



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

TOM GALLIGANI
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ALTERATION OF A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LHD) PROPERTY
STAFF REPORT

Site: 50 Bow Street

Case: HPC.ALT 2022.51

Applicant: Rob Leavell

Owner: Urbanica 50 Condominium Trust

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by removing and rebuilding two chimneys.*

HPC Meeting Date: October 06, 2022



The purpose of a staff report is to provide the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with a professional assessment of alteration proposals made for Local Historic District (LHD) properties. These assessments are based on the Historic District Ordinance (HDO) in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 40C, and the associated Design Guidelines. A Staff Report is not a determination/decision and does not represent findings. A staff report does not constitute authorization in any form.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

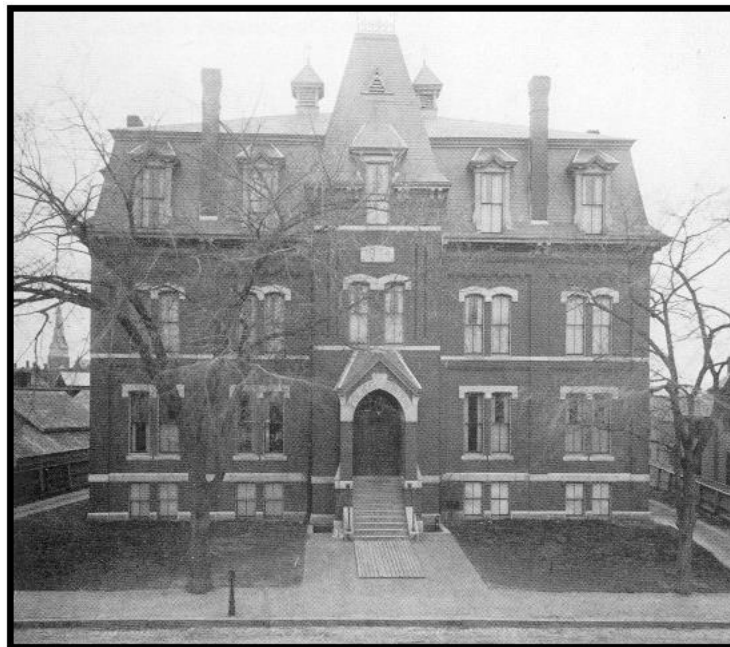
Subject Property: The locus is the c.1874 Victorian structure. This property is located on Bow Street within the Union Square area. A full description of the property is provided in the attached Form B survey held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Proposal: The Applicant proposes the following:

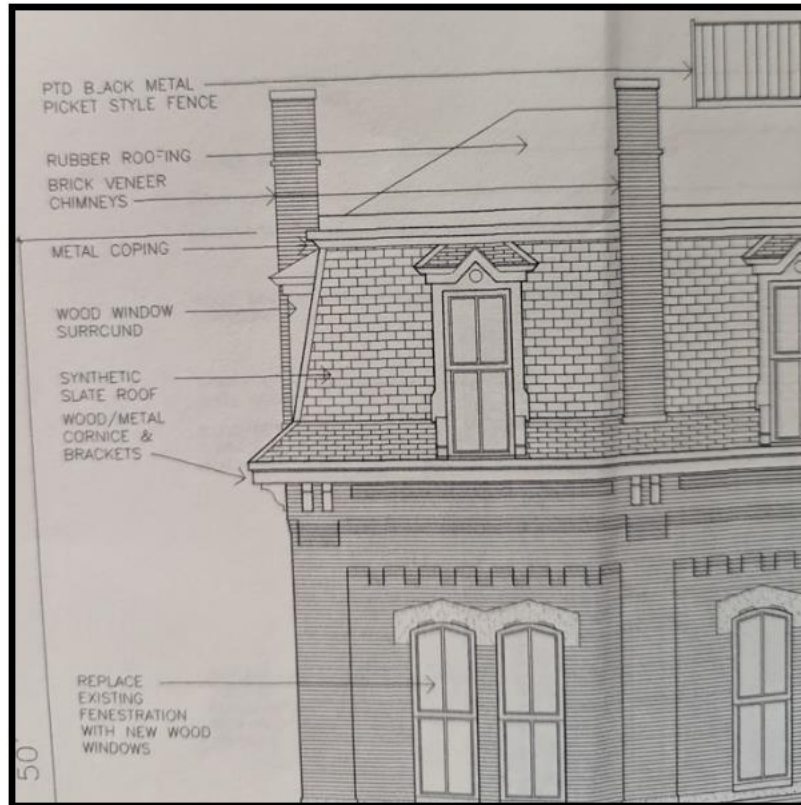
- a. Remove two existing chimneys on the left elevation
- b. Rebuild the same two chimneys on the left elevation

