



City of Somerville
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

HPC RECOMMENDATION

17 Monmouth St- ZP26-000043

June 2nd, 2026

The Historic Preservation Commission met virtually on June 2nd, 2026, to discuss recommendations for a lot split for 17 Monmouth Street. The applicant proposed a lot split of a property on the National Register of Historic Places, which requires a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals and a recommendation from the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) under 10.1.1.d.i.a of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) prior to the Special Permit.

At the June 2nd, 2026, HPC meeting, representatives of the Applicant, Architect Will Chalfont and Attorney Anne Vigorito, gave an overview of the project.

The Commission noted this was an advisory review to make recommendations for the proposal with no public comment.

Commission members began the conversation by discussing the proposed removal of the bay window that would result from the lot split in its current layout. The Commission noted this was one of the most significant features that was still in good condition and inquired whether the lot line could be moved to keep the bay window.

Chalfont noted they planned to remove the window so that the lot split would not create a zoning compliance non-conformity. Their proposed triple decker on the new lot would be required to have minimum width and setbacks which dictated their decision to remove this feature. He noted he wanted to keep the bay, but did not want to go through the zoning relief process.

Staff noted that a Special Permit is already required from the ZBA for the lot split and that keeping the bay would require a Hardship Variance for side setbacks.

The Commission noted that they believe keeping the bay should be a priority.

The Commission stated that the Secretary of the Interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties would require that the bay window be kept, as well as the integrity of the original design. They noted the fabric of Monmouth Street on this portion of the street is comprised of larger buildings on larger lots.

The HPC's recommendation for the proposed lot split is summarized below:

- Not opposed to the lot split but would prefer to see the bay window be kept as it is a significant historic architectural element of the house.
- The Commission has strong support for whatever allowances or variances can be made to keep the bay window because it is one of the notable historic features of the property and a key feature that made the house notable enough to be included on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The Commission recommends that the window be saved in accordance with standards laid out in the **Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties** such as:

Standards for Rehabilitation:

- “Distinctive materials, features, finished, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.” - *Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard 5*
- “The Historic character of a property be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.” - *Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard 2*
- **Regarding the side setback- the Commission recommends the applicant seek a Hardship Variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals for relief of this to keep the bay window.**



Above: Bay Window proposed to be removed



Above: Bay Window and area of proposed new lot