



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

STEP 1: DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
STAFF REPORT

Site: 80 Irving Street

Case: HP25-000051

Applicant: Daniel A. Casparriello

Owner: Daniel A. Casparriello and Amanda A. Casparriello

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks to demolish a building that is at least 75 years of age.*

HPC Meeting Date: July 15, 2025

Top: Front elevation

Bottom, left: Right elevation

Bottom, middle: Left elevation

Bottom, right: Rear elevation



The purpose of this 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 Irving Street is a two-and-a-half -story, two-family residential structure built between 1874 and 1884. Irving Street is a south-bound one-way street running between Broadway and Holland Street.

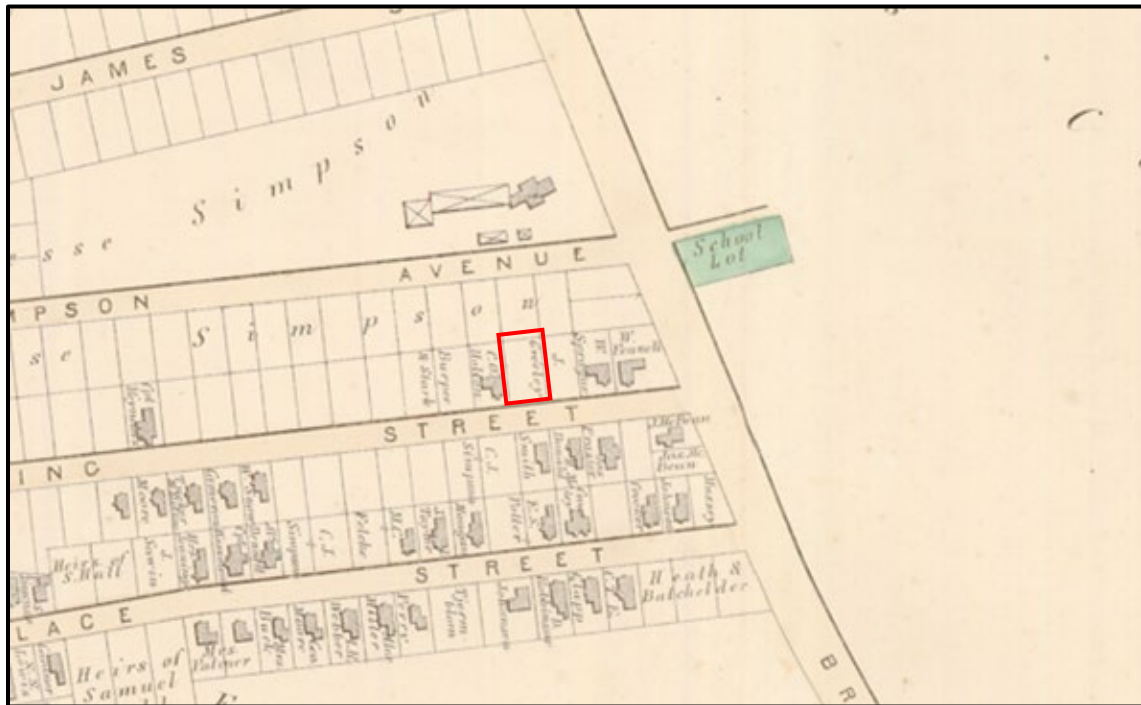
Irving Street is primarily composed of single-, two-, and three- family residential structures.

The 1852 Draper map below shows the approximate location of 80 Irving Street, just west of the Powder House along Broadway; western Somerville remained farmland through much of the 19th century.