On December 16th, 2003, the HPC granted a conditional Certificate of Appropriateness allowing for specific alterations to the exterior of the property.

As part of the Applicant's 2003 Certificate of Appropriateness approval, the HPC granted the Applicant/Owner permission to "reconstruct the chimneys based upon photos and plans" as part of a larger plan to reconstruct the roof after it was destroyed by fire. The HPC approval was to reconstruct the chimneys as shown in plans provided by the applicant in their application.



Above: Historic Photo of 50 Bow Street



Above: Plan of proposed roof reconstruction at 50 Bow Street

The Applicant/Owner did not originally comply with the requirement to construct the chimneys to match those depicted in their plans and the current chimneys are shorter than those depicted in the approved plan set and historic photos.

Alterations to exterior features of Local Historic District (LHD) properties require review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Pursuant to the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission Design Guidelines §1(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.

II. FINDINGS

The HPC must make findings based on the Historic District Ordinance (HDO) in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 40C, and associated Design Guidelines. Applicable regulations are discussed below.

A. Installation of rear deck

The applicable Somerville LHD Design Guidelines is **B. “Roofs”**

Because the chimneys are visible from the public way the HPC has purview over these features and the materials used.

Applicant Proposal

The Applicant proposes to remove and rebuild the two chimneys on the left side of the structure. Both chimneys are to be removed to address stress cracking and for additional access to all areas of brickwork that the Applicant will be re-pointing. The applicant proposes to use a Type O or Type N cement to match the existing color. The Applicant will replace the bricks with Spaulding Brick Co to match the existing size and color of the existing brick.



Above: Close-up images of the two chimneys on the left elevation proposed to be removed and reconstructed



Above: Proposed replacement bricks

Preservation Planning Assessment:

The relevant portion of the Design Guidelines is **B. “Roofs”**;

- “1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later important roof shape.*
- 4. Preserve the architectural features that give the roof its distinctive character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers and brackets...”*

Given that the current chimneys were built in 2003 and not original to the structure, they have not accrued historical significance and thus their removal and reconstruction does not violate the above cited Section B.1 or B.4 of the Design Guidelines. Staff does not have issue with the chimneys being removed and rebuilt. However, the chimneys should be built to match those chimneys depicted on the original plans approved in 2003 which coincides with historic photos. This would ensure that the original roof and its architectural features were accurately depicted.

Should the HPC vote in favor of the deck installation, Preservation Staff recommends the following conditions be included in addition to those listed in **Section IV ‘Recommended Conditions’** below.

1. The Applicant/Owner shall build the chimneys to match the design approved by the Historic Preservation Commission in HPC.ALT 2003. The Applicant/Owner shall show plans to Preservation Staff for final review and approval.
2. The chimney shall be placed in the same location as the current chimneys.
3. The Applicant/Owner shall use bricks made by the Spaulding Brick Co. and match the existing size and color of the existing brick.
4. The Applicant/Owner shall use Type O or Type N cement to match the existing color of mortar.

