



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

*HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION*

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**ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT**

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Site: 178 Central Street c.1840 Adams-Locke House  
Case: HPC 2014.014 Single Building Local Historic District

Applicant Name: Darren Stanley, Contractor  
Applicant Address: 20 Independence Drive, Winchendon, MA

Date of Application: March 18, 2014  
Legal Notice: *Replace door and windows on kitchen ell.*  
Staff Recommendation: Certificate of Appropriateness  
Date of Public Hearing: April 15, 2014

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**I. BUILDING DESCRIPTION**

**ARCHITECTURAL 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 sidehall 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

178 Central Street, 2014



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.

## II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 1. *Proposal of Alteration:*

The applicant is redoing the kitchen and would like to replace the kitchen ell windows with Marvin replacement sash and replace rear door to match existing door from driveway.

See the final pages for details and photos.

## II. FINDINGS

### 1. *Prior Certificates Issued/Proposed:*

2002.046	C/A	10/24/2002	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.
2004.037	C/A	11/8/2004	1. Reconstruct chimney from attic level using new Boston Colonial or Boston Paver bricks; 2. Install new lead flashing; and 3. Install a raincap provided that is copper or black.

### 1. *Precedence:*

- *Are there similar properties / proposals?*
  - Replace the kitchen ell windows with Marvin replacement sash.
  - Replace rear door to match existing door from driveway.

### 3. *Considerations:*

- *What is the visibility of the proposal?*

The kitchen ell windows are set over 100' back from the lot line on the north and south sides of the building. The rear of the building faces Adams Street and is set more than 115' back.

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

The existing windows are wood replacement windows of an unknown date. The rear portion of 178 Central Street is probably original to the structure. It is post and beam construction with brick nogging. According to a 1983 Report at some date prior to 1874, the rear portion was severely truncated to allow for the sale and subsequent development of properties on Adams Street. This portion has been renovated several times.

The current owner found during interior demolition and preparation for a new kitchen that the windows had been improperly installed. The doors and windows are not in their original locations based upon evidence of prior openings that had been revealed during the gutting of the kitchen.

The owner states "that the kitchen, which is located all the way in the rear of the house, has not been cared for in the same way as the rest of the house, and has suffered from poor quality renovations in that past that have not only modified the original exterior but left the structure unsafe and open to water damage, rot, and cold air infiltration in winter. These conditions have led us to a complete gut renovation of the kitchen. The interior side of the exterior walls (mostly plaster lathing but some plywood, drywall and even reclaimed wood scraps and an old door as "filling" between a portion of the post and beam construction were found) have been removed. Beneath this it can be seen that the current windows and door are not original to the house and in fact were inserted with no consideration for proper framing (no headers), or weather tight

construction (see attached photos). Portions of the walls and ceiling are also unsafe: one whole section of wall (about 15 feet), has no continuous studs from floor to ceiling, and the ceiling joists are not sufficient for the span and will be replaced. I have provided photographs of what this looks like so that you can see where the original doors were located (there were 2) and where the current door and windows are placed. Both northeast and northwest sections of the house have suffered from water infiltration damage (which is being attended to) and necessitates replacement of window sashes and door which suffered water damage and rot and no longer function to provide a weather tight exterior (supportive photos provided). We will keep the window/door frames but replace the sashes with all wood products from Marvin windows that are much higher quality than what exists now and of a similar look. The rear door is poorly constructed and improperly installed and will be replaced with a wooden one with clear insulated glass lites and insulated glass lites that match the exterior side entry door to house from the driveway. All double hung windows (6 over 6) will be of the same all wood construction and will therefore offer consistency and blend in with current exterior. The specific manufacturer and style of these replacement sash windows (manufactured by Marvin – see attached) were selected by our contractor and architect. They used these replacement sash windows with low-E glazing to improve 6-7 double hung windows in a historic Victorian house in Somerville less than 2 months ago. They look terrific and blend in nicely with the historic nature of their property, which is a similar age as ours. Furthermore the considerable distance of our kitchen windows and doors from public ways should be considered a mitigating factor in allowing for these improvements.”

- *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 kitchen ell was not discussed in the Form B.

- C. *Whenever possible, deteriorated material or architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced or removed. They have weighted double-hung wood construction.*

The Applicant states that the windows are not original, improperly installed and are in poor condition.

- 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 style similar to the existing.

- 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 original windows are unknown. The existing windows are 6/6 wood double-hung construction.

- 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 at a distance of approximately 100'.

### 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 been altered. The Applicant does not intend to alter the existing openings on the east and west sides but does intend to add one window to rear of the building near the west side. (See attached plan sketch and elevations.)

