



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

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.  
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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**STEP 1: DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE**  
**STAFF REPORT**

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**Site:** 80 Professor's Way

**Case:** HPC.DMO 2022.49

**Applicant:** Kappa Chapter of Zeta Psi  
Corporation

**Owner:** Same as Applicant

**Legal Ad:** *The Applicant seeks to demolish  
a building constructed a minimum  
of 75 years ago.*

**HPC Meeting Date:** March 07, 2023



*Top: Front elevation*

*Bottom, left: Left elevation*

*Bottom, middle: Right elevation*

*Bottom, right: Rear elevation*



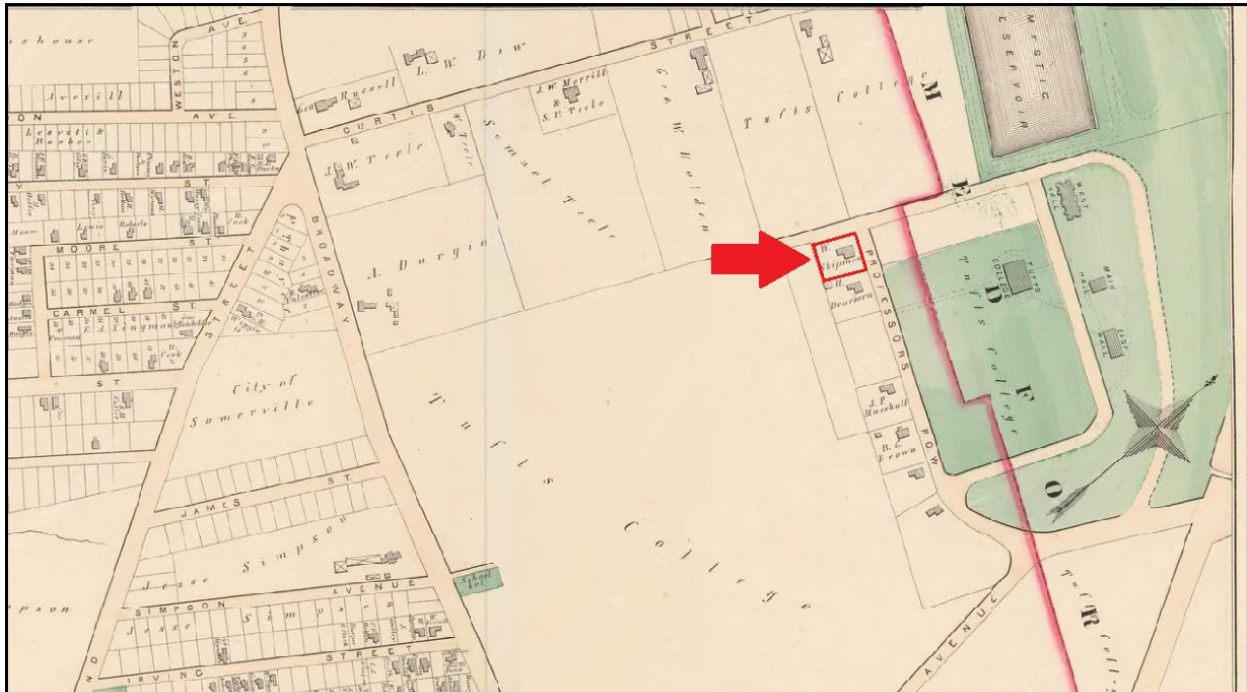
The purpose of a staff report is to provide the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with additional information and professional assessments regarding properties that are proposed for demolition. These assessments are based on the criteria allowed for consideration by the HPC in accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (DRO). A Staff Report is not a determination/decision, nor does it constitute authorization in any form.

## I. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

**Historical Context:** 80 Professor's Row is a two and  $\frac{3}{4}$  story building located across the street from Tufts University. Professor's Row is largely dominated by two  $\frac{3}{4}$  and three-story residential structures on the south side and a mix of collegiate buildings to the north.