HPC Determination:

- The HPC must determine if, based on a review of the documentation presented, the proposed project complies with the Design Guidelines
- The HPC must structure their motion to include their own specific findings on the proposed project.

III. VOTE

When bringing the matter to a vote the HPC must state their findings and reasons on why they take their position.

IV. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Preservation Planning recommends the following conditions be attached to any Certificate of Appropriateness that the HPC might grant for this project:

1. The Applicant/Owner shall file the Certificate with the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) by uploading it to the CitizenServe permitting portal with their application for zoning compliance/building permit.
2. This Certificate is valid for one year. If work has not commenced within one year of the HPC's date of determination, this Certificate shall expire, and the Applicant shall re-apply for re-issuance of this Certificate. Provided that no changes have been made to the proposal, this shall be a Staff-level re-issuance of the Certificate.
3. Any changes to this proposal made prior to the commencement of work or in-the-field changes shall be submitted to Preservation Planning for their review to determine if the changes come under the purview of the HPC.
4. The Applicant/Owner shall build the chimneys to match the design approved by the Historic Preservation Commission in HPC.ALT 2003. The Applicant/Owner shall show plans to Preservation Staff for final review and approval.
5. The chimney shall be placed in the same location as the current chimneys.
6. The Applicant/Owner shall use bricks made by the Spaulding Brick Co. and match the existing size and color of the existing brick.
7. The Applicant/Owner shall use Type O or Type N cement to match the existing color of mortar.
8. A written narrative or descriptive checklist identifying the completion or compliance with permit conditions must be submitted to the Inspectional Services Department with a copy to preservation Planning at least fifteen (15) business days in advance of a request for a final inspection.
9. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning at historic@somervillema.gov a minimum of fifteen (15) business days prior to final ISD walk-through so that Preservation Planning or their designee can confirm if the project was completed according to HPC approvals.



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Joseph A. Curtatone
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Preservation Planner

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Andrew Upton	Jim Wright
Christine Young	

January 12, 2004

Thomas J. O'Malley, Project Manager
Thomas J. O'Malley & Associates
79 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02130

Re: HPC #03.55 – 50 Bow Street – Bow Street Police Station

Dear Mr. O'Malley,

At their regular meeting on December 16, 2003, the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission voted to grant a **Certificate of Appropriateness (C/A)** for the following *exterior work* on the above property:

All improvements shall be carried out as shown on the plans and specifications submitted by the Applicant and dated (x.x.03 and 12/15/03), except as modified below. These plans and specifications are incorporated into this Certificate. Any revisions to these plans should be submitted to the Preservation Commission Staff for review, and upon approval they will sign and forward the revisions to the Inspectional Services Division for further review and permitting.

1. Replace the metal front door with new paired mahogany wood doors with lights and fan light transom (7-0);
2. Replace the asphalt shingles with synthetic slate shingles subject to Staff review and approval of the specifics of the synthetic slate shingle proposed on the new gable roof over the front door (6-1);
3. Replace the existing wood and metal clad windows with 2/2 wood insulated-glass, true divided-lights sash. If the Applicants choose to use low-E glass, they need to submit for Staff review and approval the specific type of glass which should be spatter-coat, vacuum-deposit, or soft-coat and have low reflectivity (7-0);
4. Install a large metal bay window in rear (7-0);
5. Install a rear entry door (7-0);
6. Install a handicap access to rear entry with simple black metal rails and balusters to match those on the front of the building (7-0);
7. Reconstruct the demolished mansard roof based upon plans noted above and which include:
 - a. A central tower with a cap that reflects the design in the historic photo with cresting (4-0);
 - b. Dormers to replicate original dormer windows (4-0);

- c. Fascia, gutters, metal coping and fiberglass brackets similar to originals (4-0);
 - d. Roofing materials of imitation slate and rubber membrane subject to final determination of the type of synthetic slate (7-0); and
 - e. Reconstruct the chimneys based upon photos and plans (5-2);
8. Replace the chain link fence on the north side with painted black metal, picket style fence on both sides of the walkway (7-0); and
9. Install brick pavers for central walkway and two aprons, and bituminous concrete for newly designed parking area (7-0).

