



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

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE STAFF REPORT

Site:	21 Eastman Road
Case:	HPC 2018.002
Applicant Name:	F. Michael Byrnes
Agent:	Adam Dash, Esq.
Date of Application:	January 12, 2018
Recommendation:	NOT Significant
Hearing Date:	February 20, 2018

I. Historical Association

Historical Context: According to the 1874 Hopkins Atlas through the 1895 Bromley Atlas, show that Eastman Road went all the way through to the rear lot lines of the houses on Cedar Avenue. The Eastman family owned most of the properties along the street. Mary Eastman's personal house and yard were located at the end of Eastman Road on the east side. The remaining houses are predominantly mansard cottages *circa* 1884.



In 1917, a building permit was issued to J. Crawford to alter a single-family home into a two-family dwelling. The land has a sharp slope which probably required the 1921 2 car garage to be constructed at the end of the street, blocking further access to the land platted to the west side of Eastman Road. In 1922 another house with pitched roof and concrete block foundation were constructed on the property on the east side. The original house is now numbered 26 Eastman Road and the newer 1922 house at 28 Eastman Road.

By 1925, the garage had been converted to a bungalow with the form of the front portion of the building matching the description of a hip roof garage structure and its proportions. Residents are found in the building now numbered 21 Eastman Road. Tenants included F. Gardner Leland, manager and his wife Gladys; Charles D. McKinney, receiving teller for the Boston Elevated Railway and his wife Sarah; and Duncan Campbell, a brake mechanic at a service station and his wife Edna. Charles D. McKinney acquired notoriety for embezzling \$75,000 from the Boston

Elevated Railway 20 years after he moved from Eastman Road. Owners were members of the Eastman family until it was sold to Patrick J. and Mary L. O'Leary in 1932. See spreadsheet for details.

Architectural Description: 21 Eastman Road is a small brick cottage reminiscent of a bungalow with a hipped roof. There are a large bay window and front door on the main facade. A rear addition has a slightly higher pitched roof. The Assessors Database states that it has a full unfinished basement. There are no windows or bulkhead to access the basement level if there is one. The windows are all double hung. A side door opens onto a terraced area from what is probably the kitchen.

Summary: 21 Eastman Road is a small bungalow at the end of a street of mostly 19th century wood-framed architecture. The house was occupied by residents of modest means. The street was originally platted to be longer with 4 equal sized lots on either side of the end. The topography of Spring Hill in this area is fairly steep.

Findings on Historical Association

*For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (a) **importantly associated with people, events or history** or (b) historically or architecturally significant (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B). Findings for (b) are at the end of the next section.*

(a) In accordance with the historic information obtained from *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlasses, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, such as *Somerville Past and Present*, Staff find 21 Eastman Road NOT to be 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.

The subject building is NOT found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City. The building does not represent any particular architectural style. There are no important associations with the cultural, political, economic or social history of the city.

II. Historical and 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 (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B).

The period of significance for 21 Eastman Road begins with its construction as a garage in 1921.

Integrity

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.

- a. Location: The building has not been moved.
- b. Design: The design is simple with little extraneous detail.
- c. Materials: The building appears to be brick construction with metal double-hung windows.
- d. Alterations: The original building was a small 2-car garage. The garage doors were replaced by a bay window and door with brick infill. A larger but still small single story addition has been added to the rear. Metal awnings have added to the front façade.

Evaluation of Integrity: While the building has not been moved, the building does not retain the form and massing of a garage due to the low addition and the altered front facade. The low pitch of the roof of the addition is reminiscent of a bungalow but does not have the deep eaves, projecting beams or porches commonly associated with that style.

The building is not typical of the street or any other neighborhood of the city. Its location in the middle of what had been platted as a street sets an end to it and does not contribute to the continuity of the streetscape.

Findings for Historical and Architectural Significance

*For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (a) importantly associated with people, events or history or (b) **historically or architecturally significant** (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 2.17.B). Findings for (a) can be found at the end of the previous section.*

(b) In accordance with the *Finding on Historical and Architectural Significance*, which addresses period, style, method of building construction, and association with a reputed architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, as well as integrity, which assess the ability of the property to convey significance, Staff do not find 21 Eastman Road historically or architecturally significant.

The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to lack of architectural distinction. While clearly a 20th century construction, it does not convey any particular significance. Architecturally it is out of place on the mostly 19th century wood-framed architecture of Eastman Road.

III. Recommendation

Recommendations are based upon an analysis by Historic Preservation Staff of the permit application and the required findings for the Demolition Review Ordinance, which requires archival and historical research, and an assessment of historical and architectural significance, conducted prior to the public meeting for a Determination of Significance. This report may be revised or updated with a new recommendation and/or findings based upon additional information provided to Staff or through further research.

For a Determination of Significance, the structure must be either (A) listed on the National Register or (B) at least 50 years old.

(A) The structure is NOT listed on or within an area listed on the National Register of Historic Places, nor is the structure the subject of a pending application for listing on the National Register.

OR

(B) The structure, circa 1921, is at least 50 years old.

AND

For a Determination of Significance under (B), the subject building must be found either (a) importantly associated with people, events or history or (b) historically or architecturally significant.

(a) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical Association*, which utilizes historic maps/atlasses, City reports and directories, and building permit research, and through an examination of resources that document the history of the City, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission do NOT find 21 Eastman Road 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.**

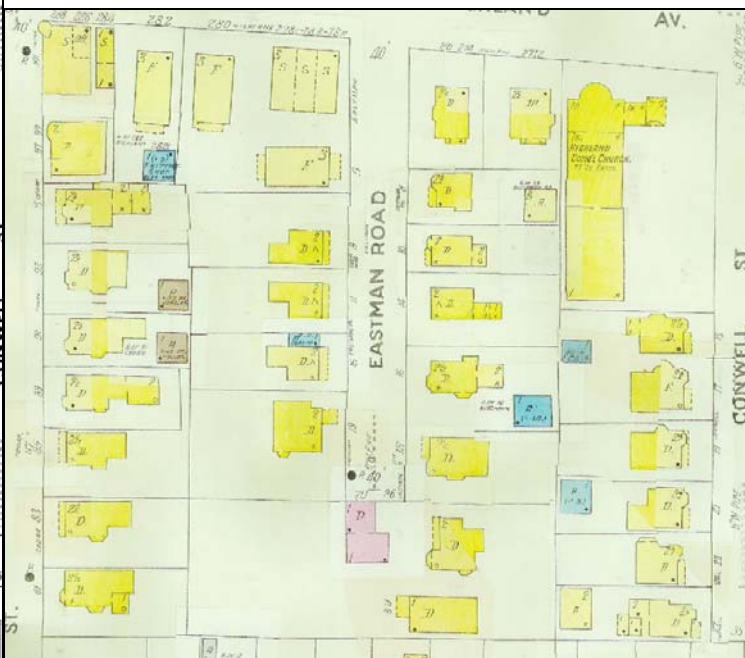
OR

(b) In accordance with the *Findings on Historical and Architectural Significance*, which addresses period, style, method of building construction, and association with a reputed architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, as well as integrity, the ability to convey significance, **Staff recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission do NOT find 21 Eastman Road historically and architecturally significant.**





1895 Bromley Plate 16



1925 Sanborn Plate 29