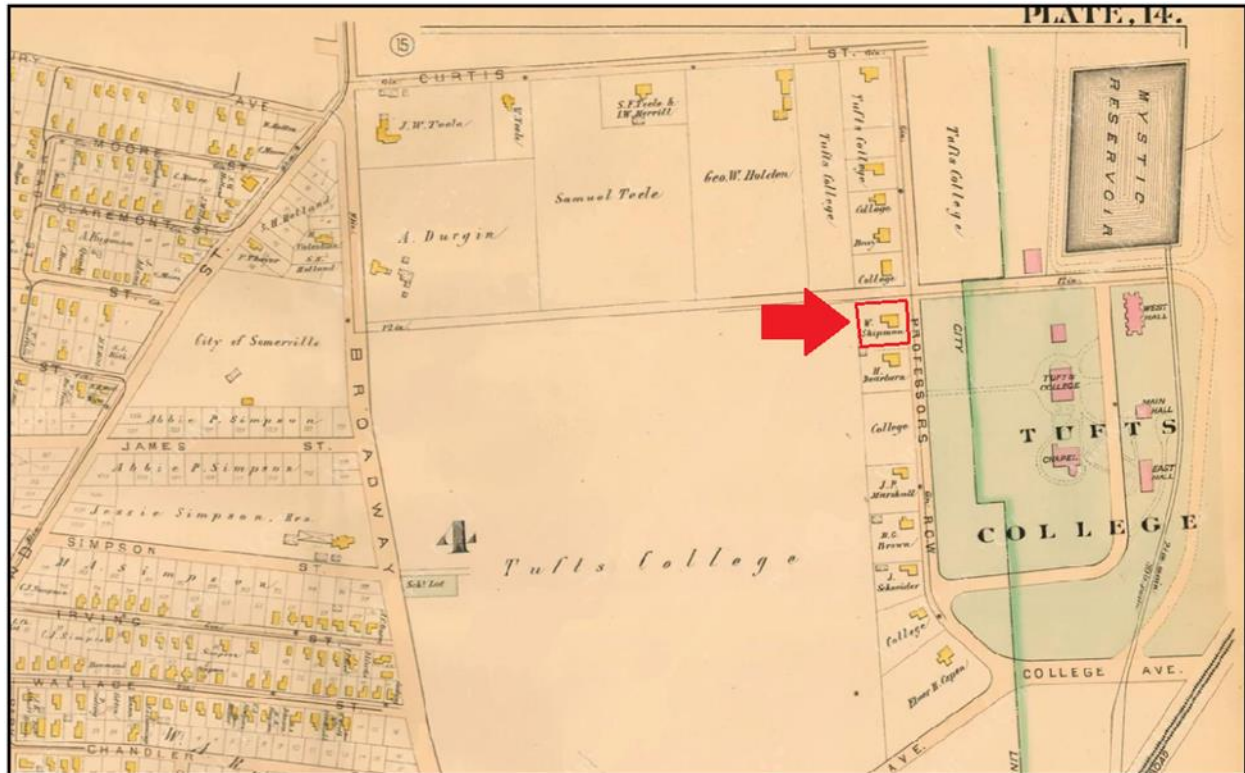
Tufts College was founded as a Universalist College in 1852 on Walnut Hill, on land donated by Charles Tufts of Somerville and Timothy Catting of Medford. Although most of the college buildings were located in Medford, an early block of faculty housing dating from the 1850s and 1860s, known as "Professor's Row," was built on former Somerville farmland. Professors Row, traditionally a street of faculty houses and student organizations, had at least four houses in 1859. The Tufts campus, with its large tract of land on Walnut (or College) Hill, helped to preserve the open space of the area, and the development of the campus did not immediately spur residential development.

