



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

Joseph A. Curtatone

Mayor

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

KRISTENNA CHASE, *PRESERVATION PLANNER*
SARAH WHITE, *PLANNER & PRESERVATION PLANNER*

Case #: HPC 2017 .046

Date: August 15, 2017

Recommendation: Preferably Preserved

PRESERVATION STAFF REPORT
for
Determination of Preferably Preserved

Site: 28 Mount Pleasant Street

Applicant Name: Chaille Trust

Applicant Address: 15 Pine Tree Drive, Saugus, MA 01906

Owner Name: Chaille Trust

Owner Address: 15 Pine Tree Drive, Saugus, MA 01906

Petition: Applicant seeks to move the existing structure on the lot in order to accommodate a side and rear addition.

HPC Hearing Date: August 1, 2017



I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. **Subject Property:** The subject property is a c.1852 gable end residential structure that is currently used as a two-family building.
2. **Proposal:** The Applicant seeks to move the existing structure to the front of the lot in order to accommodate a side and rear addition.

I. MEETING SUMMARY: Determination of Significance

On June 27, 2017, the Historic Preservation Commission, in accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (2003-05), made a determination that 28 Mount Pleasant Street is Significant. Per Section 2.17.B, this decision is found on the following criteria:

*Section 2.17.B - The structure is at least 50 years old;*¹

and

- (i) *The structure is 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;*

and

- (ii) *The structure is historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures.*

According to *Criteria 2.17.B*, listed above, historic map, US Census, and City Directory research identifies the structure as c. 1850. A dwelling at 28 Mount Pleasant Street is indicated toward the front of the lot. Two other buildings were also located at 26 and 30 Mount Pleasant Street on the same lot and were demolished *circa* 1927 and 1930 with the passing of Lydia Poor, descendent of Samuel Poor.

In accordance with *Criteria (i)*, listed above, the Commission agreed with Staff findings, that 28 Mount Pleasant Street 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 found importantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to associations with the Poor family, railroad workers and especially the early development of Somerville beyond the neck to Charlestown.

In accordance with *Criteria (ii)*, listed above, the Commission agreed with Staff findings, that 28 Mount Pleasant Street historically or architecturally significant.

The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to its relationship to the streetscape and its place within a group of similarly important buildings and an intact representative of 19th century working- class housing stock. The subject building is found historically and architecturally significant due to its period, style, method of building construction, and 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 find 28 Mount Pleasant Street historically or architecturally significant. It is integral to the pre-1874 neighborhood and despite alterations is identifiable as Greek Revival home through its massing, and fenestration. The method used for the installation of the current aluminum siding suggests intact architectural details beneath

II. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Joseph G. Clinkard, resident of 26 Mount Pleasant Street from 1884 until his death in 1894 was an active union organizer with the Central Labor Union from 1888. With over 30 articles mentioning his involvement in union activities in the Boston Globe, he was involved in several different groups and represented them nation-wide. He associated with such seminal labor figures as Eugene V. Debs and Samuel Gompers. He died at the age 41 from pneumonia. His wife continued to live at 26 Mount Pleasant until 1918.
- Frank S Hartshorn (1846-1907), resident of 28 Mount Pleasant Street 1880-1881, was a well-known actor with the Boston Museum and later an hotelier in Atlanta, Georgia. He was a member of the first graduating class of Somerville High School. Past Master of the John Abbot Lodge 1873-1875. He is buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery.

- Other residents did not make as much impact on the City but are characteristic of the working class residents that were the underpinning of Somerville industries and transportation.

Site Visit:

Mount Pleasant Street has a wide range of 19th century housing stock. Many of the buildings are hidden behind modern siding but still retain their integrity of form and location.



Mount Pleasant Street, looking south toward Perkins Street

Comparable Structures:

Two story gable-end dwellings with three bays are common throughout the City and compose a majority of the residential housing stock within the City. This building type is generally constructed as a single or two-family dwelling and can reflect several different period styles. Comparable structures in the neighborhood on Mount Vernon Street of similar date and elsewhere.

- 8 Mount Vernon Street, c. 1852 (LHD)
- 16 Mount Vernon Street, c. 1852 (LHD)
- 22 Summer Street, c. 1870 (LHD)
- 39 Oxford Street, c. 1870
- 54 Atherton Street, c. 1880 (NR)
- 174 Hudson Street, c. 1887

Predominant differences between the comparable dwellings and the subject dwelling are those of style and fashion. The Greek Revival buildings are characterized by the full pediments, tall ground floor windows and wide trim boards. The Italianate buildings have wider eaves, broken pediments, shorter windows and narrower trim boards. The roof pitch is a little steeper. Queen Anne style buildings have further elaboration of volumes and the tympanum.



28 Mount Pleasant Street, c. 1852



*Top: 8 Mount Vernon Street (LHD); 16 Mount Vernon Street (LHD); 22 Summer Street (LHD)
Bottom: 39 Oxford Street, 54 Atherton Street (NR); 174 Hudson Street*

III. PREFERABLY PRESERVED

If the Commission determines that the demolition of the significant building or structure would be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City, such building or structure shall be considered a preferably preserved building or structure. (Ordinance 2003-05, Section 4.2.d)

A determination regarding if the demolition of the subject building is detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City should consider the following:

How does this building or structure compose or reflect features which contribute to the heritage of the City?

