



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

THOMAS F GALLIGANI JR  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

---

**STEP 2: DETERMINATION OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED  
STAFF REPORT**

---

**Site:** 97 Highland Avenue

**Case:** HP23-000024

**Applicant:** Somerville Young Men's Christian  
Association

**Owner:** Same as Applicant

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

**HPC Meeting Date:** November 21, 2023



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. SUMMARY OF October 17, 2023 MEETING**

At their regular public meeting on October 17, 2023, the HPC declared the structure at 97 Highland Avenue to be "Historically Significant". Due to this determination, 97 Highland Ave moved on to the second step in the demolition review process, which calls for the HPC to determine whether or not the building should be "Preferably Preserved". A determination of "preferably preserved" does not permanently halt demolition of a building.

## II. BUILDINGS UNDER CONSIDERATION

The building at 234 Pearl Street is a 2.3 story structure and constructed approximately in 1892.

***Right: 97 Highland Avenue***



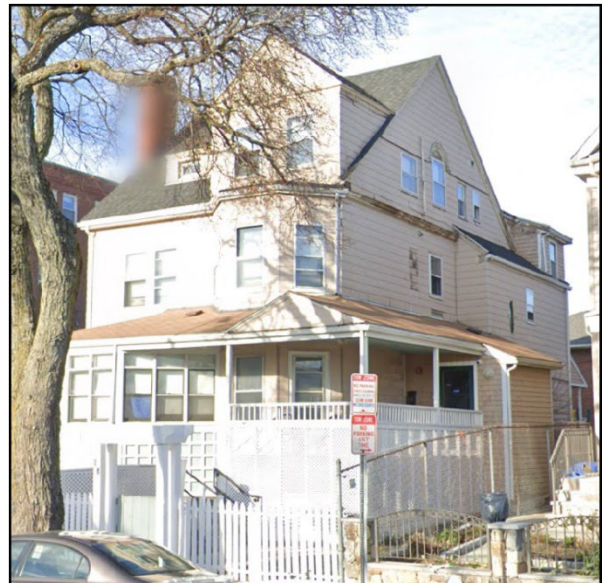
***Right: Left Elevation***



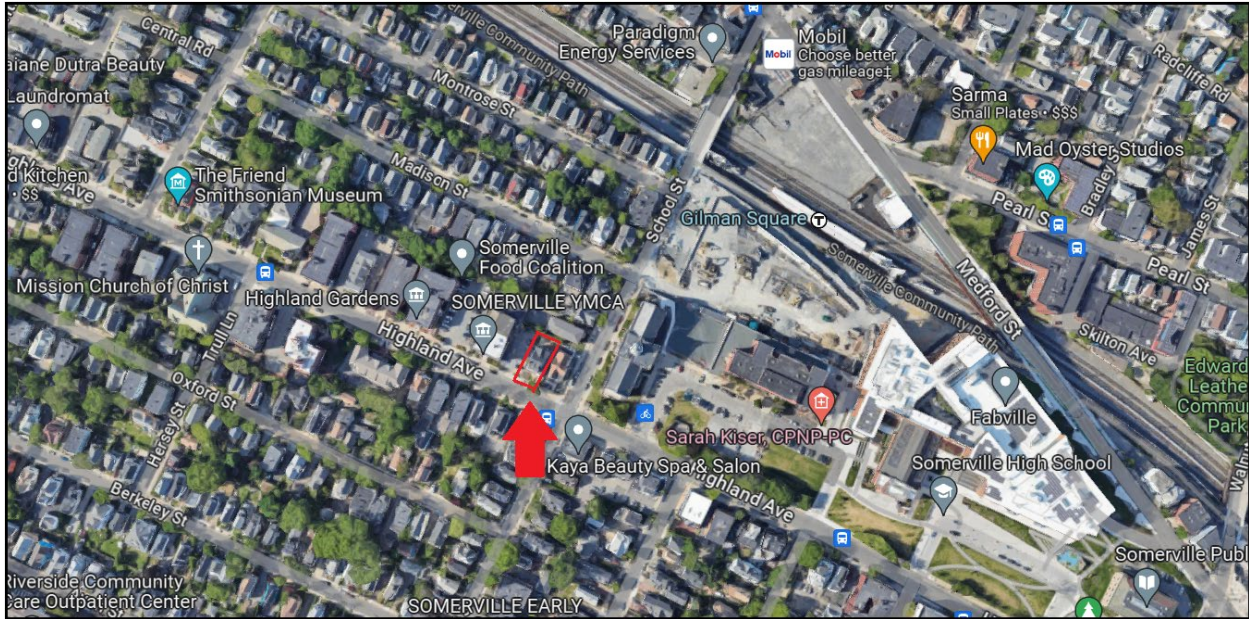
***Right: Rear***



***Right: Right Elevation***







*Above: Context Map for 97 Highland Ave.*

### **III. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Preservation Planning has not uncovered any additional information in the intervening weeks since the Historic Significance vote.

To see the historic maps and research regarding structure at 97 Highland Ave and a general history of the area, see the October 17th, 2023, staff report on Historic Significance.

### **IV. DETERMINATION**

The HPC must determine one of the following for the structure at 97 Highland Ave:

- a. That the building is Preferably Preserved.
- b. That the building is not Preferably Preserved.
- c. That the building is not Preferably Preserved *with Conditions*.

See the following section V “Findings” for guidance.

## V. **FINDINGS**

The HPC need to make determinations of whether the structure is to be preferably preserved and adopt findings.

### a. **Preferably Preserved**

For a determination of **preferably preserved**, the HPC must make the following finding:

- *That the demolition of the structure at **97 Highland Ave** would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City.*

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

### b. **Not Preferably Preserved**

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

### c. **Not Preferably Preserved with Conditions**

For a determination of **NOT preferably preserved with Conditions**, the HPC must make the following finding:

- *That the structure at **97 Highland Ave** do not meet any of the criteria to be “preferably preserved.”. The HPC may add any or all of the following as conditions to this determination:*
  - 1. photographic documentation of the building to be demolished;*
  - 2. architectural renderings of the building to be demolished;*
  - 3. identification of materials for salvage of material; and/or,*
  - 4. a plan for installation of historic or interpretive signage at or near the site.*

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

## VI. **VOTE**

When bringing the matter to a vote, the HPC must include the reasons why the structure at **97 Highland Ave** is or is not “preferably preserved”.