



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

TOM GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ALTERATION OF A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LHD) PROPERTY
STAFF REPORT

Site: 37 Albion Street

Case: HPC.ALT 2022.25

Applicant: Newpro Home Improvement
Solutions

Owner: Genevieve Daly

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by replacing existing windows.*

HPC Meeting Date: July 19, 2022



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 a residential structure at 37 Albion Street. The main structure is a c.1860 Italianate style structure known as the F.G. Williams House. This property is located within the Magoun 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 the following:

- a. Replace 38 replacement windows with a different material
- b. Replace one original window

II. FINDINGS

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.

A. Replace 38 replacement windows

The applicable Somerville LHD Design Guidelines is *C. "Windows & Doors"*

Due to the change in design elements being proposed, the HPC has purview over these features and the materials used.

Applicant Proposal

The Applicant proposes replacing 38 non-original windows throughout the structure. The 38 windows to be replaced include all windows except the bow window, the two-over-two sash window on the left elevation towards the rear, and the attic windows. The subject 38 windows were replaced around the mid-20th century from the original two-over-two double-hung windows to six-over-six double-hung windows. The Applicant is proposing to replace those six-over-six double-hung windows with six-over-six double hung windows of the same design and function. They will be changing the material from wood to wood composite. The proposal is to use applied grids on the outside of the glass to best replicate extant conditions.

Preservation Planning Assessment:

The most relevant portion of this Design Guideline is as follows:

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 physical or documentary evidence. Investigate weather-stripping and storm windows with a baked enamel finish as an alternative to the replacement of historic sash.

The proposed windows are not consistent stylistically with windows for the date of construction and architectural style of the structure. Additionally, the Applicant is proposing to use wood composite instead of replacing wood for wood; which is also in not consistent with the above cited design guideline stating that materials should replicate original materials.

The 38 replacement windows should be replaced with a two-over-two configuration that is consistent with the original windows and style of the structure. In regard to the proposed material of wood composite; it would be best to replace the windows with wood; however, wood composite would replicate the style and appearance of the current windows.

Should the HPC vote in favor of the window replacements, Preservation Staff recommends the following conditions be included in addition to those listed in Section IV 'Recommended Conditions' below.

1. The proposed windows shall be two-over-two double-hung windows.
2. Replacement windows shall not present a warped or mirrored reflection.
3. Replacement windows shall not be tinted.

HPC Determination:

- The HPC must determine if, based on a review of the documentation presented, the proposed project complies with the Design Guidelines
- The HPC must structure their motion to include their own specific findings on the proposed project.

B. Replace one original window

The applicable Somerville LHD Design Guidelines is ***C. "Windows & Doors"***

Due to the change in design elements being proposed, the HPC has purview over these features and the materials used.

Applicant Proposal

The Applicant proposes replacing an original wood window. The current window is a two-over-two double-hung window towards the rear on the left elevation facing Centre Street. The proposal is to replace this window with a six-over-six double hung window. They will be changing the material from wood to wood composite. The proposal is to use applied grids on the outside of the glass to best replicate extant conditions.



Above: Current photo of the left elevation showing the remaining original two-over-two double hung window.

Preservation Planning Assessment:

The most relevant portion of this Design Guideline is as follows:

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 physical or documentary evidence. Investigate weather-stripping and storm windows with a baked enamel finish as an alternative to the replacement of historic sash.

The proposal to replace the original windows does not comply with the Design Guidelines on windows. The extant window to be replaced is original to the structure and should be preserved and restored rather than replaced.

Additionally, the proposed window is not consistent stylistically with windows for the date of construction and architectural style of the structure. The Applicant is proposing to use wood composite instead of replacing wood for wood; which is also in not consistent with the above cited design guideline stating that materials should replicate original materials.

The Applicant should pursue installing an exterior storm window and weatherstripping, re-glazing, and insulating the window instead of replacing the original window.

Should the HPC vote in favor of the window replacements, Preservation Staff recommends the following conditions be included in addition to those listed in Section IV 'Recommended Conditions' below.

1. The original two-over-two window on the left elevation shall be retained.

HPC Determination:

- The HPC must determine if, based on a review of the documentation presented, the proposed project complies with the Design Guidelines
- The HPC must structure their motion to include their own specific findings on the proposed project.

