



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

TOM GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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

Site: 76 Highland Ave

Case: HP24-000020

Applicant: Li Liu

Owner: Same as Applicant

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by removing the rear chimney.*

HPC Meeting Date: July 16, 2024



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.1885 Queen Anne house which is a designated site known as the George Loring House. This property is located in the Prospect Hill neighborhood.

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:

- Removal of the chimney at the rear of the property, left elevation only. The brick chimney proposed for removal rises several feet above the roofline, has a modestly decorated top and is capped with two clay chimney pots.

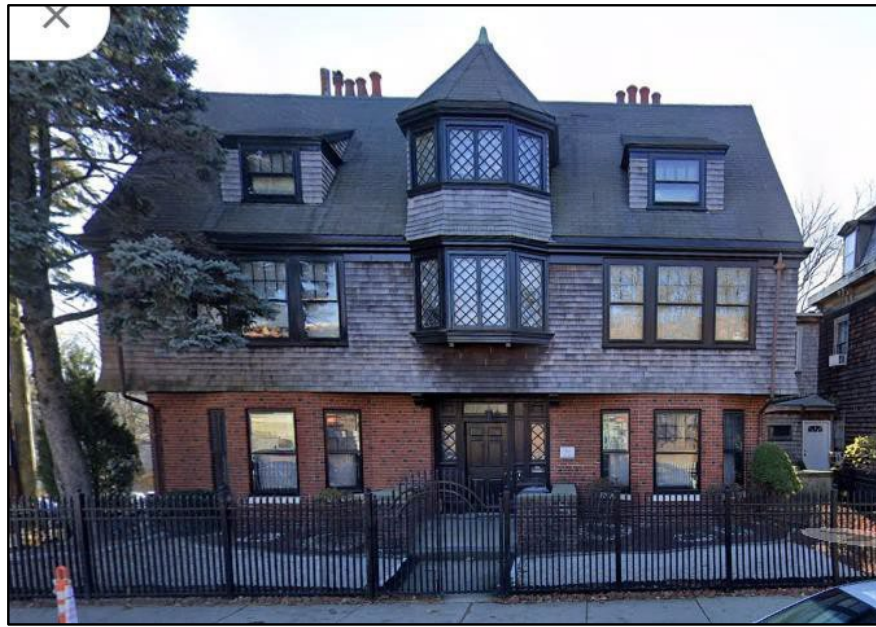


II. FINDINGS

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. Removal of the rear chimney

The applicable Somerville LHD Design Guideline is ***B. "Roofs"***.



Above: Current photo of the front elevation



Above: Current photo of the left elevation



Above: Current photo of the rear elevation

Preservation Planning Assessment:

The existing rear chimney is an integral architectural and period design feature that is emblematic of the Shingle and Queen Anne styles that make up the design of this building. The relevant portions of the Design Guidelines address the treatment of masonry and roofs are Section II, A. Exterior Walls, 2, Masonry, items a, b, and c. Section II, B. Roofs, item 4

Section II, A. Exterior Walls, 2, Masonry, items a, b, and c read as follows:

- a. Wherever possible, original masonry and mortar should be retained.*
- b. Original mortar should be duplicated in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.*
- c. Deteriorated masonry should be repaired and replaced with material which matches as closely as possible the original.*

Section II, B. Roofs, item 4 reads as follows:

- 4. Preserve the architectural features that give the roof its distinctive character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers and brackets. Downspouts should be inconspicuously located and should be painted to match the color of the siding.*

The Applicant is proposing to remove the rear chimney, which does not comply with any of the above-stated design guidelines. Regardless of whether or not the Applicant wishes to remove the chimney in order to achieve changes in the interior programming of the house, a skilled mason will be able to repair and restore/rebuild the chimney, including appropriate replacement of chimney pots, and install appropriate flashing and shingling to prevent any future leaks around the chimney perimeter. The Applicant should pursue roof renovation options that allow for the existing rear chimney to remain intact.

This chimney is an important feature of this Shingle/Queen Anne style home. The chimneys are specifically called out in the Form Bs from the 1980s (the subject chimney can be seen in one of the black and white left elevation images of the building) as being characteristic of the English medieval

design that the building is trying to reflect. Other elements of this design include the lattice-mullioned windows on the front elevation, the steeply pitched roof and the protrusion of the second and third floors above each one below them.

If the HPC votes to approve the removal, recommended conditions appear below.

If the HPC votes to deny the removal of the chimney, they may then vote to approve repair and restoration of the chimney with conditions added.