While the town made urban improvements in the eastern section, farmers, particularly market gardeners and fruit raisers, carried on profitable businesses in the western section. Tufts College was surrounded with the fields of the Teele, Curtis, Dow, and Russell farms. In 1865 there were twenty-two farms in operation, most of them small-scale. Farming declined sharply in the decades after the Civil War and West Somerville farmers often turned to land speculation. The building at 80 Professor's Row was among the row of nineteenth century faculty housing built after the establishment of Tufts College in 1853 and can be seen on the 1874 Hopkins Map depicted below.



Above: 1874, Plate K, Hopkins Map, specifying location of 80 Professor's Row.

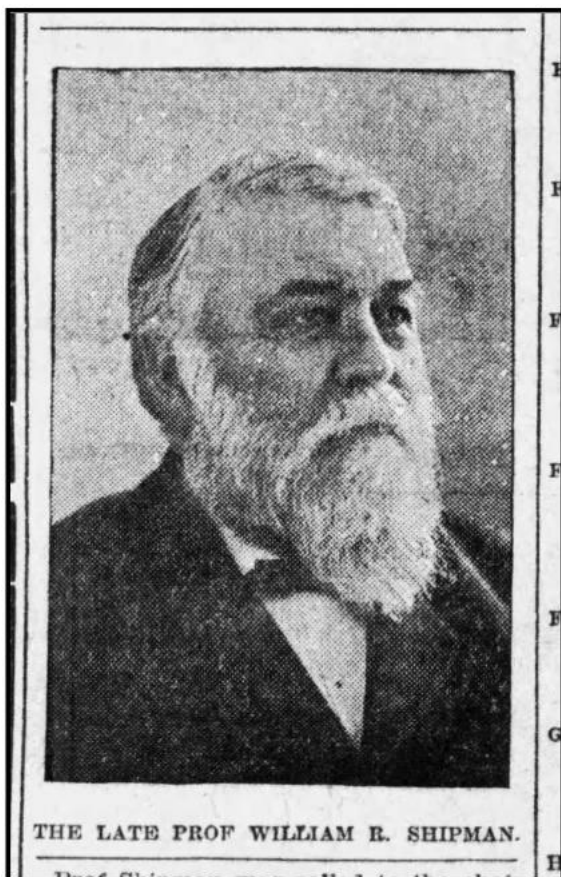
Plate K of the 1874 and 1884 Hopkins Maps show that since 1859 most of the undeveloped land belonged to Tufts College. The land not owned by Tufts College had been largely subdivided; however, most of these tracts of land had not been developed yet either.



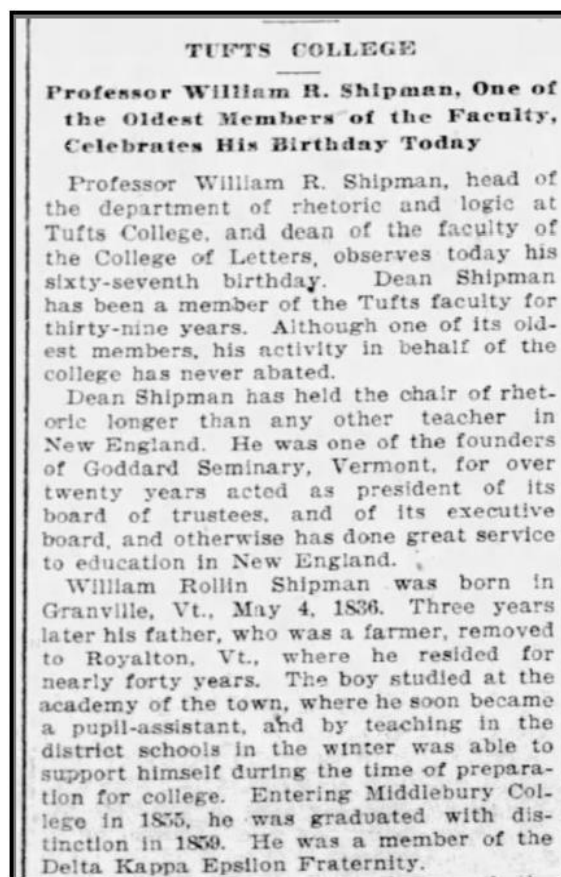
Above: 1884, Plate K, Hopkins Map, specifying location of 80 Professor's Row.

