



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:	11 Westwood Road	c. 1898 Elbridge Newton House
Case:	HPC 2016.012	Westwood Road Local Historic District
Applicant Name:	Lucas Rogers, Owner	
Applicant Address:	11 Westwood Road, Somerville, MA 02143	
Date of Application:	March 10, 2016	
Legal Notice:	<i>Demolish garage.</i>	
Staff Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness	
Date of Public Hearing:	April 19, 2016	

I. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The house is a 2 ½ story side-hall plan Colonial Revival/Shingle style with a large central dormer and salt box rear.

There is a low two bay garage at the rear of the property constructed in 1929 in the most basic auto shed style of cement blocks in the shape of rusticated granite and a hipped roof. It is located as far from the house as possible on the lot. The doors are not original to the garage.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT/EVOLUTION OF STRUCTURE OR PARCEL:

Originally platted on the Shute Estate and Benton Farm originally used for dairy farming in 1874, Westwood Road was developed as one of Somerville's few exclusive residential enclaves.

Westwood Road was replatted and developed by Charles Bradshaw, hardware dealer in 1894. A small adjoining section of Benton Road was laid out by Reuben Benton at about the same time. Bradshaw built eight houses all handsome examples of the Queen Anne/ Shingle Style and Colonial Revival Styles of architecture. Additional houses were constructed prior to 1905.



The garage was constructed more than 30 years after the house when modes of transportation had drastically changed from horses and streetcars to personal automobiles.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Proposal of Alteration:

1. Demolish 1929 garage to grade.
2. Add patio and new landscaping.

See the final pages for details and photos.

II. FINDINGS

1. Prior Certificates Issued/Proposed:

C/A	Lois Russell	2003.035	1. Replace accordion fold garage doors with overhead doors to closely match existing; 2. Store the doors and hardware for future reuse; and 3. Document placement of hardware in situ.
C/A	Chris Thompson	2009.060	1. Rebuild the chimney from below the roof line with S or N mortar; 2. Strip 3-tab asphalt roof shingles; 3. Install ice and water shield, metal drip edges and copper flashing; 4. Install Cobra® ridge vent; 5. Replace the three-tab asphalt shingles with CertainTeed® Landmark™ 30 year architectural shingles 6. Remove and replace rotted and damaged wood shingles as needed; and 7. Install new EPDM roofing on slightly hipped bay window on west side.
C/A	Christopher Thompson	2009.070	1. Remove 3-tab asphalt roof shingles; 2. Install ice and water shield, metal drip edges and copper flashing; 3. Install Cobra® ridge vent; 4. Replace the three-tab asphalt roof shingles with CertainTeed® Landmark™ 30 year architectural roof shingles; and 5. Install new EPDM roofing on slightly hipped bay window on west side.
C/NA	Luke Rogers	2011.054	1. Repair wood windows and casings in-kind; 2. Replace glass in-kind as necessary; and 3. Replace storm windows.
C/NA	Lucas Rogers	2012.053	1. Remove and replace existing damage wood newels, lower fascia boards, stair treads and other damaged materials on the front porch with hardwood to match existing; and 2. Install trellis to support wisteria.
C/NA	Lucas Rogers & Mathieu Gagné	2013.024	1. Replace metal flashing over 3 windows on the east side; 2. Replace wood shingles as needed; and 3. Replace wood fascia on the garage to match the existing fascia in materials and dimensions.

C/A	Lucas Rogers & Mathieu Gagné	2013.025	a. Install a single gate on the porch at the top of the stairs with rails and balusters to match the existing and with hinges to allow for a 180° swing.
C/A; C/NA	Luke Rogers	2015.041	1: Applicant shall obtain all appropriate building permits prior to commencing work. 2: Applicant shall consult with HPC Staff should the gable vents be changed from those presented to the HPC Commission. 3: Applicant shall contact HPC Staff upon completion of the work for sign-off that the work was done in accordance with the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and approved plans. 1. The awnings shall be of canvas-like material. 2. The awnings shall have a classic triangular side-view with a valance. 3. The awnings shall be hinged and retractable. 4. The awnings shall be removable with the seasons.

1. *Precedence:*

- *Are there similar properties / proposals?*

Only two proposals for the demolition of 1920s concrete block garage within a Local Historic District have been reviewed in the last 10 years for an historic property: 17-19 Aldersey Street (2014) and 57 Columbus Avenue (2012). While typical of the 1920s when hundreds if not thousands of such buildings were constructed for Model Ts and other popularly available cars, the concrete block garage is not within the period of significance for the Westwood Road Local Historic and National Register Districts.

3. *Considerations:*

- *What is the visibility of the proposal?*

The existing garage is visible at the rear of the property on the east side.

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

The garage is located at the northeast corner of the lot. It is in fair condition but does not have its original doors which were replaced in 2003. The garage is typical but less ornamented than many garages of the 1920s. See **Carriage House to Auto House** by Reed and Hardwicke for a typology of popular styles. It is significant as a characteristic structure of the vintage automotive era when the Model T and Model A Fords were the car of choice for many.

- *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 affect 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.*
- B. *Changes and additions to the property and its environment that have taken place over the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected (LATER IMPORTANT FEATURES will be the term used hereafter to convey this concept).*
- A. *Whenever possible, deteriorated material or architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.*
- C. *When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of the original or later important features.*
- D. *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.*
- E. *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.*

There will be no changes to the historic fabric as described on the Form B. The garage does not have any significance attached to a particular event or person and is not a distinguishing feature of the Westwood Road Local Historic District. No historic material or features will be altered or replaced.

Demolition

- 1. *Demolition of part or all of a structure is considered to be an alteration to the exterior and is subject to the review of the Commission.*

The demolition of the garage will not significantly alter the building or the district in a negative manner.

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 Westwood Road Local Historic District; therefore **Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission grant Lucas Rogers and Mathieu Gagné, Owners a Certificate of Appropriateness for 11 Westwood Road** for the following.

1. Applicant shall obtain all appropriate building permits prior to commencing work.
2. The 1929 garage shall be demolished to grade.
3. If the approval differs from the plans, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work.
4. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans.

