



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

STEP 1: DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
STAFF REPORT

Site: 9 Norwood Avenue

Case: HP26-000030

Applicant: Emery Boy Builders

Owner: Kevin Emery

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

HPC Meeting Date: July 21, 2026

Top: Front elevation

Bottom, left: Left elevation

Bottom, middle: Rear elevation

Bottom, right: Right elevation



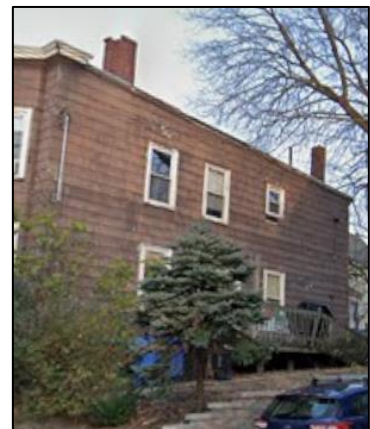
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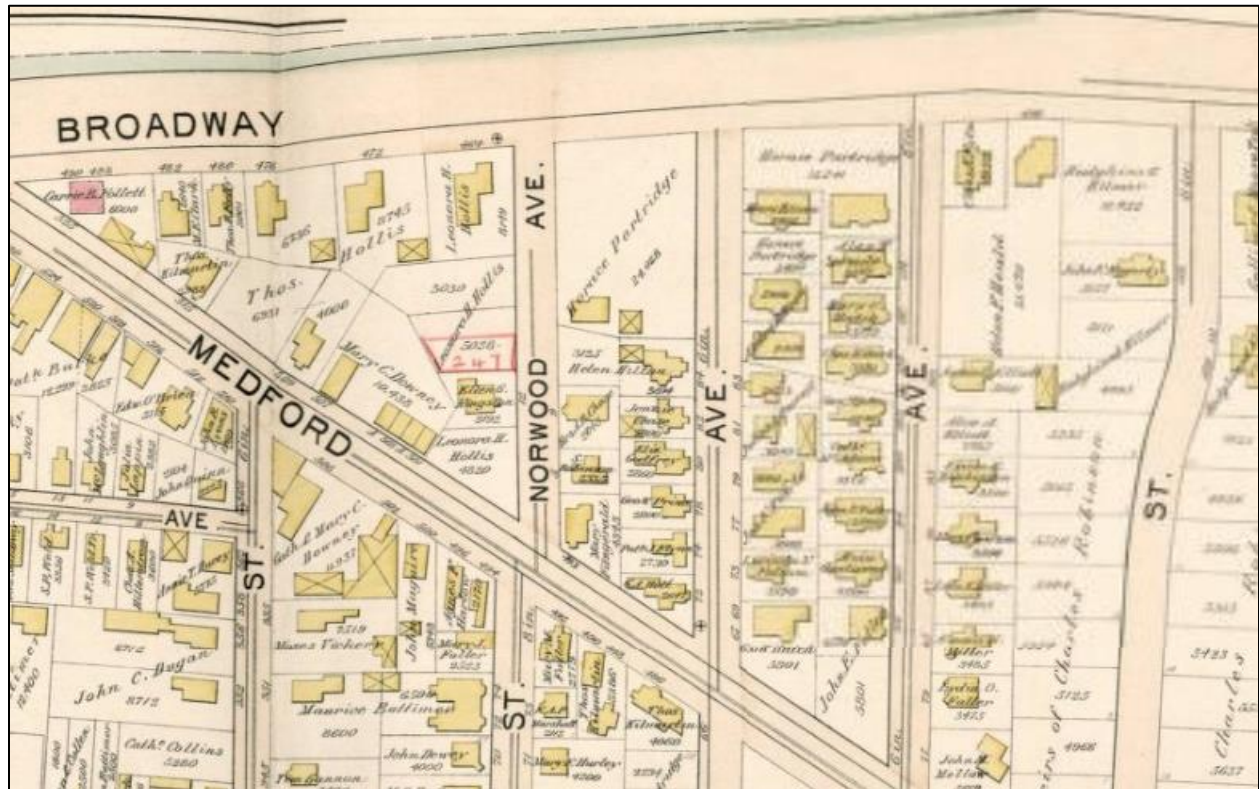


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The purpose of a staff report is to provide the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with additional information and professional assessments regarding properties that are proposed for demolition. These assessments are based on the criteria allowed 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

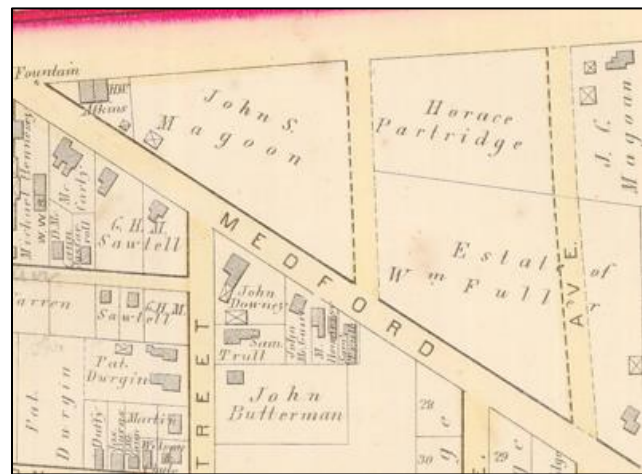
Historical Context: 9-11 Norwood Avenue is a two-unit double decker building. The street is largely made up of gable fronted detached homes.