(Continued on next page.)





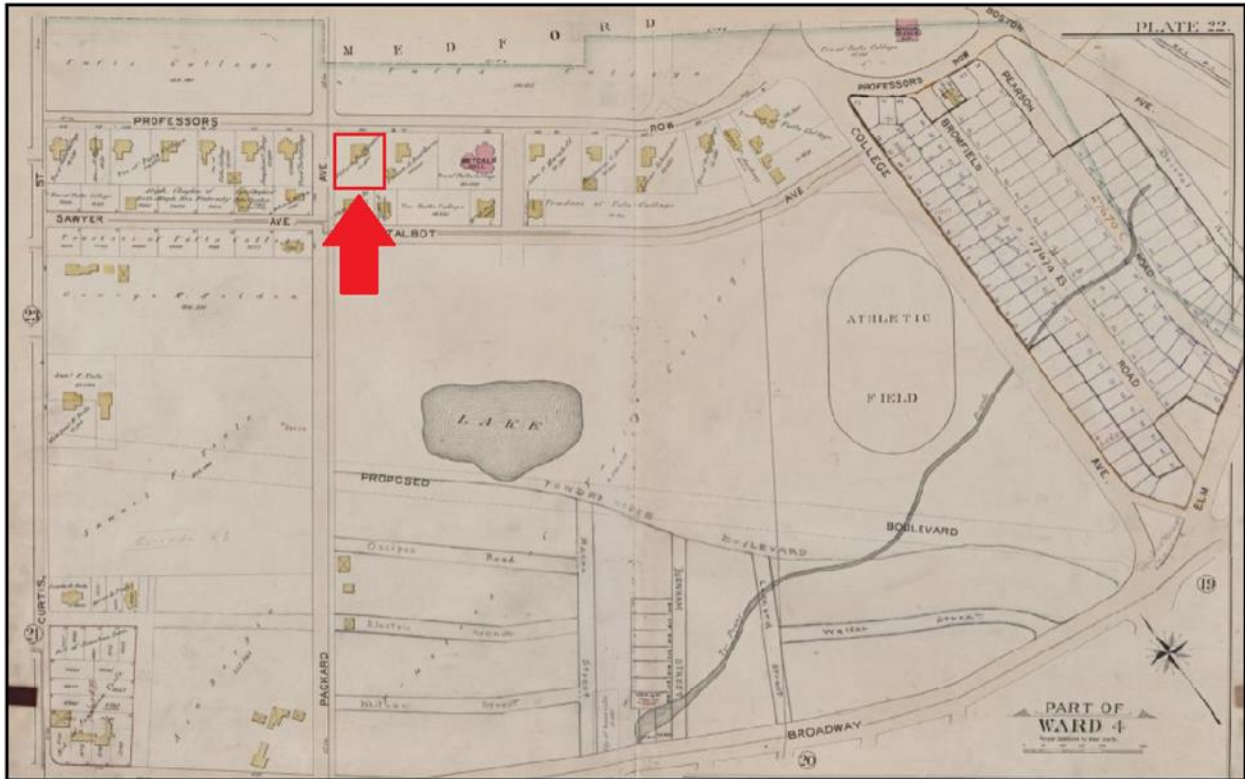
*Above: Excerpt from The Boston Globe, January 16, 1908*



*Above: Excerpt from The Boston Globe, May 04, 1903*

The first listed owner for 80 Professor's Row is William R Shipman. Professor Shipman started his career at Tufts as a Professor of Rhetoric before becoming the head of the Department of Rhetoric and Logic and Dean of the faculty at the College of Letters. Historic maps and City Directories list William as the property owner from 1874 to 1898. However, it is likely that he resided at 80 Professor's Way until his death in 1908. This coincides with individual listings in the City Directories beginning in 1910 that list students living at the property, indicating that at his death the ownership of the property reverted to Tufts which likely turned it in to student housing or rental property. In 1919 Tufts then sold the property to the Zeta Psi fraternity (though City Directories only begin to list the property as belonging to Zeta Psi House in 1924).

