



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JACOB D. WILSON
MAYOR

TOM GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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

Site: 5 Wilton Street

Case: HP26-000021

Applicant: Adam Dash & Associates

Owner: Robert and Donna Langill

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

HPC Meeting Date: April 7, 2026

Top: Front elevation

Bottom, left: Left elevation

Bottom, middle: Rear elevation

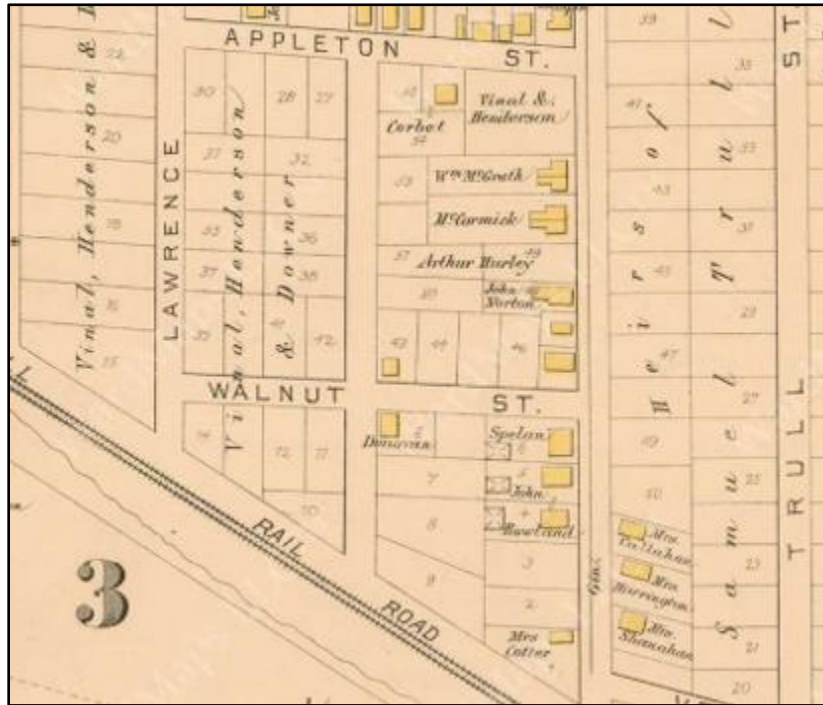
Bottom, right: Right elevation



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: 5 Wilton Street is a 2.5 story front facing worker’s cottage. The street is largely made up of similar gable fronted structures.



1884 Hopkins Map

Wilton Street is in the Magoun Square neighborhood. Magoun Square was a convenient commercial shopping area for laborers and drivers hauling stone, brick, cordwood, and farm produce through Somerville into Boston and Cambridge.

5 Wilton Street appears as an empty parcel of land on the 1884 Hopkins Map. At the time the street was named Walnut Street. Wilton Street appears on the 1895 Sanborn Maps. The parcel is shown as being owned by a “Francis Murray”. The structure at 5 Wilton Street first appears on the 1895 Sanborn Maps.



1895 Sanborn Map

According to the 1900 Census, the Murray family lived at 5 Wilton Street from roughly 1895 to 1920 (likely beyond this date). No additional information was found on the Murray family.

Census data also tells us that Frank Murray was born in Ireland and immigrated to the United States in 1880. While his wife Julia’s parents were born in Ireland, she was born on Prince Edward Island and immigrated to the United States in 1887.

WILTON	
5	Frank W Murray
8	Manuel Carreiro
8	Antonio Delbrasso
9	John J Sullivan
11	Henry Jenks
14	Jesse J Perry
24	William Patterson
24	Mrs Minnie Brown

City Directory

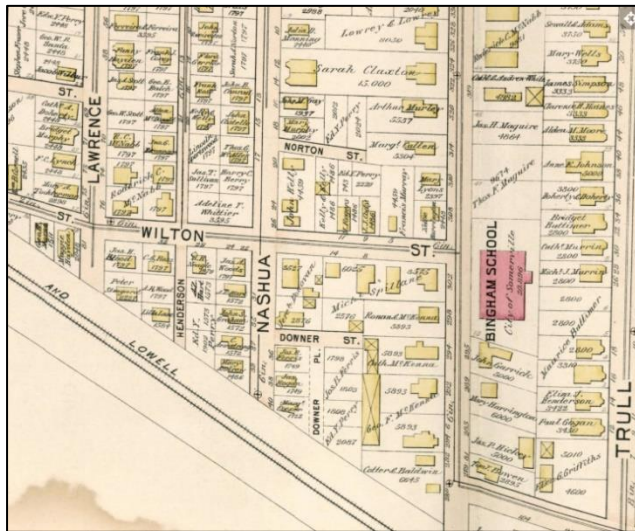
<u>Name</u>	<u>Year(s) of Residency</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Residency Type</u>
Frank Murray	1895-1920	Day Laborer	Head of Household	Owner
Julia Murray		None Listed	Wife	--
Mary Murray		In School	Daughter	--
Frank Murray		In School	Son	--
John Murray		--	Son	--
Annie Murray		--	Daughter	--