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. FINDINGS & VOTE

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

IV. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

IF the HPC approves replacement windows for this property, Preservation Planning recommends the following conditions be attached to any Certificate of Appropriateness that the HPC might grant for this project:

1. The Applicant shall obtain all necessary permits for this project through the Inspectional Services Department (ISD). The Applicant must upload a copy of this Certificate to their BUILDING PERMIT application and obtain any necessary division/departments sign-offs. This Certificate is for the above-described work only. Any changes to this proposal shall first be submitted to Preservation Planning at historic@somervillema.gov for review and approval PRIOR to implementation. Failure to do so will nullify this Certificate and delay final sign-offs/CO.
2. Any roof shingles affected by the removal of the rear chimney shall be replaced with the same shingles approved under the Historic Alteration permit HP24-000063.
3. Work for which this Certificate is granted must commence within one year of issuance. If work does not commence within one year or pauses for a significant period of time such that the expiration date of the Certificate passes, the Applicant shall be required to apply for this Certificate to be re-issued. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning at historic@somervillema.gov for instructions.
4. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning a minimum of 15 business days prior to arranging for a final inspection from ISD. Preservation Planners or their designee shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that it was executed in accordance with the Certificate of Appropriateness. Contact shall be made at the following email address ONLY: historic@somervillema.gov. The Applicant must provide before and after photos of the project area in the email as .JPG attachments. The attachments cannot be embedded in the body of an email.

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SMV.36		
Historic Name:	Loring, George House		
Common Name:			
Address:	76 Highland Ave		
City/Town:	Somerville		
Village/Neighborhood:	Prospect Hill;		
Local No:	140; 76; 88; 92-B-28;		
Year Constructed:	C 1895		
Architectural Style(s):	Shingle Style;		
Architect(s):	Loring, George F.;		
Use(s):	Single Family Dwelling House;		
Significance:	Architecture;		
Area(s):	SMV.C, SMV.AY		
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register MRA (03/11/1985); Local Historic District (03/11/1985); Nat'l Register Individual Property (03/11/1989);		
Building Materials:	Roof: Wood Shingle; Wall: Brick; Cedar Shingle; Wood; Wood Shingle;		
Demolished	No		

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: Monday, July 8, 2024 at 2:51 PM

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

MAH

AREA
C, A Y

FORM NO.
3

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uSG--s - /61 5/



Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location
in relation to nearest cross streets and/or
geographical features. Indicate all buildings
between inventoried property and nearest
intersection(s).
Indicate north

See Attached Assessor's Map

JTM REFERENCE 19 327/JJO 4694/560

3orr,erville

s ...:7_6_H

ic Name

Present residential

Original residential

PTION

ca. 1895

map research/directories

Shingle Style/Queen Anne

ect Loring & Phipps

nr

Exterior Wall Fabric brick / shingles

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition good

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage less than one acre

Setting Southwest corner of Highland Ave. & Putnam St., on main thoroughfare facing institutional center of Central Hill.

Recorded by Gretchen J. Schuler

JSGS ADRANGLE 30 s t o n o r t h _

3CALE 1 2 ; 5 ; _ ; _ o o o _ , , _ - - - - -

Organization iv.ass. Historical Commission

Date September,

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The George Loring House at 76 Highland Avenue is one of the only Shingle Style, architect built houses in Somerville. It retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with well known local architect George Loring and with the development of late 19th century Somerville. It fulfills Criteria A, B and C of the National Register of Historic Places at the local level.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The George Loring House, built by 1895, is one of the best conserved local examples of the late Shingle Style of architecture. Organized under a single large gable, the house is massed as a simple rectangular unit. The elements of the brick and shingle facade are arranged symmetrically and have a horizontal orientation. The broad massed chimneys, the expansively shingled and steeply pitched roof are references to the English Medieval structures. Other architectural features of note include the lattice mullioned windows in the central and side oriels, the shed roof dormers with 4/1 sash, and the recessed entrance flanked by brick projecting one-story bays.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Located in the part of Somerville known as Central Hill, the George Loring House is a focal point on a corner lot adjacent to the institutional center of Somerville. The prominence of the location articulates the prominence of the resident and architect as a Somerville citizen.