Coinciding with these changes Tufts College was expanding. The 1895 Bromley Map shown below depicts the expansion of Tufts campus with the development of the land south of 80 Professor's Way with new structures, and between these structures new roads had been paved. The land directly behind Professor's Way had also been platted with new buildings constructed on them, perhaps to house a growing faculty and/or student body.



Above: 1895 Bromley Map, Plate 22, specifying location of 80 Professor's Row.



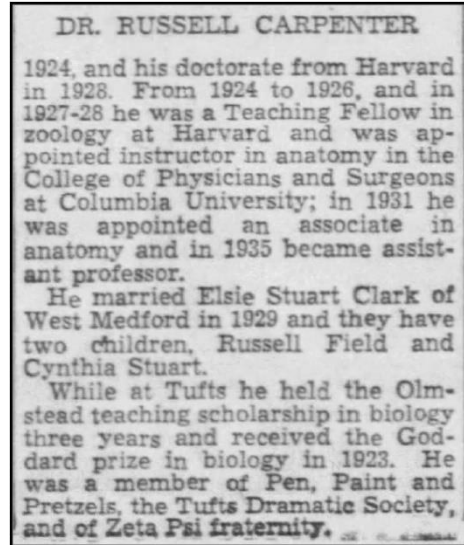
Left: 1900 Sanborn Map, Sheet 04, specifying the location of 80 Professor's Row.

By 1900 the land in West Somerville had been fully platted and increasing numbers of plots had been built upon as the population from East Somerville came west to look for cheaper housing.

Some of the students who lived at 80 Professor's Way would go on to become professors at Tufts themselves, such a Russell Carpenter, who began as an undergraduate student and a member of Zeta Psi fraternity and later became a Zoology Professor at Tufts.



*Above: Excerpt from The Boston Globe, April 21, 1938*

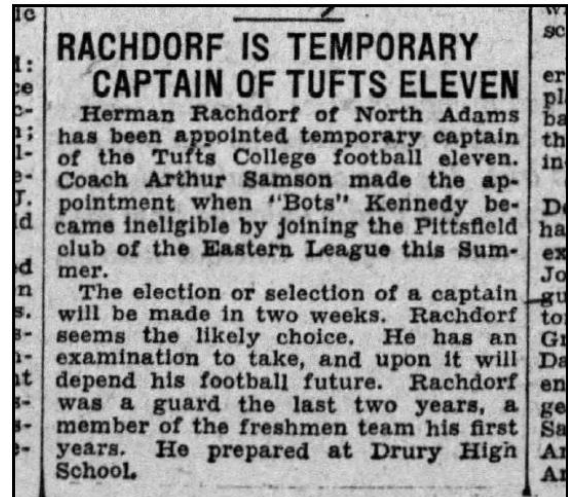


*Above: Excerpt from The Boston Globe, April 21, 1938*

The students who resided at 80 Professor's Way were typical college students. They engaged in Greek life, played on university sporting leagues, joined clubs, performed in university plays, competed in scholastic competitions and other such activities representative of the college experience.



*Above: Excerpt from The Boston Globe, November 19, 1916*



*Above: Excerpt from The Boston Globe, Sep 06, 1929*





Above: Excerpt from *The Boston Globe*, Dec 10, 1930

Left: Excerpt from *The Boston Globe*, March 19, 1929

Further research resulted in the following information on the tenants over the decades at 80 Professor's Row. The names that have been found show the property was inhabited by students after 1924. A list of all residents is provided on the next page.