A handwritten census table with columns for name, relationship, sex, age, date of birth, and birthplace. The entries are: Frank Murray (Head, M, 46, 1841, 21, Mass. English), Julia (Wife, F, 41, 1841, 21, 7, 6, Mass. English), Mary (Daughter, F, 18, 20, Mass. English), Frank W. (Son, M, 14, 19, Mass. English), John (Son, M, 12, Mass. English), Annie (Daughter, F, 9, Mass. English), and Ruth (Daughter, F, 4, 6, Mass. English).

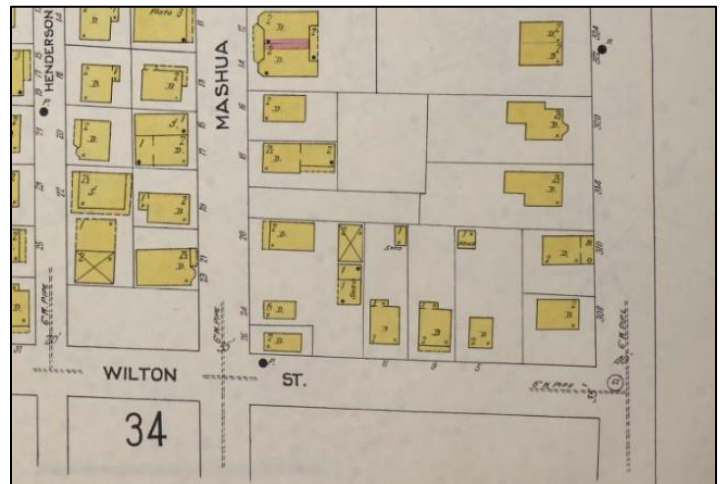
Census Data showing Murray Family living at 5 Wilton Street

II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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.



1895 Sanborn Map

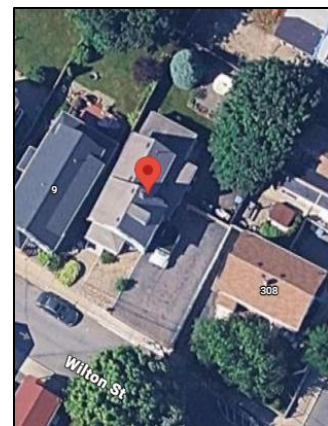


1900 Sanborn Map

1. 5 Wilton Street

The period of relevance for the house starts c. 1895

- a) Location: This structure is in its original location.
- b) Design: The house is a two and a half story front gabled Italianate style home.
 - Front Elevation
 - Front gable
 - Door with stoop/porch structure (appears composite material)
 - White railings
 - Stone Steps
 - Six one-over-one windows (likely replacement)
 - Basement window
 - Left Elevation (hard to see due to proximity to abutting structure)
 - Three one-over-one windows
 - Right Elevation
 - Dormer with one one-over-one window
 - Chimney
 - Eight one-over-one windows
 - Rear door
- c) Materials
 - Foundation: Concrete
 - Windows: Likely aluminum
 - Entry Door: Aluminum outer door, wooden door
 - Siding: Asbestos shingles
 - Trim: Wood
 - Steps: Stone
 - Roof: Asphalt
- d) Alterations: The structure appears to a rear addition that does not appear on the historic maps.
- e) Evaluation of Integrity of 5 Wilton Street: Based on the operations and a study of the historic maps, it is Staff's position that the building retains most of the integrity of its original form. Alterations have occurred to this structure which obscure some original details; however, the original massing and key architectural details such as the front gabled roof.



Google Imaging

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 5 Wilton Street meets any of the criteria state above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 5 Wilton Street does or 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 contact of a group of buildings or structures, and therefore 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 5 Wilton Street meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 5 Wilton 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 5 Wilton Street is or is not “historically significant”.