- a) What is the remaining integrity of the structure? The National Park Service defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey significance.*

- The building retains its integrity of form and location. It is not known whether the building retains integrity of design which can only be determined by the removal of the siding.
- The building is similar in form and fenestration pattern to contemporary houses on Mount Vernon Street as well as later 19th century homes. See the comparable buildings for possible historic architectural features of this structure may be found beneath the siding.

What is the level (local, state, national) of significance?

- This property is significantly associated with the broad architectural, cultural, economic and social history of the City due to its age, associations with a prominent labor organizer, Joseph G. Clinkard; the locally prominent Poor family; and associations with the railroad workers.

b) What is the visibility of the structure with regard to public interest (Section 2.17.B.ii) if demolition were to occur?

- The structure is visible about halfway down Mount Pleasant Street which runs one-way from Broadway to Pearl Street, both of which are major local thoroughfares.

c) What is the scarcity or frequency of this type of resource in the City?

- The City of Somerville has many gable-end toward the street houses retaining varying degrees of architectural integrity.

Upon a consideration of the above criteria is the demolition of the subject building detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City?

The Applicant's proposal relocates the building on the lot with two large additions and major alterations to the fenestration. Staff recommends that the Commission consider the following questions when making their determination as to whether the property should be "preferably preserved" as it is:

- Is the architecture or the history of the property important to the City?
- How important is position on the lot which originally had 3 structures?
- Is a large U-shaped structure with asymmetrical fenestration a typical form and massing of a mid-19th century building (the proposed structure would ultimately present as two closely spaced buildings with a large flat roofed 3-story addition linking the two)?
- How would this massing affect the streetscape?

III. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided and an assessment of the building, Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission finds the property at 28 Mount Pleasant Street to be PREFERABLY PRESERVED.

ALSO IN HAVERBILL.

Boston Daily Globe (1872-1922); Feb 7, 1894; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Boston Globe
pg. 10

Willis L. Mix of New Haven will preside and speeches will be made by Prof. E. L. Fitch and Henry Canister of Boston, and by Rev. Frederick Stanton Mott, Dr. A. C. Cook, John A. Porter and others of this city.

DEATH OF JOSEPH G. CLINKARD.

Pneumonia Causes the Death of the Walking Delegate of the Carpenters' Unions of Boston.

Joseph G. Clinkard, the walking delegate of the carpenters' unions of this city, died yesterday at 11 o'clock of pneumonia at his residence in Somerville.

He had been ill with this disease for about three weeks and had so far recovered that he was able to attend the meeting of the Building trades council a week ago last Sunday. He suffered a relapse after this, and was obliged to take to his bed last Thursday. He leaves a wife and two children.

The funeral will take place from the house, 26 Mt. Pleasant st., Somerville, Friday, at 10 o'clock, and a large attendance of men prominent in the labor reform movement are expected to be present.

The executive committee of the Building Trades council will hold a meeting this evening at 600 Washington st. to make suitable arrangements for the funeral.



JOSEPH G. CLINKARD.

The deceased has been a prominent leader in the carpenters' organization for many years, and has been so active an officer that his death will be felt as a great loss by that body.

Joseph G. Clinkard was born in Chelsea in 1823. He left school at the age of 13, and went to work for his father in a periodical and stationary store. At the age of 13 he began his apprenticeship as a carpenter in Charlestown.

In 1873 he joined a local union of carpenters and was a member during the time it lasted, which was but a year and six months. He joined Boston union, no. 24, of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in December, 1882, and was elected treasurer at the next July meeting. He was elected president in 1888 and served one term.

He has been a member of it ever since, excepting three months, when he joined Somerville union, 24, for the purpose of building it up. He was chairman of the picket committee in the big eight-hour strike of 1886.

In the latter part of May the union created the office of walking delegate, and he served two years and two months in that position continuously.

He was out of that position six months when he was again elected, and held that office up to his death.

In the fall of 1886 he was elected a delegate to represent union 24, in the biennial convention of the brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. He was appointed district organizer for Massachusetts in 1886, and in that capacity organized many new unions of his craft.

In 1886 he was elected a delegate to the Central labor union and has been re-elected ever since. In that body he was trustee for two terms and was chairman of the eight-hour committee during the agitation preceding the eight-hour strike of 1886.

He served two terms as vice president and filled out part of one term as president. He served five terms in that position. He also has served four terms as delegate to the Amalgamated Building Trades council and delegate to the Carpenters' district council. He was marshal of the Central labor union division and also marshal of the carpenters' division at the last labor parade.

He was a man who had many firm friends, positive in his statements, but one who always desired to be fair. He was a model chairman and a hard worker in the labor movement, whether as an officer or a plain member.

Working Women's Co-Operative Union.

Joseph G. Clinkard, district organizer, organized a union of working women, under the name of the Working Women's Co-operative Union, at the headquarters of the carpenters' union, corner of Harrison avenue and Broadway, last evening. Twenty-four were initiated, after which officers were elected.

March 7, 1888 Boston Globe