



**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 2017.0967  
**Date:** December 19, 2017

**Recommendation:** Conditional Approval

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**PRESERVATION STAFF REPORT**

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**Site:** 7 Campbell Park  
Campbell Park/Meacham Road Local Historic District

**Applicant Name:** Darlene Matthews  
**Applicant Address:** 11 Campbell Park  
**Owner Name:** Darlene & Brian Matthews  
**Owner Address:** same as above

**Petition:** Darlene Matthews, Owner, seeks permission from the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to install a driveway paved with cast brick pavers on the west side of the building and remove the fence.

**HPC Hearing Date:** January 16, 2018

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**I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

1. **Subject Property:** The subject house is located in a residential neighborhood near Davis Square. See Form B for details.

**Proposal:** The Applicant proposes install a driveway paved with cast brick pavers on the east side of the building and remove the chain link fence. See attached plans and specs for details.



*7 Campbell Park – 2007 photo*

Several of the houses on the north side of Campbell Park have added driveways. The neighborhood was constructed before the advent of the automobile.

## II. FINDINGS FOR LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PAVING

1. *The general intent of this section is to preserve the existing or later essential landscape features that enhance the property.*
2. *It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the structure and its newer surroundings.*
3. The existing landforms of the site should not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the structure or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the structure.
4. *The original layout and materials of the walks, steps and paved areas should be maintained* if significant grade changes constitute an important feature of the structure or site. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that improved site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will accomplish this without altering the integrity of the structure.

The Commission may also take the following into consideration.

### A. PAVING & CIRCULATION

Walkways, Ramps, & Site Stairs; Driveways & Parking; Patios or Other Outdoor Use Areas

*Walkways, ramps, and stairs are influenced by the historic patterns of use of the site. Driveways and parking areas, where original, speak to the transportation of the City and the property; where these features are later alterations to accommodate modern lifestyles; care should be taken to ensure that they do not distract from the site's historic nature. Paved patio areas and other formal spaces form outdoor rooms and contribute to a site's overall character.*

1. Whenever possible, retain historic paving features and related elements, including materials and elements such as curbs and steps.
2. *New paving features and related elements should be constructed of historically appropriate materials. Modern paving may be considered if its location, materials, and use in the landscape design are compatible with the historic character of the property.*
3. Bituminous concrete ("asphalt" or "hot top") should not be used for walkways, ramps, or patios. *It may be considered for driveways and parking areas, but alternate materials are encouraged.*
4. *Driveways should not be prominent in the landscape design unless historically appropriate to the property.*
5. Screen parking areas from public view with low masonry walls, wood fences, or landscaping.
6. *The color of durable materials should be compatible with the historic character of the property.*

Paving Materials		
Historically Appropriate	Modern Appropriate	Not Appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clay brick</li> <li>• Natural stone paving. including cobbles and stone slab pavers</li> <li>• Concrete</li> <li>• Gravel, peastone, stone dust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultured stone</li> <li>• Decorative precast concrete pavers (brick-like or simulated stone)</li> <li>• Bound aggregate pavements such as “Chip-and-Seal” or resin-bound aggregate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precast pavers with non-historic profiles, shapes colors or finishes</li> <li>• Bituminous concrete (“asphalt” or “hot top”) for surfaces other than driveways or parking areas</li> <li>• Crushed stone</li> </ul>

### FENCES, GATES, RAILINGS, PERGOLAS & OTHER STRUCTURES

*Fences and gates often define the boundary between a historic property and its surroundings, both streetscape and neighboring properties. Railings atop walls, handrails for site stairs, trellises, and similar structures are often also prominent features in the landscape. The following guidelines address these elements when they are located in the landscape. (Porch railings, etc. are covered in the Porches section.)*

1. Preserve historic fences, and gates whenever possible, including ironwork such as hitching posts, boot scrapers. etc.
2. New fences and gates should be compatible with the historic property in style, scale, placement, and materials.
3. Fences, gates and other landscaping elements (such as plantings) should not obscure the historic building.
4. Front yard fences should be open and decorative. Do not use front yard fences to screen front yards.
5. On public ways, the height of fences is restricted according to zoning code.
6. The finished side of any fence should face toward public view.
7. **Use historically appropriate materials for fences and gates.**
8. Fencing and plantings may be used to screen parking areas and mechanical systems.

**Staff Findings:** Staff finds that the planned driveway and fence removal meets the HPC Guidelines and other considerations of the Commission. Staff finds that chain link fencing, developed in the 1850s to contain farm animals is not appropriate for circa 1900 suburban residential property. Staff finds the proposed pavers in “Old Oak” to be a modern material that meets with the table of materials considered by the Commission to be appropriate. Staff finds that the proposal does not significantly detract from the historic character of the Campbell Park Meacham Road Local Historic District.

### III. RECOMMENDATION

*Based on the information provided and an assessment of the proposal against the Somerville LHD guidelines, Staff recommends A Certificate of Appropriateness for the new driveway with the following conditions:*

1. All appropriate building permits shall be obtained prior to the start of any work.
2. If changes are necessary to the proposed design for which this Certificate of Appropriateness was issued, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work.
3. A driveway may be constructed.

4. The chain link fence may be removed.
5. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans.