1895 Bromley Map

Norwood Avenue 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.

On the 1874 Hopkins Map, Norwood Avenue has not yet been laid out, but the parcel is owned by William Fuller. The area is largely undeveloped at this point, with large tracts of land being owned by single property owners. Norwood Avenue first appears on the 1895 Bromley map, with 9 Norwood Avenue being owned by the heirs of A. B. Chase.



1874 Hopkins Map

By the late 1800s and early 1900s, Norwood Avenue and the surrounding area is developed, following the earlier subdivision area present on adjacent streets. The structure present on the 1895 Bromley map (above) matches the structure present on the lot today.

9 Norwood Avenue

Name	Year(s) of Residency	Occupation	Relationship to Head	Residency Type
Margaret Pickell	1901-1902	Variety Store	Head	Renter
Mary Mahoney	1901	-	Mother In Law	
Ann Doyle	1901		Aunt	
Mary Barnett			Milliner	Boarder
Catherine Ford			Saleswoman (Variety Store)	Boarder
John A. Dewey	1904	Compositor	-	Not listed
George A. Progin	1906-1911	Carpenter		Renter
Flora A. Progin	1906-1911		Wife	
Florence Progin	1906-1911		Daughter	

11 Norwood Avenue

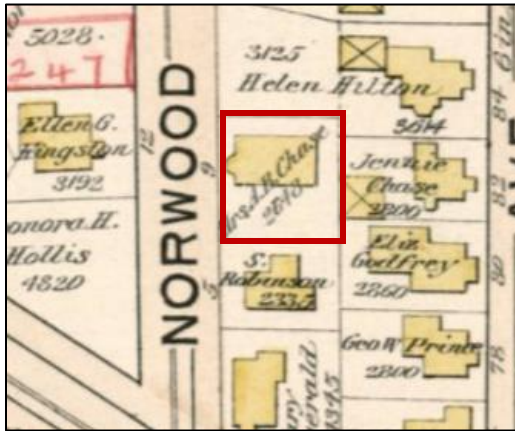
Name	Year(s) of Residency	Occupation	Relationship	Residency Type
Charles Roberts	1899-1902	Kerosene Oil Dealer/ Harness Maker	Head	Renter
Ethel Roberts	1899		Wife	
Winifred R. Roberts	1899	-	Daughter	
David Smith		Baker	Boarder	Boarder
Lewis Lombard	1909-1910	Proprietor	Head	Renter
Betsey Lombard			Wife	
Sarah Higgins			Sister	
Mary Barton	1905			

While information was found regarding the tenant log and the variety of tenants housed at 9-11 Norwood Avenue, additional information regarding the historic significance of individual tenants was not found. The mix of renters, families, and boarders suggests that this home was typical workers housing for the era and neighborhood.

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.

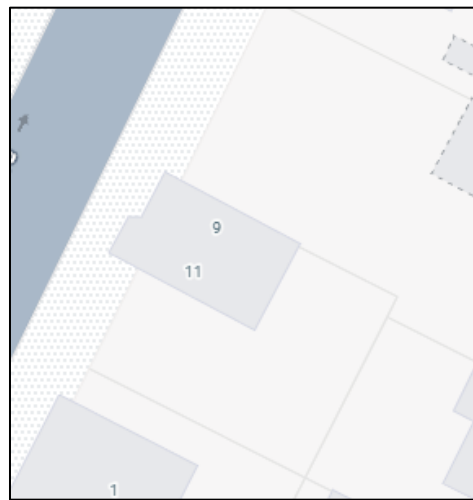
The National Park Service identifies historic integrity as the ability of a property to convey significance. A property should possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant; therefore, the following is an identification and evaluation of these qualities and alterations as they affect the ability of the subject property to convey significance.



1895 Bromley Map



1900 Sanborn Map



Present Day Google Map

1. 9 Norwood Avenue

The period of relevance for the house starts c.1884-1890

- a. Location: This structure is in its original location. The building was constructed on-site sometime between 1884 and 1895.
- b. Design: The house is a two-story double decker building.
 - Front Elevation
 - Entrance stoop with two entry doors with shed roof.
 - One one-over-one window above entry stoop.
 - Double stacked bay windows with three one-over-one windows on each.
 - Left Elevation
 - Two one-over-one windows on the first story.
 - Three one-over-one windows on the second story.

- One window on the second story is slightly smaller.
- Right Elevation
 - Two one-over-one windows on the first story.
 - Side porch with fence.
 - Three one-over-one windows on the second story.
 - One window on the second story is slightly smaller.
- Rear Elevation
 - Three one-over-one windows on the first story.
 - Three one-over-one windows on the second story.
- c. Materials:
 - Foundation: Concrete
 - Windows: Likely aluminum
 - Entry door: Modern wood door.
 - Siding: Asbest shingle
 - Trim: Wood & likely aluminum
 - Steps: Wood
 - Roof: Flat roof, two chimneys
- d. Alterations: Modern replacement of doors and windows on all elevations.
- e. Evaluation of Integrity of 9 Norwood Avenue: Based on the observations of the building 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 bay window formation remain in tact.

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 9 Norwood Avenue meets any of the criteria stated above.

2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 9 Norwood Avenue 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 9 Norwood Avenue meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 9 Norwood Avenue 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 9 Norwood Avenue is or is not “historically significant”.