The following work is granted a **Certificate of Non-Applicability** since the Somerville Historic District Ordinance states only an “alteration to the physical appearance or architectural feature visible from a public way” is subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission (Section 2). Provided that the following proposed work falls under this section, it is not subject to the review of the Historic Preservation Commission.

- 10. Install an elevator house;
- 11. Install HVAC units; and
- 12. Construct Four (4) roof decks with black metal 42” railings.

A **Certificate of Hardship** is also granted for the blinding of the two rear windows with brick to match existing, although no formal vote was taken at the December 16, 2003 meeting due to the plethora of items being discussed and the late hour of the final voting.

The Commission based its decisions on your application and presentation at the hearing, public comment, Staff recommendations, photographs of the building, discussion and recommendations of the Commission members, the Commission’s adopted Design Guidelines for Historic Districts as well as upon the Preservation Restriction recorded for this building.

This letter is your formal notification of the issuance of the requested Certificates. These Certificates are granted upon the condition that the work authorized herein is commenced within one year after date of issue. If the work authorized by these Certificates is not commenced within twelve months after the date of issue, or if work is suspended in significant part for a period of one year after the time of work is commenced, these Certificates shall expire and be of no further effect; provided that, for cause, one or more extensions of time, for periods not exceeding ninety days each, may be allowed in writing by the Chairman. Bring this letter to the Inspectional Services Department when you apply for a building permit, as it is required for the application process. If you have any questions about these Certificates, please feel free to contact us at (617) 625-6600 x 2500.

Good luck with this very exciting and long overdue project. We look forward to working with you and the rest of the project team over the coming months.