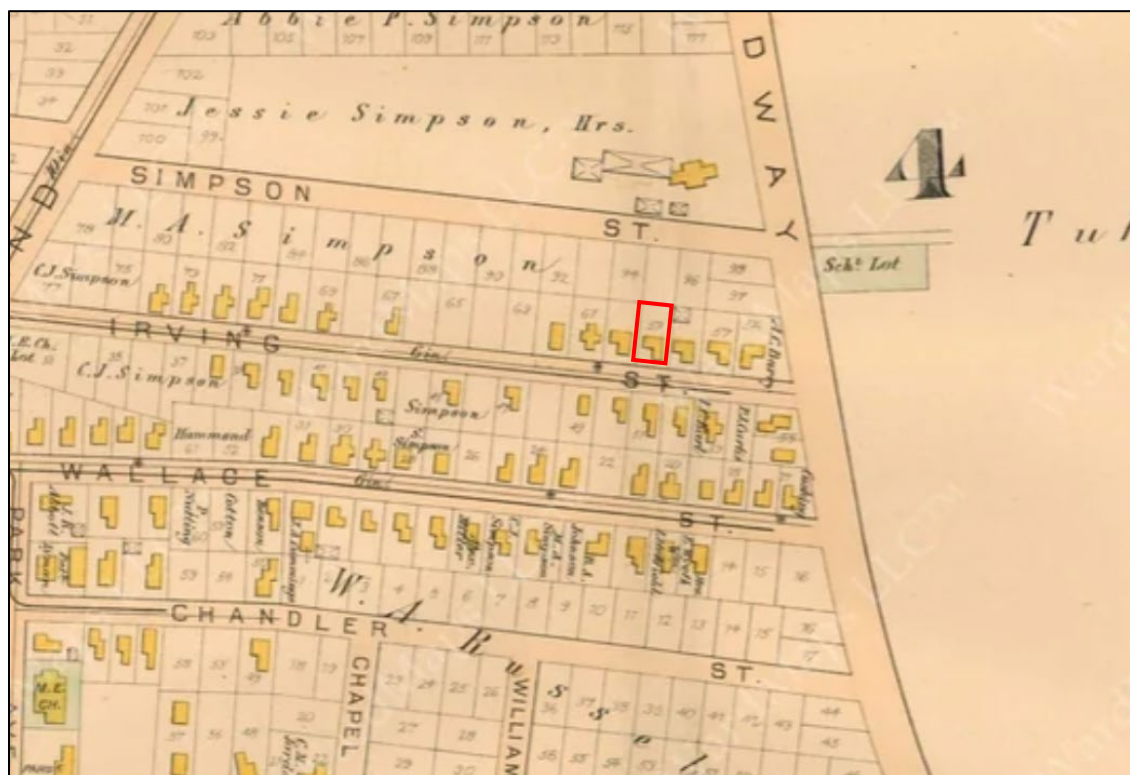
Above: 1852 Draper Map with the approximate location of 80 Irving Street indicated.

After a commuter rail station was opened in Davis Square in 1860s, this area began developing as a suburb. Wallace, Irving, Simpson, and Paulina Streets were platted on land owned by Jesse Simpson, who owned a farm and gravel quarry on the land. Irving Street was likely named for the President of the Board of Alderman in the 1880s, Irving Levi Russell.



Above: 1874 Hopkins Map, Plate L, with the location of 80 Irving Street indicated.

By 1874, the parcel now known as 80 Irving Street was platted and owned by a James M. Greeley.



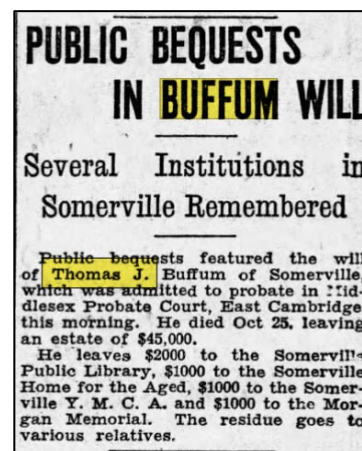
Above: 1884 Hopkins Map, Plate 14, with the location of 80 Irving Street (then 59 Irving Street) indicated.

By 1884, the building was constructed, a front-gabled two-and-a-half-story structure, with a gabled wing at the rear left of the structure. It was likely built at the same time at the neighboring houses to the north,

which follow the same style. There are Italianate brackets on the eave returns and front bay window eave. Deed records indicate that the first owner of the building was Alfred W. Savage (who purchased the land from James Greeley), who soon thereafter sold the property to the Elwell family.

