles Adams, a well-known figure on Winter Hill during his day. Adams was a farmer, animal husbandman, and state legislator. He is known to be one of the original merchants at Boston's Quincy Market.

A subsequent resident of the house was Woodbury Locke, a "cutter" employed in the leather/shoe business in Boston.

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. *Proposal of Alteration:*

1. *Replace replacement attic window sash with Marvin wood ultimate double hung sash with spacer bars and applied muntins.*

The Applicant would like to replace the existing wood single pane attic windows made by J & C Adams with newer ones by Marvin to match the ones used on the kitchen renovation. Due to the severe ice dams of two winters ago, it was found that the attic did not remain cold enough to prevent the dams, while in the summer it got too hot. He intends to insulate the roof since the insulation in the floor is insufficient.

II. FINDINGS

1. *Prior Certificates Issued/Proposed:*

C/A	Nichole & Bill Bookwalter	2002.046	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Install a 4' "Hurley Picket" fence along front yard and driveway as outlined by the contractor; and 2. Install a 5'6" double swing gate at walkway and a second gate toward the rear of the yard.
C/A	Nicole Bookwalter	2004.037	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reconstruct chimney from attic level using new Boston Colonial or Boston Paver bricks; 2. Install new lead flashing; and 3. Install a rain cap provided that is copper or black.
C/A	Serge Roy	2014.014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The replacement door will match the existing side door on the ell; 2. The replacement Marvin Tilt Pac insulated wood window sash and new wood window shall have 6/6 glazing, spacer bars, and no Low-E glass to match the existing windows in form, material, and pattern. 3. Window casings for the new window and one other window shall replicate the casings on the rest of the house.
C/NA	Serge Roy	2014.021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three-tab asphalt shingles shall be installed to match the existing in texture, size, shape, and installation detail. 2. The fascia shall match the existing in material, size, shape, and installation detail. 3. The gutters shall match the existing in material, size, shape, and installation detail. 4. The fence shall match the existing in material, size, shape, and construction details.
C/A	Serge Roy	2016.010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The walkway shall retain the current dimensions, alignment and location. 2. The walkway shall have real brick pavers to be laid in a herringbone pattern with an edging pattern as indicated in the attached photos.

2. *Precedence:*

- *Are there similar properties / proposals?*
 - *Replace existing attic windows.* It is very rare to replace only one or two windows on a single façade. This occasionally occurs when a larger condominium association is gradually changing out the existing replacement windows for another brand.

3. *Considerations:*

- *What is the visibility of the proposal?*
The windows are visible from both the public rights of way – The Central Street attic windows are fully visible while the window that faces Adams Street is only visible between two houses when there are not leaves on the trees.
- *What are the Existing Conditions of the building / parcel?*
The windows are replacement windows by J & C Adams Co. which has been out of business since at least 2013. These were installed at an unknown date since there is neither a building permit nor Certificate in the case files. Staff made a site visit to understand the construction and problems with the existing sash and confirmed that they do not have weights and are therefore held in place by friction. The bottom sash do not stay up and the upper sash are stationary. See addendum by owner.

- *Is the proposal more appropriate than the existing conditions?*
The oldest form of hung sash has a fixed upper sash and a lower sash that moved on a track and was held open by the placement of stops or supports when needed. They are proposing to install the same windows as approved by HPC case number 2014.024. Those windows were minimally and obliquely visible from the public right of way at a distance. The proposed windows are not single pane but double-pane with spacer bars and faux muntins.
- *Is the proposal more in-keeping with the age, purpose, style and construction of the building?*
The proposed alteration is not in-keeping with the age, purpose, style and construction of the building than the existing condition. See comments above.
- *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.*

The windows were not discussed in the Form B, although the casings and trim were mentioned.

C. *Whenever possible, deteriorated material or architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.*

The Applicant states that the windows are not original, improperly installed and are in poor condition. Staff noted that they were relatively modern wood replacement windows with plastic closures stamped 'Adams'. They will be replaced with

D. *When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of the original or later important features.*

The Applicant intends to replace the windows with ones in a form similar to the existing 6/6 pattern.

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.*

The existing windows are 6/6 wood double-hung construction on tracks with no weights or pulleys.

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 windows are visible down the driveway and across the neighbor's yard at the rear of the building. They are approximately 100' from the sidewalk. The rear of the building is visible down a driveway from Adams Street also at a distance of approximately 100' when there are no leaves on the trees.

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.

The original door and window openings have not been altered. The Applicant does not intend to alter the existing.

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 ...

