



**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 .069  
**Date:** December 19, 2017

**Recommendation:** Preferably Preserved

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**PRESERVATION STAFF REPORT**  
*for*  
**Determination of Preferably Preserved**

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**Site:** 30 Warwick Street

**Applicant Name:** Sean T. O'Donovan & Peri F. Nawawi

**Applicant Address:** 30 Warwick Street, Somerville, MA

**Owner Name:** Same

**Owner Address:** Same

**Petition:** Applicant seeks to demolish the house in order to construct a new larger building.

**HPC Hearing Date:** December 19, 2017



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**I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

1. **Subject Property:** The subject property is a c.1865 workers cottage that is currently used as a single family residence.
2. **Proposal:** The Applicant seeks to demolish the existing structure in order to construct a larger home that meets modern standards.

**I. MEETING SUMMARY: Determination of Significance**

On Tuesday, October 17, 2017, the Historic Preservation Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to determine the c. 1870 wood-frame dwelling at 30 Warwick Street 'Significant' per Section 2.17.B<sup>1</sup> of the Demolition Review Ordinance 2003-05.

The Commission found **30 Warwick Street** to be importantly associated with the working class development of the City and the Tufts Brick Manufacturing Company, whose location and employment opportunity spurred the development of this small neighborhood of working class housing. The house is architecturally significant as workers housing due to its size, form and massing.

The Commission also found **30 Warwick Street** as historically and architecturally significant workers housing due to its location, size, form, and massing. The context of the building is somewhat altered, since several of the neighboring properties have been or are being redeveloped. However, there still remains a significant portion of the neighborhood that retains the size, massing and form of workers housing.

## II. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The houses at 12, 20 and 26 Warwick Street have been demolished and redeveloped along with the industrial building at 13 Warwick Street.

### *Comparable Structures:*

There are few structures that are appropriate to compare with the subject dwelling due to the combination of the potential age of the structure, the modest 1½ story massing, and siting with regard to the side-gable. There are multiple buildings still existent from the mid-nineteenth century, though their massing is often larger. There are also a number of single-family dwellings with a modest 1½ story massing located throughout the City; however, these cottages are often more ornate in design and do not have a side-gable nor face the side lot line. The adjacent gable-end dwelling, according to maps, may have originally been similar to the subject building. Comparable structures within the City include: 37 Fiske Avenue (c. 1866), 23 Fiske Avenue (c. 1870), 93 Properzi Way (c. 1870), 282a Lowell Street (c. 1875), 45 Trull Street (c. 1880), and 80 Hinckley Street (1890).



37 Fiske Avenue (c. 1866), Center: 23 Fiske Avenue (c. 1870), 93 Properzi Way (c. 1870)



282 Lowell Street (c.1875), 45 Trull Street (c. 1880), 80 Hinckley Street (1890)

### 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 exterior of the structure (the only portion of the building within the purview of the HPC), retains a degree of architectural integrity and reflects the evolution of this property through key eras of architectural change (vinyl cladding and 1950s bow window aside, which is easily removed). See the determination of Significance for the determination of integrity.

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

- The building is significant on the local level. See determination above.

*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 situated among a group of similar buildings on Warwick Street.

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

- The City of Somerville has several small groupings of workers housing scattered throughout the city near the industrial area found along the railway lines. The “patch” is undergoing a sea change in that development pressures have resulted in the loss of many of the circa 1860 workers cottages. The cottages found in other areas of the city were primarily constructed at a later date.