Name	Year(s) of Residency	Occupation	Relationship	Residency Type
Auer, Geo J	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
Berry, Richard S	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
Bidgood, Earle S	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
Black, Herbert	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
Bowles, George E	1929	Student @ Tufts College		R
Budd, George E	1924	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Carpenter, Russell	1924	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Curit, Barton F	1927	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Curtis, Leslie F	1910	Student @ Tufts College		Rms
Dawson, Lawrence M	1927	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Etheridge, Harold L	1920	Student @ Tufts College		Rms
Ferguson, James E	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
Herman, Ernest F	1927	Student @ Tufts College		R
Hook, Elwyn T	1927	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Hyde, Stanley	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
King, Walter	1911 - 1914	Chef		Rms
Maron, Walter M	1924	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Nickerson, Roy G	1911 - 1912	Student @ Tufts College		Rms
Packard, Roger E	1927	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Rachdorf, Herman R	1929	Student @ Tufts College		R

Ralph, Fred S	1927	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Ransom, Lucy B	1895 - 1898		Widow of Lake Ransom	H
Ransom, William R	1895 - 1898	Student @ Tufts College		B
Roys, Arthur	1910	Student @ Tufts College		Rms
Shaw, Irving R	1910 - 1911	Student @ Tufts College		Rms
Shipman, Albert E	1893 - 1895	Student @ Tufts College	Son of William R Shipman	Bds
Shipman, Richard C	1929	Student @ Tufts College	Son of William R Shipman	R
Shipman, William R	1874 - 1898	Professor of Rhetoric @ Tufts College		H
Thomas, Edgar G	1933	Student @ Tufts College		R
Walsh, Warren B	1929	Student @ Tufts College		R
Weisleder, Walter A	1927	Student @ Tufts College		Res
Whittaker, Edwin	1929	Student @ Tufts College		R
Wilson, Raymond L	1924	Student @ Tufts College		Res

## II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

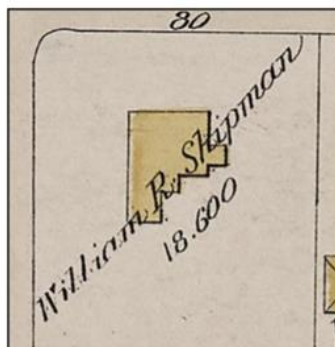
Please see the section immediately below which discusses location, design, materials, and any alterations as the same information would be written here, just in longer form.

*The National Park Service identifies historic integrity as the ability of a property to convey significance. A property should possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant; therefore, the following is an identification and evaluation of these qualities and alterations as they affect the ability of the subject property to convey significance.*

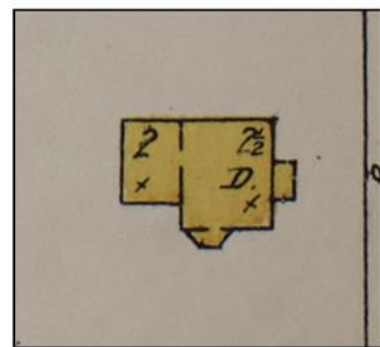
Comparing the historic map with satellite images of the current property we can determine the degree to which the structure has been altered.