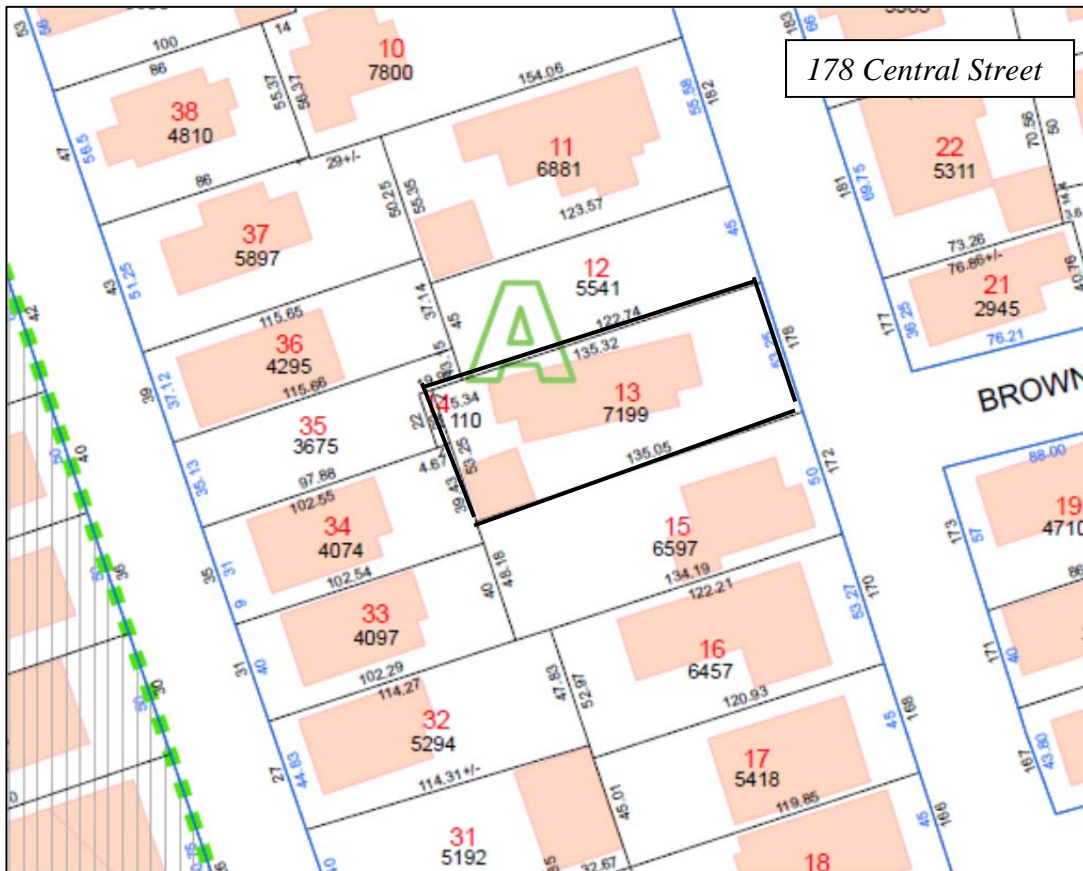
The Applicant finds the windows do not stay up and currently uses improvised supports hold the windows open.

III. 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 178 Central Street Local Historic District due to the distance of the windows from the street; therefore **Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission grant Serge Roy, Owner, a Certificate of Appropriateness for 178 Central Street** with the following contingencies.

1. Applicant shall obtain all appropriate building permits prior to commencing work.
2. Three attic windows shall be replaced with Marvin Tilt Pac insulated wood window sash which shall have 6/6 glazing, spacer bars, and no Low-E glass to match the existing attic windows in form, material, and pattern.
3. The muntin size shall be the same dimensions and shape as in the existing windows.
4. If the work differs from the approved Certificate, a new application shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work.
5. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans.



178 Central Street (Adams-Locke House)

(Proposed replacement of attic windows indicated below)



Front view of house facing sidewalk at
178 Central Street



These photos were taken from the interior of the attic and show the deteriorating shape of the windows (large gaping holes in corner from rot and multiple spaces for water/wind entry. They are also poorly installed and sections no longer have a frame. Note that there are no headers for appropriate stability and installation. Water damage (darkened areas) can be seen in many of these photos. They are also not original to house (they have the brand "Adams" on the plastic window lock. I believe therefore they are an older JC Adams "economy" window. Probably OK in their day for a cold attic space however we will have the walls and ceiling (roof) insulated with spray foam to prevent ice damming and make the overall house more efficient. The attic space will be kept at room temperature which will require more energy efficient windows.



Close up of exterior attic windows from front of house facing Central Street. The replacement windows will be of exact same proportions and we will match the trim to rest of house. There will also not be any aluminum storm windows which should improve the historic character of the front of the house.



This is what the new replacement windows will look like (two photos above) from exterior and interior. These were taken from our kitchen project last year and represent the Marvin windows that were approved by the historic commission for that project. We will use the same windows except they will be 3 over 3 double hung. Below is a photo showing how well the new windows match the existing windows on rest of house