The first George Loring House is located next to this property and was used by the Loring family until the 1890s when Loring designed and built this dwelling for the family on the remaining building lot of their Italianate ca. 1880 house at 78 Highland Avenue. Loring, born in Boston in 1851, entered the office of Boston's City Engineer in 1868 and from 1874 to 1882 served as head draftsman. He worked briefly with George A. Clough, former City of Boston Architect, and began his own firm in 1883. In 1889 Loring and Sanford Phipps (formerly of Somerville) established a partnership and went on to design numerous public and residential buildings in New England and New York, including many of the buildings at Tufts University and public buildings in Somerville. Loring also designed over 100 houses in Somerville.

(continued)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Bromley, G.W. Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1895.

Somerville Journal.

Somerville Board of Trade, A Martin & Sons, Publisher, 1912.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

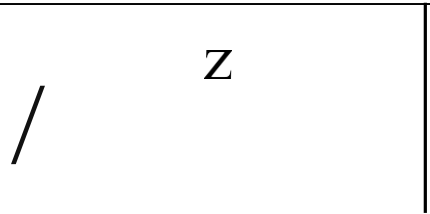
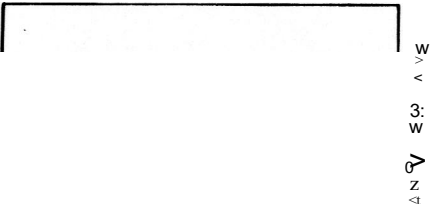
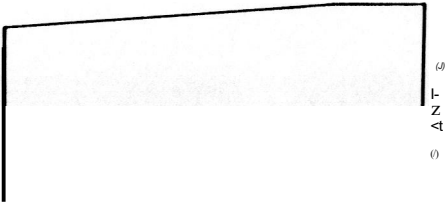
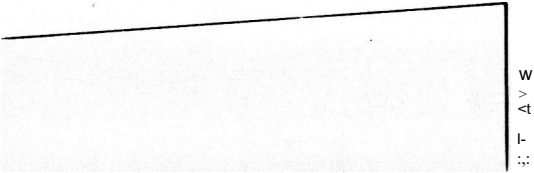
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Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
SOMERVILLE	140 36
Property Name: George Loring House	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Historical Significance (con't)

The George Loring House is significant for its association with prominent architect George Loring, as one of the best conserved examples of Shingle Style architecture designed and lived in by George Loring. The House is also significant for its representation of late 19th century development of substantial single family residences on Highland Avenue, a fashionable neighborhood of prominent Somerville citizens. It was the time of rapid expansion in the development of apartment houses to accommodate the rising population, however, it was also a time for continued prosperity for many local and Boston based businessmen, thus the construction of large single family homes as well.



MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Roll 41:31

Somerville

76 Highland

Name George Loring House

Final residence

Present residence

:0 Private individual
Private organization

Public

Original owner George Loring

ION:

Date ca. 1895

Source map research

Style Shingle/English Medieval Revival

Architect

Exterior wall fabric brick/shingle

Out buildings

Major alterations (with dates)

