



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT

Site: 88 College Avenue c.1890 Charles H. Lockhart House
Case: HPC 2015.009 Westwood Road Local Historic District

Applicant Name: Melissa & Christopher Frost, Owners
Applicant Address: 88 College Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144

Date of Application: January 28, 2015
Legal Notice: *Install a finial on turret.*

Staff Recommendation: Certificate of Appropriateness
Date of Public Hearing: April 21, 2015

I. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Architectural Description: From the Form B
One of the most prominent houses built on College Avenue (then Elm Street) and near Tufts Park, this Queen Anne style dwelling was built as a single family and retains many of the elaborate details that distinguish it from others and contribute to its significance. The asymmetrical building retains its polygonal, turnip-top, corner tower, well-suited to the corner lot, the handsome balustraded bay on the College Avenue façade with curved stained glass sash and fluted pilasters between each of the four sash, and its cross gable dormer over the side octagonal bay with brackets and dentil molding. The house has been somewhat altered with the partial application of synthetic siding. This dwelling is one of the finest detailed Queen Anne houses in the area and can be a focal point on the College Avenue streetscape. The second floor bay and front porch details were constructed in the early twentieth century.



88 College Avenue 2015

Historic Context: From the Form B



Located in the area west of College Avenue (formerly Elm Street) and between Davis Square and Tufts University, this area was subdivided after the Civil War in part due to the expansion of railway lines to service these then outlying areas. Farmers such as William Russell, Jesse Simpson and Lorenzo Dow divided their large agricultural tracts of land into residential subdivisions, most of which were not actually constructed until the 1880s and 1890s. Ira Hill, well-known Prospect Hill real estate developer, invested in and began construction of the Park Avenue and Chandler Street area near Davis Square, in the early 1870s.

This house, located on the north-west corner of College Avenue and William Street, was built on land that had been part of the William A. Russell estate. It is one of the large stylish houses built north of Davis Square after much of the smaller row houses and mansard cottages were built for workers closer to Davis Square. Such houses were built for business men commuting to Boston made possible by the improved rail service in these outlying areas. First owner/occupant, Charles H. Lockhart was an undertaker who maintained an office in Boston and factory in East Cambridge. City directories list Lockhart at this address from 1890.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. *Proposal of Alteration:* See the final pages for details and photos.

With the exterior restoration of the house, the owners desire to add a finial to the peak of the tower of the roof where currently there is no such ornamentation. This finial will be designed and created by owner, Chris Frost. Frost is a sculptor and his studio is in the property's carriage house. The design is of a tree and will be cast in bronze and sit atop a small sphere. Supporting the finial is an anchored stainless steel rod that is connected to a copper cable with travels through the building and into the ground, making the finial a working lightning rod.

III. FINDINGS

1. *Prior Certificates Issued/Proposed:*

C/A	Melissa & Chris Frost	2003.020	1. Install an off-white 3' – 4'6" wood picket fence on 2 and ½ sides of yard and a 6' at the rear and 2 gates.
C/NA,C/A	Melissa & Chris Frost	2004.006	1. Replace garage doors with new ones similar in appearance to the existing loft door with Staff review and approval and; 2. Replace shortened hay bale arm in-kind to approximately 3' length. 3. Repair loft door; 4. Repair existing side door; 5. Repair and replace trim and siding in-kind as needed; 6. Add exterior surface ceiling light outside main garage door; and 7. Add vents for plumbing and exhaust fan; 8. Rebuild brick foundation of carriage house and rebuild 6' x 20' of the brick foundation of the main building in-kind at the right rear corner of the house abutting the back porch using similar brick to existing on the condition that appropriate mortars are used and with Staff review and approval of any replacement brick; 9. Repair and replace roof shingles in-kind.