Residents

The first known residents of the property were Simon and Judith Elwell, both born in Maine. Simon Elwell is listed in the Somerville City Directory as a soapstone worker, clerk, and a salesman, while Judith (nee Littlefield) Elwell is listed as a housekeeper. They lived at the property with their daughters Josie and Lottie, their son-in-law, and their grandson Alfred Rust until their deaths in 1885 (Simon) and 1900 (Judith).



The property was next owned by Thomas J. Buffum and Amelia I.D. Buffum. Thomas was a dry good agent, while Amelia has no listed occupation. The Buffums lived at 75 Florence Street, in what is now called the Thomas J. Buffum house in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System; the property at 80 Irving Street was likely seen as an investment for them, as they appear to never have lived at the property. Instead, a long list of laborers are listed as boarding at the two-family structure – bookkeepers, carpenters, coopers, cabinet and piano makers, and composers are all listed (see spreadsheet below for a complete list). Countries of origin of these laborers included England, Canada, and Sweden.

Notably, there were no listed residents at the property between 1916 and 1918 – it can only be speculated as to the reason for this, possible fire or other issue made the property hazardous.

After the Buffums, the property was briefly (1920 – 1923) owned and lived in by Jean B. Renault, an elevator operator, and his wife Catherine Renault, both immigrants from Canada. The property then passed (1923 – 1924) to the Owens family – Terrence J. and Mary A., and their sons Clarence, George, and Albert. After the Owens, George F. Speers, a plumber, and his wife Evelyn M. Speers owned the property (1924 – 1927).

August and Elvine Schriber, immigrants from Estonia and Russia, respectively, purchased the property in 1927. August was a cabinet maker; he and Elvine raised four children – two daughters and two sons. They owned the property until 1961.

Name	Residency Year(s)	Occupation	Relationship	Type
Jessie Simpson	N/A – Vacant Land	Farmer		Owner
James M. Greeley	N/A – Vacant Land	Laborer		Owner
Alfred W. Savage	1874			Owner
Simon Elwell	1874 - 1885 (death)	Soapstone Worker	Head	Owner
Judith Elwell	1874 - 1900 (death)	Housekeeper	Wife	Owner
Josie H. Elwell	1879 - 1881	Music Teacher	Daughter	
Lottie Rust	1880		Daughter	
Alfred Rust	1880		Grandson	
Thomas J. Buffum	1901 - 1920	Salesman		Absentee Owner
Amelia I.D. Buffum	1901 - 1920			Absentee Owner
George J. McClure	1900 - 1903	Bookkeeper	Head	Renter
Mary G McClure	1900-1903		Wife	Renter
Allan W Carter	1900 -	Machinist		Renter
George A. Hook	1903 -	Student		Renter