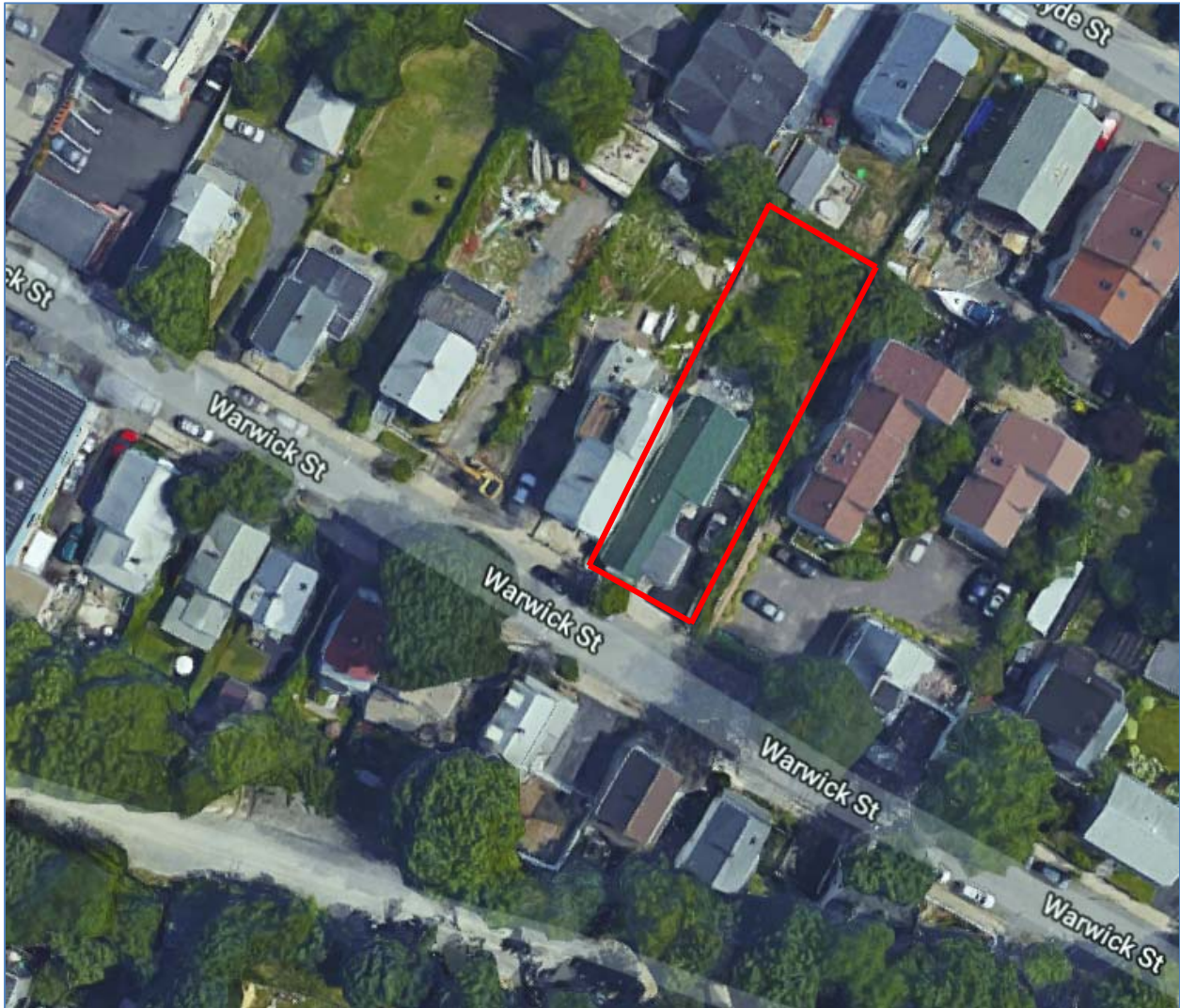
*Upon a consideration of the above criteria is the demolition of the subject building detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City?*

The Applicant’s proposal for a new house at this location meeting modern building codes and on a larger scale. The street is a mix of 1 ½ story to 2 ½ story gable roofed buildings with modern infill particularly on the north side.

### III. RECOMMENDATION

*Based on the information provided and an assessment of the building, Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission finds the property at 30 Warwick Street to be PREFERABLY PRESERVED.*





<sup>i</sup> “at least 50 years old, and is or has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure after a finding that the building or structure is either:

- i. “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, or
- ii. “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, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished.”