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repair loft door; 2. Repair existing side door; 3. Repair and replace trim and siding in-kind as needed; 4. Repair front window in-kind to match existing; 5. Add exterior surface ceiling light outside main garage door; 6. Add vents for plumbing and exhaust fan; 7. Rebuild brick foundation using similar brick to existing; and 8. Rebuild with in-kind materials 6' x 20' brick foundation of the main building at the right rear corner of the house abutting the back porch. 9. Replace garage doors with Equal Door Industries Model #450 plus; 10. Replace shortened gantry arm in-kind to a usable dimension. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Install PVC vent stack on the condition that it is hidden by a cast iron vent stack where it emerges from the roof per plans dated 4/6/04; b. Remove asphalt shingles and repair and replace louvers in-kind as needed on cupola per plans dated 4/6/04; c. Replace existing wood 2/2 sash and blinded wood windows with Norco wood 2/2 sash in same size and style as the existing on both the sides and rear; and d. Add two (2) Andersen® 22" x 38" skylights on roof on rear of building per plans dated 4/06/04.
CNA	Melissa & Chris Frost	2006.072	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repair 6 clear and colored glass single and double-hung third floor windows.
CA, C/NA	Melissa & Chris Frost	2006.074	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Remove aluminum siding; 3. Repair or replace in-kind rotted or missing wood elements; 4. Install fan vent on eastern side of roof; and 5. Install a bronze ornament on top of corner tower.
CA, C/NA	Melissa & Chris Frost	2015.005	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The aluminum siding shall be removed. 2. Damaged trim, clapboard and shingled siding shall be replaced with in-kind materials that match the existing in size, shape and texture as needed. 3. Thirty seven 1/1 existing replacement windows may be replaced with Marvin Clad Insert Double Hung SDL aluminum-clad windows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The model shall be an insert double-hung window and the color of the aluminum cladding shall be Black; b. The glazing shall not be low-E and a dark spacer shall be included for simulated divided light; c. The muntin shall be 1 1/8"; d. Any exterior window casing, clapboard, or other historic fabric removed or displaced as a result of this project shall be repaired in-kind; and e. The Applicant shall contact HPC Staff upon installation to ensure correct installation and in-kind repair to historic fabric. 4. The existing asphalt shingle roof shall be replaced to match the carriage house roof. 5. The back porch shall be removed and replaced with a larger deck per plans received and stamped on March 5, 2015. 6. The rear door shall be replaced with a wood Simpson F-117 door. 7. All damaged wood clapboard, shingles, and trim shall be restored, repaired or replaced with in-kind materials to match the originals in size, shape, material, and texture. 8. The porches shall be repaired to match the existing with in-kind materials to match the existing with respect to size, shape, material, and texture. 9. The gutters shall be repaired or replaced with in-kind materials to match the existing with respect to size, shape, material, and texture.

1. *Precedence:*

- *Are there similar properties / proposals?*

The Applicant received a Certificate of Appropriateness in 2006 to install a bronze ornament on top of the corner tower on the condition that he returned to the Commission for approval of the design. No other cases of finial replacement or sculpture have been received for a determination of Appropriateness.

3. *Considerations:* See photos at the end of the document.

- *What is the visibility of the proposal?*

The house is located on a corner; the sculpture would be visible.

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

The tower is missing its finial. The historic photograph of the house indicates that there was one. Its exact size and proportions are not known although one might be able to derive them from the historic photo.

- *Is the proposal more appropriate than the existing conditions?*

A finial is an appropriate element for the towers of Queen Anne structures. The proposed ornament is reversible and has a modern approach that would never be mistaken for a historic ornament.

- *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.*

No alterations to the historic fabric of the building will be undertaken.

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

The historic finial has been missing for some years. Its exact size and proportions are not known although one might be able to derive them from the historic photo.

- 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 proposed ornament does not match any historic feature. Only its location is based on photographic and physical evidence.

- 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 proposed finial ornament is constructed of bronze and copper.

- 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.*

All aspects of the project will be visible from the public right of way.

B. Roofs

1. *Preserve the integrity of the original or later important roof shape.*

There will be no change to the roof shapes. The proposed addition is completely reversible.

2. *Retain the original roof covering whenever possible. If the property has a slate roof, conserve the roof slates. Slate is a near-permanent roofing material, and deterioration is generally caused by rusted roofing nails.*

There will be no change to the roof covering.

3. *Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material that matches the old in composition, color, size, shape, texture and installation detail.*

No deteriorated materials are involved in the proposal which is essentially an installation of a small sculpture on top of the tower.

4. *Preserve the architectural features that give the roof its distinctive character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers and brackets. Downspouts should be inconspicuously located and should be painted to match the color of the siding.*

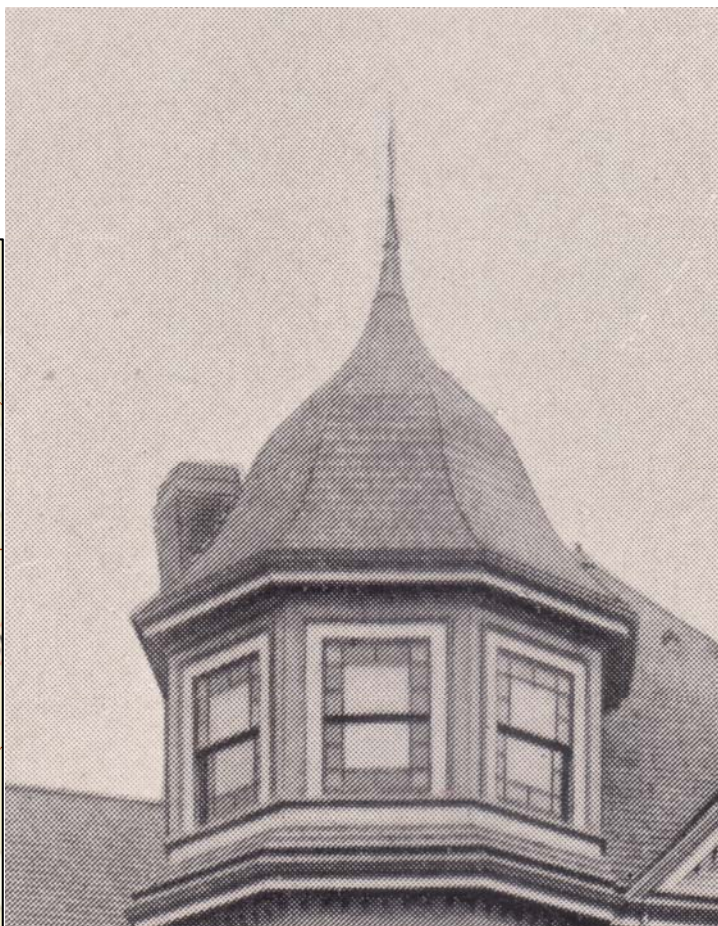
No historic architectural features that give the roof its distinctive character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers and brackets will be altered.

