



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

THOMAS F GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ALTERATION OF A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTY
STAFF REPORT

Site: 23 Chester Street

Applicant Name: Rebel Builders LLC - Juan Barrios

Owner Name: Brown, Jason & Tamara A Trustees

Petition: *The applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by replacing three windows*

HPC Hearing Date: October 20, 2026



23 Chester Street

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. 1867 Colonial Revival/Second Empire building known as the John Perry – Lemuel Mage House. The property is in a residential neighborhood in the Davis Square Neighborhood. A full description of the property is provided in the attached Form B survey held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Proposal: The Applicant proposes to replace two (2) windows on the first floor and one (1) window on the second floor. The existing windows are wood framed.

II. ANALYSIS

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.

Due to the material of the windows changing on a Local Historic District (LHD) property, the HPC has purview over this work.

The applicable design guidelines can be found below:

C. Windows and Doors

- 1. Retain original and later important door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.*
- 2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later important window elements such as sash, lintels, sill, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorative elements and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on a physical or documentary evidence. If aluminum windows must be installed, select a baked finish that matches as closely as possible the color of the existing trim. Investigate weather-stripping and storm windows with a baked enamel finish as an alternative to the replacement of historic sash.*

Materials: The applicant proposes using a wood and aluminum window. The window on the second floor is proposed to be made larger.

III. VOTE

HPC Determination:

The HPC must determine if, based on a review of the documentation presented, the proposed projects comply with the Design Guidelines.

When bringing the matter to a vote, the HPC must state their findings and reasons why they take their position.

IV. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Planning staff recommend the following conditions be attached to any Certificate of Appropriateness that the HPC might grant for this project. The HPC may also add further conditions as-needed during their deliberations.

1. The applicant/owner shall file the Certificate with the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) by uploading it to the Citizenserve permitting portal with their application for a building permit.
2. This Certificate is valid for one year. If work has not commenced within one year of the HPC's date of determination, this Certificate shall expire and the Applicant shall re-apply for the reissuance of this Certificate. Provided that no changes have been made to the proposal, this shall be a Staff-level reissuance 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 Planning Division for their review to determine if the changes come under the purview of the HPC.

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SMV.205
Historic Name:	Perry, John - Page, Lemuel House
Common Name:	
Address:	23 Chester St
City/Town:	Somerville
Village/Neighborhood:	Davis Square;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	1867
Architectural Style(s):	Colonial Revival; Second Empire;
Use(s):	Single Family Dwelling House;
Significance:	Architecture;
Area(s):	SMV.AV
Designation(s):	Local Historic District (10/31/1989);
Building Materials:	Roof: Asphalt Shingle; Wall: Wood; Wood Clapboard;
Demolished	No



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

LHD 10/31/89 (10)
PI - DMS SQ
USGS BOSTON
SECTA

AREA

Davis
Square

FORM NO.

205

SOMERVILLE

23 Chester Street

ic Name John Perry - 1868

Lemuel Page - 1872

Present residential

Original residential

PTION

1867 - 1868

deeds / maps

Second Empire / Colonial Reviv

ect

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings

Major Alterations (with dates)

Condition good

Moved **Date**

Acreage 8083 sq. ft.

Setting Southwest corner of Chester
& Orchard, well maintained, tree-
lined street of substantial single
family dwellings

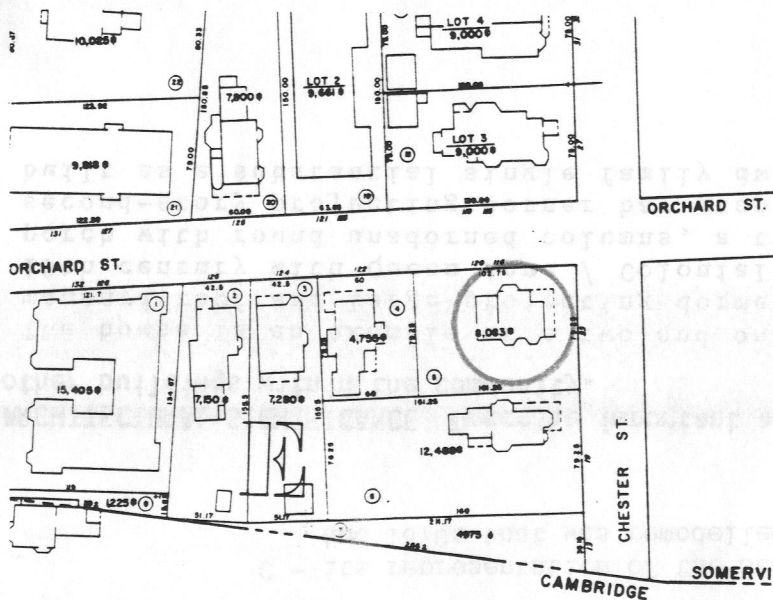
Recorded by Carol Zellie - 1980
Gretchen G. Schuler - 1981

Organization Somerville Historic
Preservation Commission

Date March, 1988



Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north



UTM REFERENCE

USGS QUADRANGLE

SCALE

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The property is part of a district that is significant for:

- A - its association with the subdivision of land in the area, which was developed into a suburban residential area of Somerville.
- C - its representation of the Second Empire style popular in the 1860s and 1870s that was remodelled in the late 1890s or early 1900s.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The house is an example of a two and one-half story dwelling with a small mansard roof and large projecting dormers. Updating occurred in the late 19th century with Queen Anne / Colonial Revival details including a wrap porch with round unadorned columns, a two-story projecting side bay and a second-story projecting corner bay atop the wrap porch. The house was built as a substantial single family dwelling on a large corner lot.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

Built on land what had been part of the Chester Kingsley Estate (after whom Chester Street was named), the house is representative of a late 19th century dwelling that underwent some architectural updating at the end of the 1800s. It also demonstrates the substantial single family dwellings that were built in the area for local and commuting business men and their families. Thus, the house is representative of the suburbanization of Somerville.

The land, on which this house was built, was part of a larger parcel sold by Chester Kingsley to Bradley C. Whitcher and Alonzo R. Smith in 1865. In 1867 Whitcher and Smith split their parcel and Whitcher retained this portion which he sold (with buildings according to the deed) immediately. The property changed hands two other times until it was purchased by Lemuel Page. Page, who is listed as a commission merchant working in Boston, owned and lived in this house until near the turn of the century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1. Atlas of Middlesex County, Somerville; 1874 ("L. Page"), 1884 ("L. Page").
2. Directories of Somerville: 1870s, 1880s.
3. Registry of Deeds, Middlesex County, Book 954, Page 206; Book 1009, Page 506; Book 1032, Page 404; Book 1256, Page 361.

