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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

November 21, 2012

Richard Berg
C/o Richard G. DiGirolamo
424 Broadway
Somerville, MA 02145

Re: HPC 12.116 D – 360 Mystic Avenue, Somerville

Dear Mr. Berg,

On Tuesday, November 20, 2012, the **Commission** voted unanimously (7-0) to determine **the circa 1887 industrial building at 360 Mystic Avenue** 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 of the structure reflects the industrial history of the City, especially with regard to furniture-making, not only individually, but particularly in the context of the group of buildings on the site. Despite some alterations, the building still retains its essential mill character.

The Commission will be holding a public hearing on December 18, 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



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initial determination of 'significance.' A copy of these materials was given to you at the 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, December 4, 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