



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

November 3, 2011

Mr. Paul Gross, Principal
Moshe Safdie Associates
100 Properzi Way
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: 92 Properzi Way, Somerville, MA
HPC 08.72 Proposed Partial Demolition

Dear Mr. Gross,

This letter is a confirmation that the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously (7-0) at its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2011, that the building at 92 Properzi Way is a “preferably preserved” building as set forth in Section 7-28 (Demolition Review Ordinance) under the City of Somerville Ordinance. This decision was based upon the finding that the building was at least 50 years old, and has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure and 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 house is as a workers’ cottage in a group of related buildings. The area is being considered for designation as a Local Historic District because it represents a rare example of a workers’ neighborhood that was settled prior to the Civil War, shortly after the town became known as Somerville, and that still remains relatively intact. Development of the neighborhood started before 1852 in order to provide



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area housing for workers employed in nearby industries, such as the Middlesex Bleachery, Wyatt's brickyard, and the American Tube Works.

The Commission made its "preferably preferred" determination based upon many materials, including: a) your presentation and residents' input received at the October 20th public hearing; b) several site visits to the property and neighborhood; c) photos of the building and neighborhood; d) extensive historical research that has been summarized in a Massachusetts Historical Commission Area Form for Properzi Way, as well as a Building Survey Form B for the subject property at 92 Properzi Way. Both of these forms highlight the historic and architectural significance of the building and the overall area and their association with the economic and social development of the City of Somerville.

Based upon this "preferably preferred" determination, the Commission expects that your office as the Applicant will present alternatives to your current plans to partially demolish the subject house. As you know, the Commission set up a small working group the night of the meeting to help expedite the process of mitigating any partial loss to this "preferably preserved" building. They are willing to meet on a regular basis as needed to discuss and review alternative plans developed by your office.

Please note that according to the Demolition Review Ordinance, "During the nine (9) month delay, the applicant, the owner (if different from applicant), and the Commission are required to actively pursue alternatives to demolition of the preferably preserved building or structure, including but not limited to, finding a buyer for the building or structure that is willing to rehabilitate the property, rather than demolish it. As stated at the meeting, the Commission and its Staff are pleased to work with you and any designated staff to accomplish this goal.

Please let me know if you have any further questions or needs regarding this letter via kchase@somervillema.gov or (617) 625-6600 x 2525.

Sincerely,

Kristi Chase
Preservation Planner

Cc: Edward Nuzzo, Acting Superintendent, Inspectional Services Division
Paul Nonni, Sr. Building Inspector, Inspectional Services Division.
John Long, City Clerk
Michael Glavin, Executive Director, OSPCD
George Proakis, Director of Planning
Dick Bauer, Chairman, SHPC
Brandon Wilson, Executive Director, SHPC