Sincerely,

Kristenna P. Chase
Preservation Planner

J. Brandon Wilson
Executive Director

Cc: John Long, City Clerk

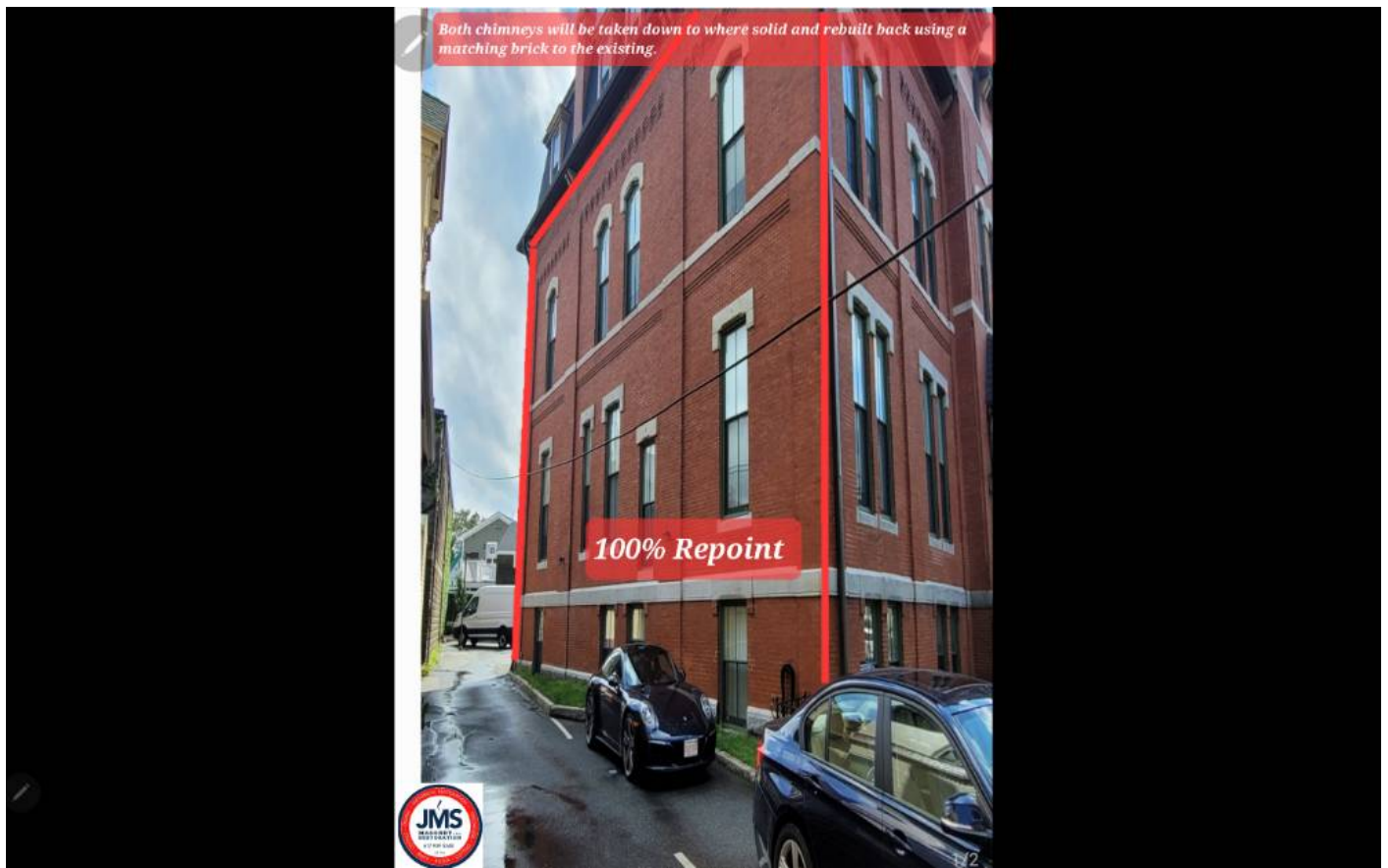
Paul Nonni, Sr. Building Inspector, Inspectional Services Division

Jura Strimaitis, Special Counsel, OHCD

Paul Holtz, Preservation Architect, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Richard DiGirolamo, Attorney for the Applicant