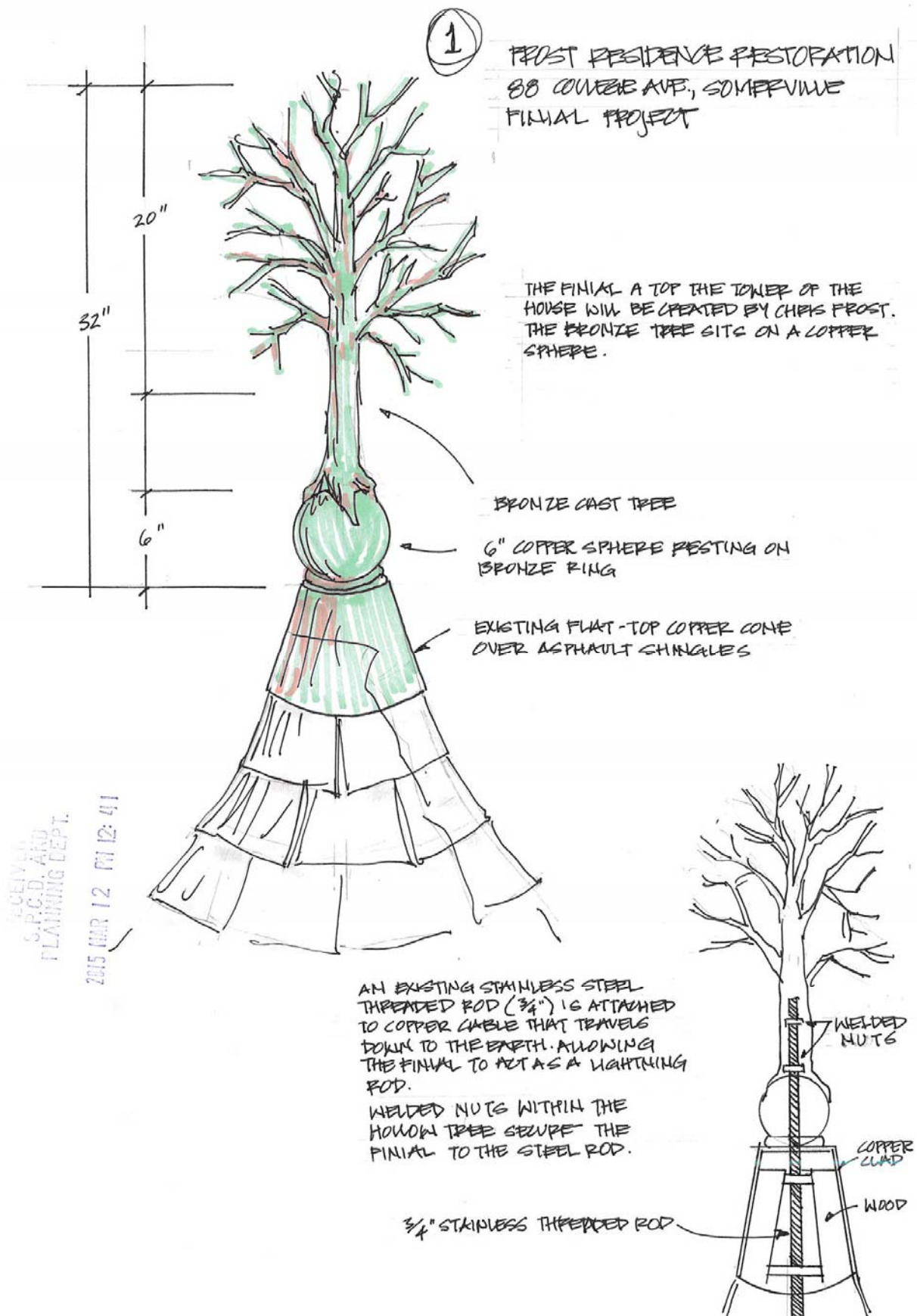
IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

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 88 College Avenue Local Historic District; therefore **Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission grant Christopher and Melissa Frost, Owners a Certificate of Appropriateness** for the following.

1. The finial sculpture shall be installed in a manner that is reversible.







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- ③ FROST RESIDENCE RESTORATION
88 COLLEGE AVE, SOMERVILLE
FINAL PROJECT
CURRENT TOWER W/ FINAL ADDED (TO SCALE)