Moved Date

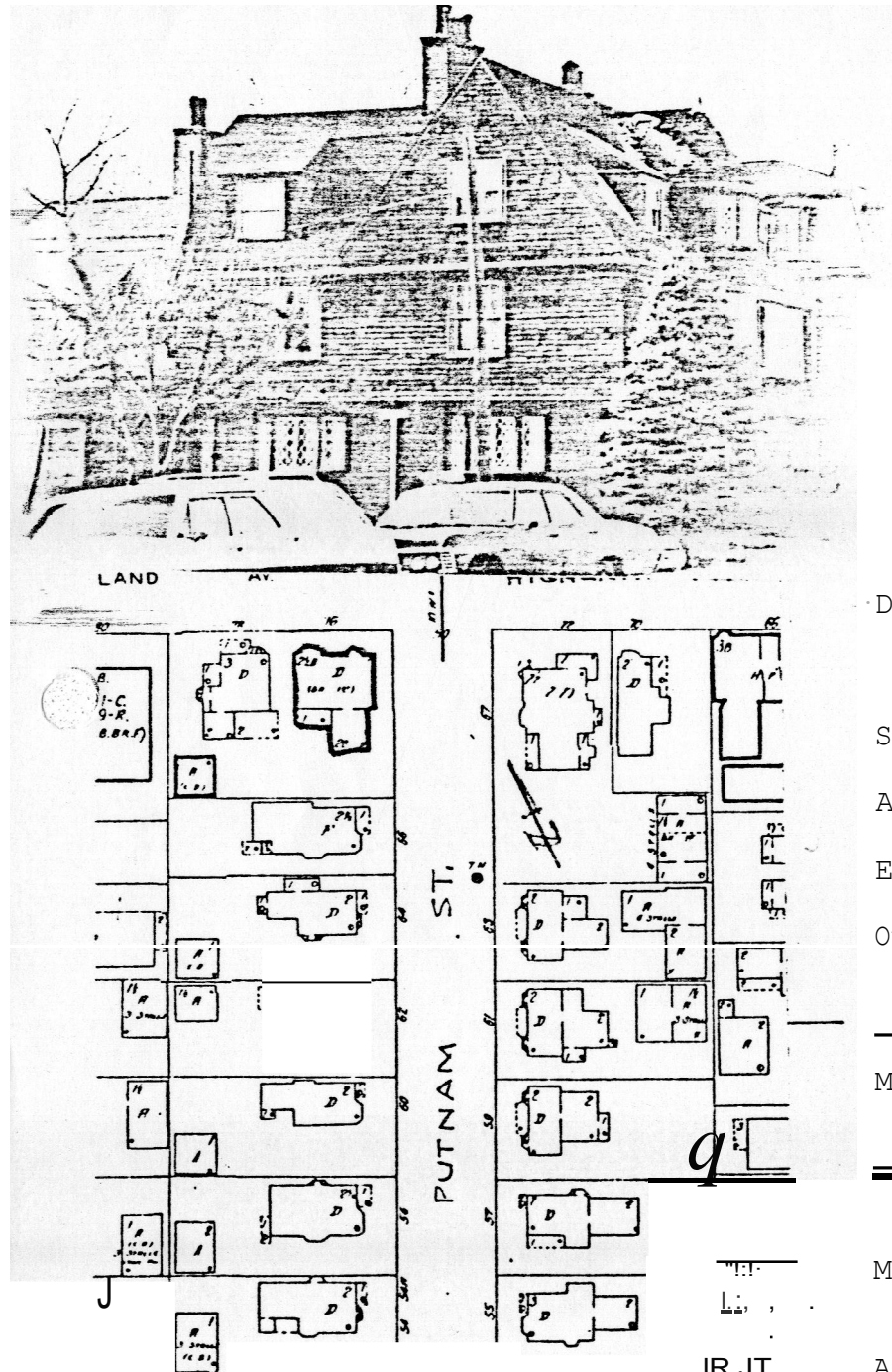
Approx. acreage

Setting

Recorded by Carole Zellie

Organization Landscape Research

Date 12/80



,IR,JT

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFIC. CE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

Fine mullioned windows in central and side oriels, and Loring's skillful use of shingle and brick resulted in one of Somerville's finest Shingle Style houses. The broad, massed chimneys and steeply pitched roof are strong references to the English Medieval structures. Which Loring often used as sources for his more rustic designs. Fortunately, this house is well conserved.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

George F. Loring was born in Boston in 1851 and attended Boston public schools. In 1868 he entered the office of Boston's City Engineer where he served as head draftsman from 1874-1882. Loring accepted a position with the architectural firm of George A. Clough, former City Architect of Boston, in 1882, and remained there until establishing his own firm in 1883. In 1889, he joined forces with another architect, Sanford Phipps, formerly of Somerville. Loring and Phipps opened offices in Boston and designed numerous public and residential buildings in New England and New York, concentrating their efforts in Somerville where they became the most popular firm of their day.

The first home Loring occupied in Somerville was an existing structure at 78 Highland Avenue. A large two-story Mansard with an L-shaped wing at the rear, this house is a particularly gracious example of a vernacular late 19th century style which is prevalent in Somerville. The original clapboard has been replaced with cedar shingles, and the portico has been enclosed, but the basic form of the house remains as it was when Loring occupied the property.

In about 1895, Loring built a second residence for his family next door at 76 Highland Avenue. This house is among Somerville's most outstanding examples of the late shingle style type made popular by R.H. Richardson and McKim, Mead and White in New England. Organized under a single large gable; the house is massed as a simple rectangular unit. The elements of the brick and shingle facade are arranged symmetrically and have a horizontal orientation, giving the structure an overall quietness and formality which reflects the tendency in the late 19th century to temper the restlessness of earlier Queen Anne types.

Most of the residences designed by Loring and Phipps in Somerville tend further towards a genuine Colonial Revival style. Their public buildings were often in a Richardson Romanesque style, in keeping with the fashionable movement towards simplification. Among the firm's notable public structures in Somerville are the first bldgs of Tufts University, the Public Library (now demolished), several public schools, the Masonic Temple and Odd Fellows Hall.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

ssor's Records; Somerville Journal; Somerville Board of Trade, A. Martin & Co. ; Publisher, 1912; G.W. Bromley, Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1895; no. 92-B-28 OPCD

FORM B - BUILDING

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

In Area no. Form no.