III. FINDINGS & VOTE

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

IV. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Preservation Planning recommends the following conditions be attached to any Certificate of Appropriateness that the HPC might grant for this project:

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 zoning compliance/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 re-issuance of this Certificate. Provided that no changes have been made to the proposal, this shall be a Staff-level re-issuance of the Certificate.
3. All replacement windows shall be two-over-two double-hung windows.
4. Replacement windows shall not present a warped or mirrored reflection.
5. Replacement windows shall not be tinted.
6. The original window on the left elevation shall remain.
7. Any changes to this proposal made prior to the commencement of work or in-the-field changes shall be submitted to Preservation Planning for their review to determine if the changes come under the purview of the HPC.
8. A written narrative or descriptive checklist identifying the completion or compliance with permit conditions must be submitted to the Inspectional Services Department with a copy to preservation Planning at least fifteen (15) business days in advance of a request for a final inspection.
8. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning at historic@somervillema.gov a minimum of fifteen (15) business days prior to final ISD walk-through so that Preservation Planning or their designee can confirm if the project was completed according to HPC approvals.



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F. G. White House
ca. 1855

Thirty Seven



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Photos – 37 Albion Street















Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SMV.143
Historic Name:	Williams, F. G. House
Common Name:	
Address:	37 Albion St
City/Town:	Somerville
Village/Neighborhood:	Magoun - Albion
Local No:	103; 1023
Year Constructed:	C 1860
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	Italianate
Use(s):	Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Architecture
Area(s):	SMV.AY: Somerville Multiple Resource Area
Designation(s):	Local Historic District (3/11/1985); Nat'l Register Individual Property (8/18/1989); Nat'l Register MRA (9/18/1989)



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>)

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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

NRMRA/IND 9/18/89
(10) MHC# 1023

LHD-3/11/85 (10)
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AREA

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FORM NO.

103
143



Somerville PI-MAGOUN
37 Albion Street USGS-BOSTON
SECT A

Historic Name F.G. Williams House

Present residential

Original residential

OPTION

ca. 1860

map research / stylistic
analysis

Italianate

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition excellent

Moved no Date n/a

Acreage less than one acre

Setting North side of residential
street, on a sizeable corner lot,
with a Centre Street address as well.
Late 19th century surrounds, urban.

Recorded by Gretchen G. Schuler

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date September 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

See attached assessor's map

UTM REFERENCE 19 326/730 4695/060

USGS QUADRANGLE Boston North

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Frank G. Williams House retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with Somerville's mid 19th century development. The dwelling is one of the best preserved examples of a center gable Italianate and is architecturally significant as an excellent Somerville representative of the period and style. The Frank G. Williams House fulfills Criterion C of the Nation Register of Historic Places on the local level.

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

The F.G. Williams House is one of the best preserved examples of a center gable Italianate remaining in Somerville. Located on a corner lot giving the house high visibility, it exhibits a traditional three-bay center entrance plan with a substantial rear ell. The dwelling displays fine Italianate detail including the center gable with trefoil window in the peak, round headed windows in the gable-end peaks, high profile bracketed window lintels, and a raking cornice with elaborately carved brackets. The center entrance with half side lights and transom is accentuated by the projecting open porch with squared columns and pilasters and a bracketed cornice.

The near by Gaut House at 137 Highland Avenue retains identical fenestration and bracketing detail. In all likelihood the two houses were built at the same time by the same builder.

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

Located on Albion Street, once known as Forest Place, the Frank G. Williams House was one of the first houses built in the "Polly Swamp" area. By 1880 there were at least five dwellings in this subdivision laid out by the mid 19th century land owners, the Stearnes. Subsequent development of the immediate area occurred at the end of the 19th century when William Stearnes subdivided remaining lands of the family farm. Much of the housing stock included modest mansard cottages and two-family vernacular housing.

Frank Williams, the mid 19th century owner and resident of this dwelling worked in Boston and dealt in kitchen furnishings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of the City of Somerville, 1874.
 Directories of the City of Somerville, 1870s.



10 ST.