Michael Payne, AIA, Chairman, Historic Preservation Commission



Work Scope



work scope

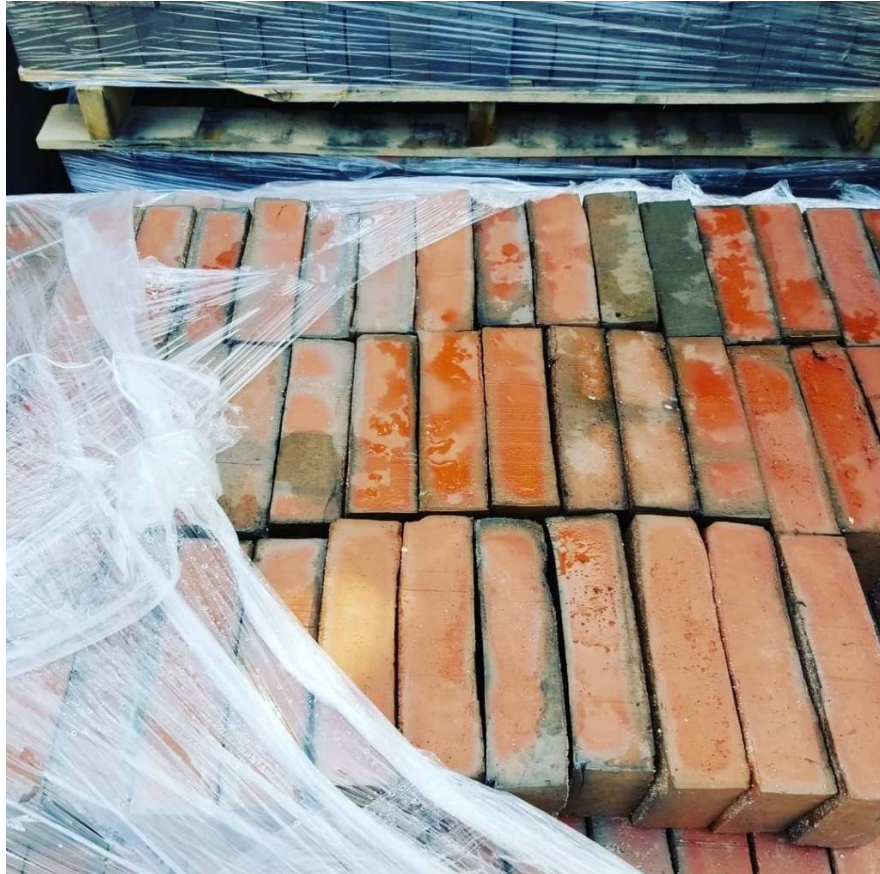


work scope

Stress cracking on chimney



Stress cracking on chimney,



These are the brick that match

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SMV.32
Historic Name:	Somerville Police Station
Common Name:	American Legion Post #377 - Somerville Boys Club
Address:	50 Bow St
City/Town:	Somerville
Village/Neighborhood:	Prospect Hill
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Victorian Gothic
Use(s):	Clubhouse; Other Governmental or Civic; Police Station; Professional Office
Significance:	Architecture; Community Planning; Health Medicine; Politics Government
Area(s):	SMV.A: Bow Street Historic District
Designation(s):	Local Historic District (3/11/1985); Nat'l Register District (3/26/1976); Preservation Restriction (10/15/2002)



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on:

Tuesday, October 18, 2011 at 2:27: PM

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston



1. Town Somerville

Address 50 Bow Street

Name Police Station

Present use Somerville Boys Club

American Legion Post #377

Present owner City of Somerville

3. Description: brick municipal building

Date 1874

Source granite marker in building

Style eclectic Victorian, mansard style

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric red brick & granite trim

Outbuildings (describe) garage in back

Other features Gothic entry with slate roof,
pointed arch granite lintel. Tall thin
windows in twos. Flagpole in front

Altered mansard removed Date early 1940's

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size:

One acre or less X Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 120' on Bow Street

Approximate distance of building from street

30'

6. Recorded by Margo Jones, Lisette Ellis

Organization Somerville Historic Commission

Date 24 June, 1975

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location
in relation to nearest cross streets and
other buildings. Indicate north.

BLDG. #12



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____

MHC Photo no. _____

RECEIVED

JUL 1975
MASS. HIST. COMM.

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) City of Somerville

Original use City Police Station

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates Medical offices (1930's-depression); Boy's Club, American Legion Post at present time.

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u> </u>	Conservation	<u> </u>	Recreation	<u> X </u>
Agricultural	<u> </u>	Education	<u> X </u>	Religion	<u> </u>
Architectural	<u> X </u>	Exploration/ settlement	<u> </u>	Science/ invention	<u> </u>
The Arts	<u> </u>	Industry	<u> </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u> X </u>
Commerce	<u> </u>	Military	<u> X </u>	Transportation	<u> </u>
Communication	<u> </u>	Political	<u> X </u>		
Community development	<u> X </u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

Somerville Police Station. Built 1874. Architect unknown.

One of the first projects of the newly-chartered city of Somerville was to erect this Police Station. The entrance arch and use of contrasting colors (red brick and light granite) indicate a High Victorian Gothic style. There are paired windows with stilted segmental arched lintels (having some carved detail). String-coursed granite sills on the second floor, and the now-disassembled mansard roof indicate some later Italianate and Second Empire influence. The brick is articulated as pilasters at corners and at intervals between. There is some corbelling and detailed brickwork below the eaves.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)