



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Joseph A. Curtatone

Mayor

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

KRISTENNA CHASE, *PRESERVATION PLANNER*
SARAH WHITE, *PLANNER & PRESERVATION PLANNER*

Case #: HPC 2019.029

Date: June 18, 2019

Recommendation: Preferably Preserved

PRESERVATION STAFF REPORT
for
Determination of Preferably Preserved

Site: 1006 Broadway

Applicant Name: Jilong Liu

Applicant Address: 1006
Broadway, Somerville, MA

Owner Name: As above.

Owner Address: As above.

Petition: Applicant seeks to
demolish the c. 1846 wood-frame
dwelling.

HPC Hearing Date: June 18, 2019



I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. **Subject Property:** The subject property is a c. 1846 wood-frame dwelling.
2. **Proposal:** The Applicant seeks to demolish the existing structure.

II. MEETING SUMMARY: Determination of Significance

On Tuesday, May 21, 2019, the Historic Preservation Commission determined the c. 1846 wood-frame dwelling at 1006 Broadway 'Significant' because the building, per Section 2.17.B of the Demolition Review Ordinance 2003-05, is "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.”

1006 Broadway is a rare pre-1852 house dating to the earliest days of the city. When the town of Somerville split off from Charlestown, the population was a mere 1013 people. Few buildings of this era still remain. 1006 Broadway was clearly a farmers’ house. The architecture is a simple cross-gable. The Simpson family was prominent in Somerville throughout the last half of the 19th and the early part of the 20th centuries.

The Commission found 1006 Broadway importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to the age of the building which retains its massing and form, its associations with the farming history of the city and its associations with the Simpson family.

The Commission found 1006 Broadway historically and architecturally significant due to its period, style, method of building construction and associations with early Somerville and the Simpson Family for whom several streets in the neighborhood have been named.

III. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

No additional information has been received.

Comparable Structures:

There are few structures that are appropriate to compare with the subject dwelling due to the combination of the age of the structure, and the cross gable massing



15 Spring Street LHD (1845), 22 Porter Street LHD (c. 1850), 23 Porter Street LHD (c. 1850)



13 Fairmount Avenue LHD (1848), 108 Cross Street NR (1855)

II. PREFERABLY PRESERVED

If the Commission determines that the demolition of the significant building or structure would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City, such building or structure shall be considered a preferably preserved building or structure. (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 4.2.d)

A determination regarding if the demolition of the subject building is detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City should consider the following:

How does this building or structure compose or reflect features which contribute to the heritage of the City?

a. What is the remaining integrity of the structure? The National Park Service defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey significance.

- i. The exterior of the structure (the only portion of the building within the purview of the HPC), retains a high degree of architectural integrity and reflects the evolution of this property through key eras of architectural change (a small addition, siding and fenestration which are reversible). See determination of significance for a summary of the historic architectural features of this structure.

b. What is the level (local, state, national) of significance?

- i. The Commission found 1006 Broadway importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to the age of the building which retains its massing and form, its associations with the farming history of the city and its associations with the Simpson family.
- ii. The Commission found 1006 Broadway historically and architecturally significant due to its period, style, method of building construction and associations with early Somerville and the Simpson Family for whom several streets in the neighborhood have been named.

c. What is the visibility of the structure with regard to public interest (Section 2.17.B.ii) if demolition were to occur?

- i. The structure is set back from Broadway behind over grown trees and shrubs. It is clearly visible from Corinthian Road.

d. What is the scarcity or frequency of this type of resource in the City?

- i. The City of Somerville has few structures from the 1850s or earlier without massive alterations. 1006 Broadway is a rare pre-1852 house dating to the earliest days of the town. When the town of Somerville split off from Charlestown, the population was a mere 1013 people. Few buildings of this era still remain. 1006 Broadway was clearly a farmers' house. The architecture is a simple cross-gable similar to the examples shown above.

Upon a consideration of the above criteria is the demolition of the subject building detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City?

Using the criteria above, Staff finds that the loss of this building would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, and social heritage of the City.

III. RECOMMENDATION

*Based on the information provided and an assessment of the building, Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission finds the property at 1006 Broadway to be **PREFERABLY PRESERVED**.*