Lester F. Bowlby	1902 - 1903	Carpenter		Renter
Effie M Bowlby	1900			Renter
Walter C. Goddard	1904 - 1905	Cooper		Renter
Adolph Larson	1904 - 1905	Cabinet Maker		Renter
John F. Johnston	1906 - 1909	Piano Maker		Renter
Nathan Eugene Nourse	1906 - 1915	Carpenter	Head	Renter
Alice M Nourse	1906 - 1915		Wife	Renter
Elmer Sprague	1909 -	Salesman		Renter
John D. Cooke	1910 - 1911	Carpenter	Head	Renter
Bertha L Cooke	1910 - 1911	Clerk	Wife	Renter
Henry E Cooke	1910 - 1911		Father	Renter
Frank A. Ferguson	1912 - 1915	Compositor	Head	Renter
Mary Ferguson	1912-1915		Wife	Renter
Allan A Howe	1912-1915	Shipper	Son-in-Law	Renter
Amy L Howe	1912-1915		Daughter	Renter
Ruth M Ferguson	1912-1915		Daughter	Renter
Gladys Ferguson	1912-1915		Daughter	Renter
Lewis J Hansen	1919 - 1920	Motorman	Head	Renter
Vesta E Hansen	1919 - 1920	Saleslady	Wife	Renter
Lewis R Hanson	1919 - 1920	Timekeeper	Son	Renter
Ruth W Hansen	1919 - 1920		Daughter	Renter
Jean B. Renault	1920 - 1923	Elevator Operator	Head	Owner
Catherine Renault	1920 - 1923		Wife	
Terrence J. Owens	1923 - 1924	Waiter	Head	Owner
Mary A. Owens	1923 - 1924		Wife	Owner
Clarence J Owens	1923 - 1924	Salesman	Son	
Geroge E Owens	1923 - 1924		Son	
Albert W Owens	1923 - 1924		Son	
George F. Speers	1924 - 1927	Plumber	Head	Owner
Evelyn M. Speers	1924 - 1927		Wife	Owner
August Schrieber	1927 - 1961	Cabinet Maker	Head	Owner
Elvine Schrieber	1927 - 1961		Wife	Owner
Erika F Schrieber	1927 - 1940	Seamstress	Daughter	
Charles E Schrieber	1927 - 1950		Son	
Harry Srieber	1927 - 1950		Son	
Ethel Schrieber	1927 - 1950		Daughter	
John S. Collins	1961 - 1974			Owner
Cecilia A. Collins	1961 - 1974			Owner
Ronald Q. Butt	1974 - 1975			Owner
Donald K. Butt	1974 - 1975			Owner
John F. Partridge Jr.	1975 - 1983			Owner
Armand Cajigal	1983 - 1999			Owner
Joanne DeLucia	1983 - 1999			Owner
Christopher S. Frost	1999 - 2003			Owner
Melissa P. Frost	1999 - 2003			Owner
Stephen Berman	2003 -			Owner

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.



