



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

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

Site: 9 Brastow Avenue

Case: HP26-000032

Applicant: Artisans Homes and Renovations

Owner: Luo Jerome & Meosky Nell

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by adding a shed to the backyard of the property visible from the public street.*

HPC Meeting Date: July 21, 2026



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.1873 Sewall, Charles E. House known as the Mongan, Charles A. - Hurwitz, William O. House. This property is located in the Spring Hill neighborhood.

A full description of the property is provided in the attached Form B survey, conducted by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Proposal: The applicant proposes to rebuild the existing exterior deck without modifying the existing deck location, footprint, layout or size. The proposed materials are composite decks, and vinyl railings posts and decks. These proposed materials will not be in-kind materials, though the applicant has explained that the appearance of the rear deck will be maintained as close as to the existing one.

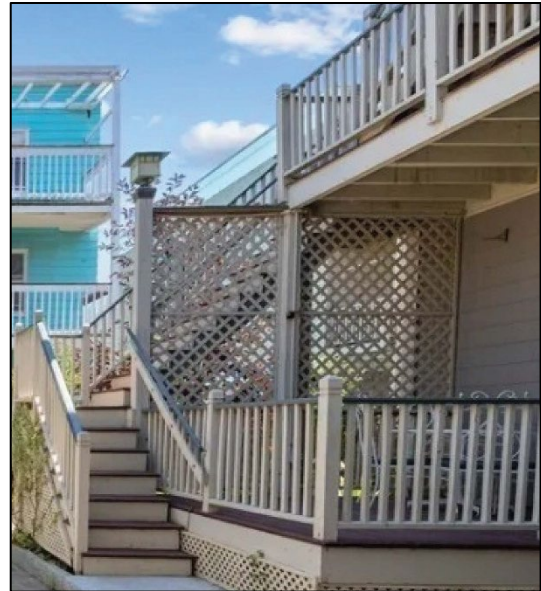


Figure 1: 9 Brastow Street existing rear deck

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. Rebuilt and replacement of existing deck

The applicable Somerville LHD Design Guideline is ***D. Porches, steps, trim and other exterior architectural elements***

Preservation Planning Assessment:

The relevant portions of the Design Guidelines which address the replacement and rebuilding of this rear deck is Section II, D. “Porches, steps, trim and other exterior architectural elements”, where item 1 read as follows:

1. *Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later important features, including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ornamental ironwork and other important decorative items. If new pieces are needed, they should match as closely as possible the style, shape, scale and materials of the old. Avoid replacing wood posts and railings with metal ones or wood porch decks with concrete.*

As mentioned in the project summary, the Applicant is proposing to maintain the size and layout of the existing rear deck, only alteration/renovation . As shared through the narrative and pictures in the application package, the existing deck shows white/light beige, faded red and light blue/turquoise wooden boards and railings in aging conditions. The style of the deck speaks to the second empire architectural context of the house. The proposed materials are wood-like composite board decking in a neutral brown tone, and white vinyl railings. The objective of the proposal is to maintain as similar as possible the exterior appearance of the rear deck, which is visible from the public way at Crow Street.

If the HPC votes to approve the replacement, recommended conditions appear below

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 the new shed 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/department signoffs.
2. 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.
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.