



City of Somerville HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

PROPERTY ADDRESS: **25 Atherton Street**
PERMIT NUMBER: **HP25-000090**
OWNER: Carr Schoolhouse Condominium Trust
OWNER ADDRESS: 25 Atherton St., Somerville, MA
APPLICANT: Christine Strout- IRB Real Estate
APPLICANT ADDRESS: 2 Brattle Sq., Cambridge, MA 02138
DECISION: *Conditional* Certificate of Appropriateness
DECISION DATE: January 6, 2026

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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

This decision summarizes the findings made by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) or their designee regarding the **Local Historic District** property at **25 Atherton St.**

LEGAL AD

- The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property constructing a retaining wall and two patios

SCOPE OF WORK

- The applicant will install two 10' x 14' patios in the front yard, replacing the patio pictured in the existing conditions photo. The patios will be made of Thermal Bluestone Pavers. The material specifications are attached.
- The applicant will also install a retaining wall in the front yard. The wall will be made of North Mountain Granite Wallstone. The material specifications are attached.

DETERMINATION

Under the Somerville Historic Districts Ordinance (HDO) proposed alterations of Local Historic District (LHD) properties must conform to specific criteria set out in the *Design Guidelines*.

In the instance of 25 Atherton Street, the proposal, relative to the replacement of the gutters and downspouts, the proposal meets the following criteria set out in Section II, H. Landscape Features and Paving, items 1 - 4.:

1. *The general intent of this section is to preserve the existing or later essential landscape features that enhance the property.*
2. *It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the structure and its newer surroundings.*
3. *The existing landforms of the site should not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the structure or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the structure.*
4. *The original layout and materials of the walks, steps and paved areas should be maintained if significant grade changes constitute an important feature of the structure or site. Consideration*

will be given to alterations if it can be shown that improved site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will accomplish this without altering the integrity of the structure.

At their January 6, 2026 meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) discussed the proposal. The Commission stated that the material choices fit in well with the landscape and keep the focus on the building. They agreed that the proposal will help enhance enjoyment of the space for residents, and the visual impact from the public way will be minimal. The HPC voted 5-0 in favor of granting the requested Certificate of Appropriateness.

Due to the nature of the proposal, the provisions set forth in the Historic District Ordinance (HDO) and related Design Guidelines, the Applicant is granted a *Conditional Certificate of Appropriateness*.

The Conditions attached to this Certificate are as follows and must be followed by the Applicant/Owner:

CONDITIONS

1. The Applicant/Owner shall file this 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 does not commence within one year of the HPC's date of determination, this Certificate shall expire, and the Applicant will need to 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. Failure to seek approval for changes may delay final sign-offs/COs.
4. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning at historic@somervillema.gov a minimum of 15 business days prior to any final ISD site visit so that Preservation Planning or their designee can confirm if the project was completed according to HPC approvals.

As part of this communication, 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.

Issued on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):

Eric Parkes, *Chair*
Denise Price
Ryan Falvey

Robin Kelly, *Vice-Chair*
DJ Chagnon, *Alt.*