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. If aluminum windows must be installed, select a baked finish that matches as closely as possible the color of the existing trim. Investigate weather-stripping and storm windows with a baked enamel finish as an alternative to the replacement of historic sash.*

The Applicant finds the windows to be both beyond repair and improperly installed, therefore he proposes to install insulated 6/6 wood replacement sash with no Lo-E coating to replace the existing traditional 6/6 double-hung ones. The existing casings will be retained or replicated.

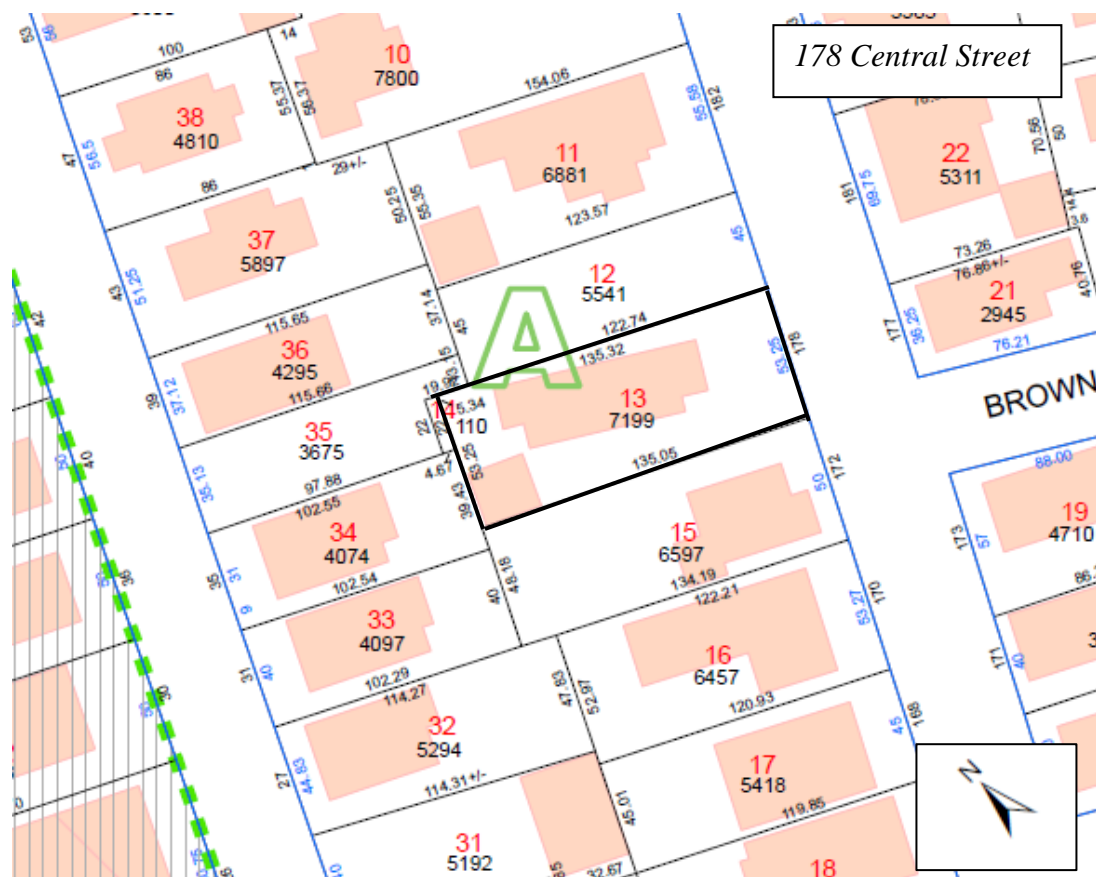
The new door on the rear will replace a later non-original solid wood door with one with divided lights to match the side door off the driveway. (See attached plan sketch and elevations.)

## 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 Adams-Locke Local Historic District at 178 Central Street because the distance of the alteration from the street renders the alteration indistinguishable from the existing fabric on the east and west sides, original configuration of the rear ell of the building has been extensively altered, a window on the rear façade will give better balance to the rear elevation; therefore **Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission grant Darren Stanley, Contractor and Serge Roy, Owner a Certificate of Appropriateness** to replace the windows on the east and west sides of the rear ell with insulated 6/6 wood replacement sash with no Lo-E coating.





178 Central Street, 2014





*178 Central Street, 2014*







East facing window is rotted, and will not open and close and has significant air entry. The wood is too rotten to repair



*178 Central Street. 2012*



West facing windows (along driveway)  
have rotten sashes





Another west facing window with indication of water damage and rot from water leaking through exterior fascia board. The picture also shows that these are old replacement sash windows and are not original to house. There are no headers on this window...it was just cut into wall and its location is not original to house. We are asking to replace these sashes with new wooden ones that offer double pane glass and better construction and better protection to house from rain and wind.



*178 Central Street from Adams Street. 2014*