92-B-28

36

town Somerville

address 76 Highland Avenue

name Miss Elizabeth Raymond

present use Residential

present owner Miss Elizabeth Raymond

description:

date c. 1895

Source Somerville Journal obituary

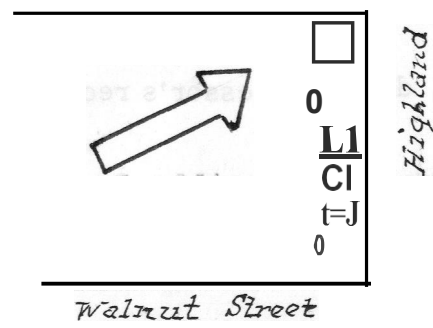
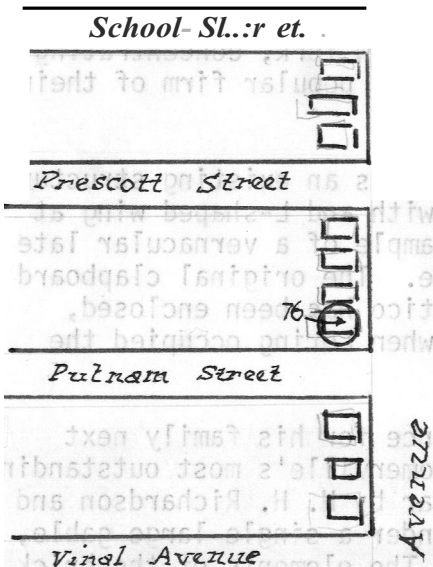
style Richardsonian Shingle

Architect George F. Lor'ing



4. Map. draw sketch of building location
in relation to nearest cross streets and

other buildings. Indicate north.



Exterior wall fabric cedar shingle/brick

Outbuildings (describe) _____

Other features half-turret composed of
2nd floor bay and attic dormer

Altered _____ Date _____

Moved _____ Date _____

Lot size 5. Lot size --5-, 17_0 sq ft_

One acre or less _____ Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 57

Approximate distance of building from street

5 ft

Recorded by Michael A. Campbell, Katherine M. Tuttleman, Walter Mulligan

Organization Office of Planning and
Development, City of Somerville

Date Dec 19 1992

(over)

SEP 28 1978

PSS. HIST. C M

2. Original owner (if known) George F. Loring

Original use Residence

Subsequent use\$ (if any) and dates

3. Themes (check as many as applicable)

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

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

George F Loring was born in Boston in 1851 and attended Boston public schools. In 186a he entered the office of Boston's City Engineer where he served as head draftsman from 1874-1882. Loring accepted a position with the architectural firm of George A. Clough, former City Architect of Boston in 1882, and remained there until establishing his own firm in 1883. In 1889, he joined forces with another architect, Sanford Phipps, formerly of Somerville. Loring and Phipps opened offices in Boston and designed numerous public and residential buildings in New England and New York, concentrating their efforts in Somerville where they became the most popular firm of their day.

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

Assessors' Records; Somerville Journal; Somerville Board
of Trade, A. Martin & Sons, Publisher, 1912

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No:
	J J --
Property Name:	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

9. Historical Significance (cont.)

and shingle facade are arranged symmetrically and have a horizontal orientation, giving the structure an overall quietness and formality which reflects the tendency in the late 19th century to temper the restlessness of earlier Queen Anne types.

Most of the residences designed by Loring and Phipps in Somerville take this tendency even further towards a genuine Colonial Revival style. Their public buildings were frequently executed in a Richardsonian Romanesque style, and in keeping with the fashionable movement towards simplification. Among the firm's most notable public structures in Somerville are the first buildings of Tufts University, the Public Library (now demolished), several public schools, the Masonic Temple and Odd Fellows Hall.



North facade

76 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA 02143

Narrative description for chimney removal

Seek HPC approval to remove the small chimney in the back of the house while keeping the two large chimneys in the front of the house.

The applicant (Li Liu) is in the process of buying the property with a planned closing date of 08APR2024 (Monday). Since the removal of the small chimney likely requires HPC review, the applicant would like to submit the application in advance and hopefully the HPC could review the application during the meeting on 16APR2024.

Highland Ave

Highland Ave

76

Putnam St