Fig 1

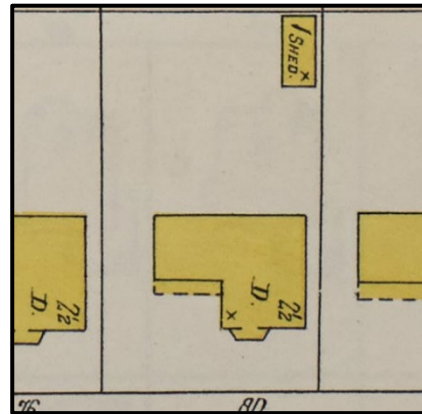


Fig 2

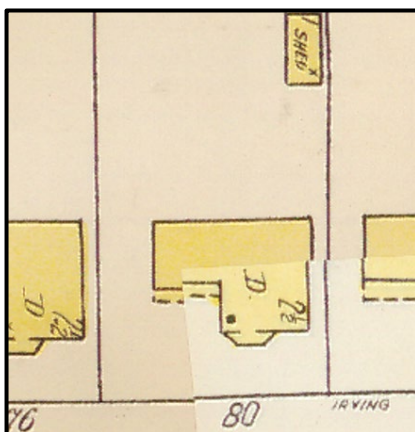


Fig 3

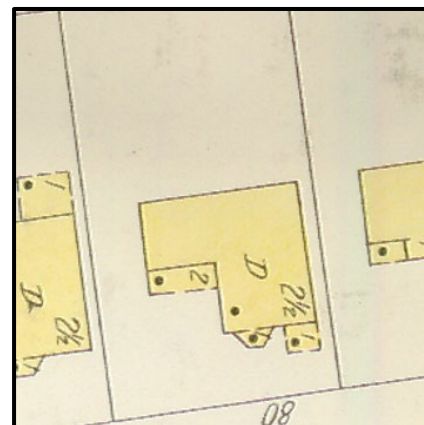


Fig 4



Fig 5

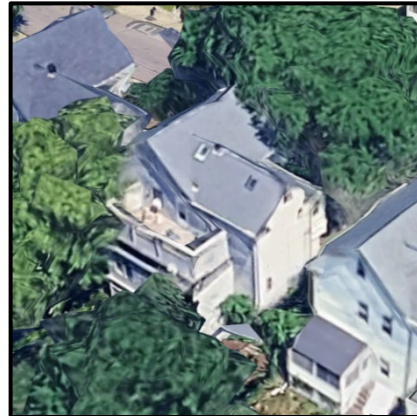


Fig 6

Figure 1: 1895 Bromley Map

- Shows the original footprint of the structure.
- Gabled front and rear left wing; moderate pitch roof; 2.5 story structure

Figure 2: 1900 Sanborn Map

- Addition of uncovered porch on the front of the rear left wing
- Addition of shed in rear yard.

Figure 3: 1925 Sanborn Map,

- Shows the same footprint.

Figure 4: 1938 – 1959 Sanborn Map

- Possible enclosure of the porch on the front of the left rear wing.
- Addition of portico at the front entry.
- Removal of the shed in the rear yard.

Figures 5 & 6: Satellite image of the property

- Enclosure of the porch on the front of left rear wing.
- Single story rear addition with a porch on top (see rear elevation photo)
- Skylights on the roof shown.

80 Irving Street

The period of relevance for the property starts in ca 1890.

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

b. Design: The structure is two and a half stories, with a moderate pitch gable front and wing. It has elements of Italianate style, with slight eave overhang with brackets. There is a sunburst above the front door, but it is unclear if this is a later addition.

- Front Elevation

- The front elevation presents a moderate pitch gable with bracketed eave return.
- There is a one story projecting polygonal bay with bracketed eaves on the first story.
- There is a later-addition portico over the front door; it is unknown if the door is original.

- A set of concrete steps leading to the front entrance.
 - The first story bay presents three (3) one-over-one double hung windows; the second story bay presents three (3) one-over-one double hung windows on the front gable massing and five (5) one-over-one double hung windows on the enclosed porch off the left rear wing; the attic half story presents one (1) one-over-one double hung windows.
 - None of the windows are original.
- Right Elevation
- The right elevation presents an asphalt-shingled moderate-pitch roof face, with a slight eave with brackets.
 - The first story present two (2) one-over-one double hung windows, one larger than the other; the second story has the same fenestration as the first story; there is a skylight on the roof.
 - None of the windows are original.
 - There is an exhaust pipe on this elevation.
- Left Elevation
- The left elevation presents a moderate pitch gable with a bracketed eave return.
 - There are no first story windows; the second story has only one small single-pane window on the original façade and one (1) one-over-one double hung window on the enclosed porch; the attic half story has one (1) one-over-one double hung window.
 - None of the windows are original.
 - There are utility lines on this elevation.
- Rear Elevation
- The rear elevation presents the rear gable and rear of the left side wing.
 - The original massing is largely obscured by the late-addition (1960s or later) rear addition.
 - The rear addition as four (4) one-over-one double-hung windows.

c. Materials:

1. *Main Structure:* Aluminum siding over wood frame; wood eaves; rear wooden porch (not original) over aluminum sided rear addition (not original, wood portico (not original); concrete front steps; wooden door (unknown if original); brick chimney stacks (unknown if original); vinyl/aluminum windows; asphalt shingles on roof; parged concrete foundation.

Alterations: In addition to the changes in materials as noted in the Materials section above, the structure has seen an addition of the front portico (mid-20th century) and a rear addition (late 20th century).

Evaluation of Integrity of 80 Irving Street: 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 and later forms and massing. While some alterations have occurred to this structure it retains some degree of integrity of original and later architectural elements.

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.

Residential Structure

1. The HPC must make a finding as to whether or not the STRUCTURE at 80 Irving Street meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 80 Irving Street 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.

Residential Structure

1. The HPC must make a finding as to whether or not the STRUCTURE at 80 Irving Street meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 80 Irving Street does 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 Irving Street is or is not "historically significant".