Above: Fig 1

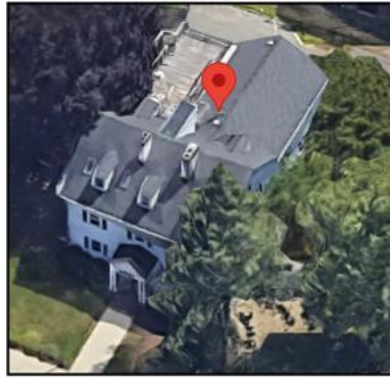


Above: Fig 2

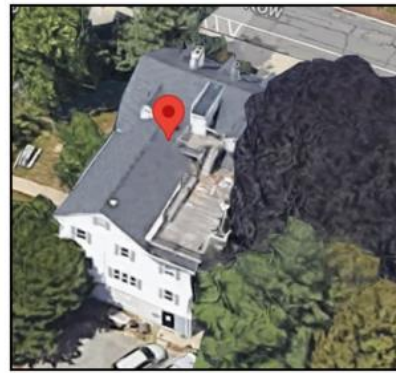


Above: Fig 3





Above: Fig 4



Above: Fig 5

Fig 1: 1874 Hopkins Map, close-up of 80 Professor Row

- The 1874 Map is the first time the current structure is shown. It is a plain square building with a projection towards the right of the rear.

Fig 2: 1895 Bromley Map, close-up of 80 Professor Row

- An addition has been added to the right rear projection.
- A small projection can be seen on the left, likely a bay.

Fig 3: 1900 Sanborn Map, close-up of 80 Professor Row

- Front entrance/portico depicted.
- A rear addition levelling the rear-most addition with that of the original rear projection.
- The plan shows that the projection on the left is a bay.
- Sanborn map states the front building is 2 ½ stories, with the rear portion at 2 floors

Fig 4: Satellite image of 80 Professor's Row

- Two chimneys, likely original, on main massing
- Three gable dormers on front elevation

Fig 5: Satellite image of 80 Professor Row

- Rear shed dormer on the main massing, likely a later addition
- Two gable dormers on rear of main massing flanking the shed dormer
- Later addition on rear left has a flat roof and what appears to be a railing.

## 1. **80 Professor's Row**

The period of relevance for the property starts c.1859

a. Location: The structure is in the original location and was built on-site.

b. Design: The primary structure is two and ¾ stories, wood framed, with gable roof; wood clapboard, three gable dormers on the front, two brick chimneys, portico entryway with sidelights and transom window above, brick steps and landing leading to front entrance; rear elevation has two gable dormers flanking a shed dormer, building is placed on a slope with the rear foundational level extending down slope in the rear; on the left elevation there are wood stairs leading to a roof top balcony; right elevation has a side portico entrance with side lights; fenestration consists of one one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash windows with shutters on either side of each window; one original two-over-one double-hung window on right elevation; pivot windows along ground floor level.

- c. Materials: Wood clapboard; wood replacement front door; wood porticos; brick steps and landing on front; metal railings; brick chimney stacks; wood stairway; asphalt shingle roof; concrete or concrete with brick parging foundation.
- d. Alterations: Rooftop balcony; wood stairs; replacement windows and doors; asphalt shingles; shed dormer; removal of bay window on left elevation; addition on the left rear.
- e. Evaluation of Integrity of 80 Professor's Row Based on the observations of the building and a study of the historic maps, it is Staff's position that the building largely retains the integrity of its original form. Alterations have occurred to this structure; however, they minimally obscure original architectural details; the original massing remains largely intact.

### III. **FINDINGS**

*For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (i) importantly associated with people, events or history and/or (ii) historically or architecturally significant. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) must make these findings. The portions of the Demolition Review Ordinance (DRO) related to these findings are included below:*

#### **A. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

*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.*

1. The HPC must make a finding as to whether or not the STRUCTURE at 80 Professor's Row meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 80 Professor's Row does or does not meet the threshold for historic significance under finding "a".

#### **B. HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

*The findings for historical and/or architectural significance of a historic property address the period, style, method of building construction and association with a reputed architect or builder of the subject property, 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.*

1. The HPC must make a finding as to whether or not the STRUCTURE at 80 Professor's Row meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 80 Professor's Row or does not meet the threshold for historic significance under finding "b".

If the HPC makes the above finding, the HPC must state their reasons why they take this position.

#### **IV. VOTE**

1. When bringing the matter to a vote, the HPC must include the reasons why the STRUCTURE at 80 Professor's Row is or is not "historically significant".