



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

GEORGE J. PROAKIS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

STEP 1: DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
STAFF REPORT

Site: 11 Benedict Avenue

Case: HPC.DMO 2022.03

Applicant: Ben Rogan

Owner: Christopher & Loren Galvin

Legal Ad: *Demolish principal structure.*

HPC Meeting Date: February 15, 2022

Top: Front elevation

Bottom, left: Left elevation

Bottom, middle: Rear elevation

Bottom, Right: Right elevation



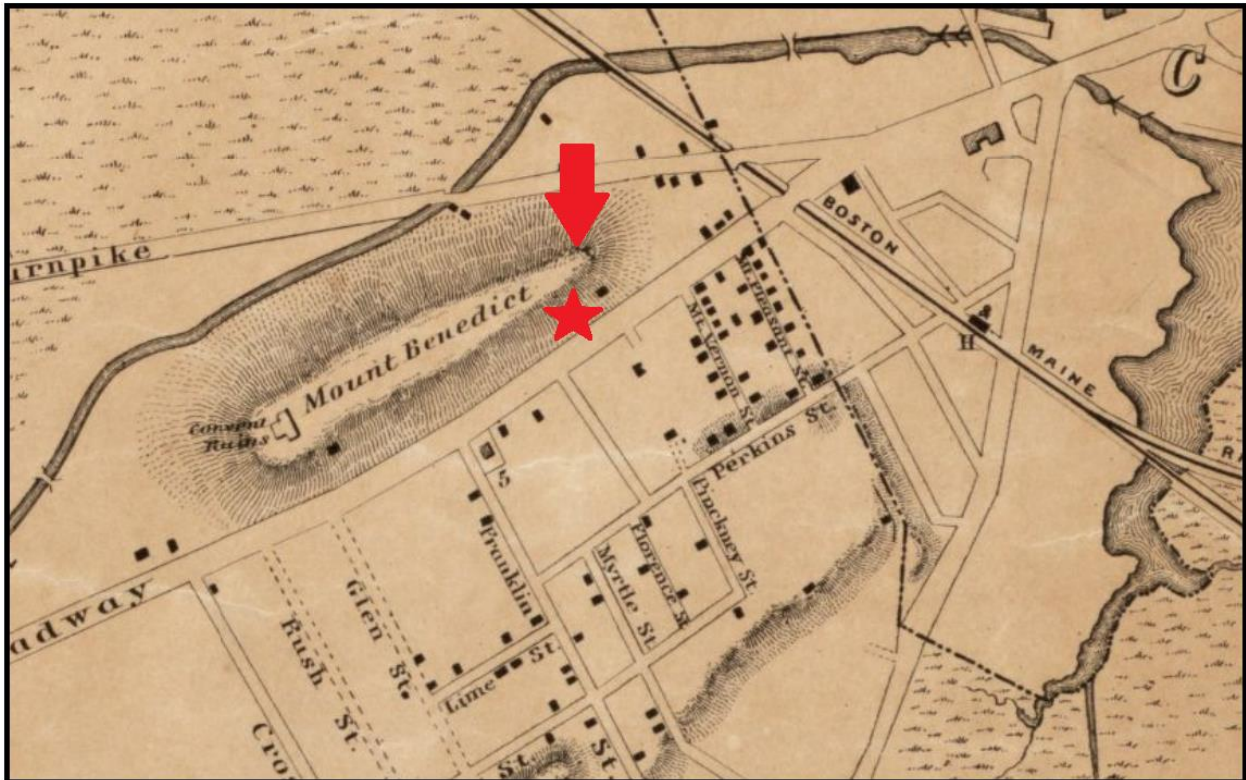
I. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Historical Context: 11 Benedict Avenue is a two and half-story structure. This portion of Benedict is dominated by two-and-half and three-story residential buildings.

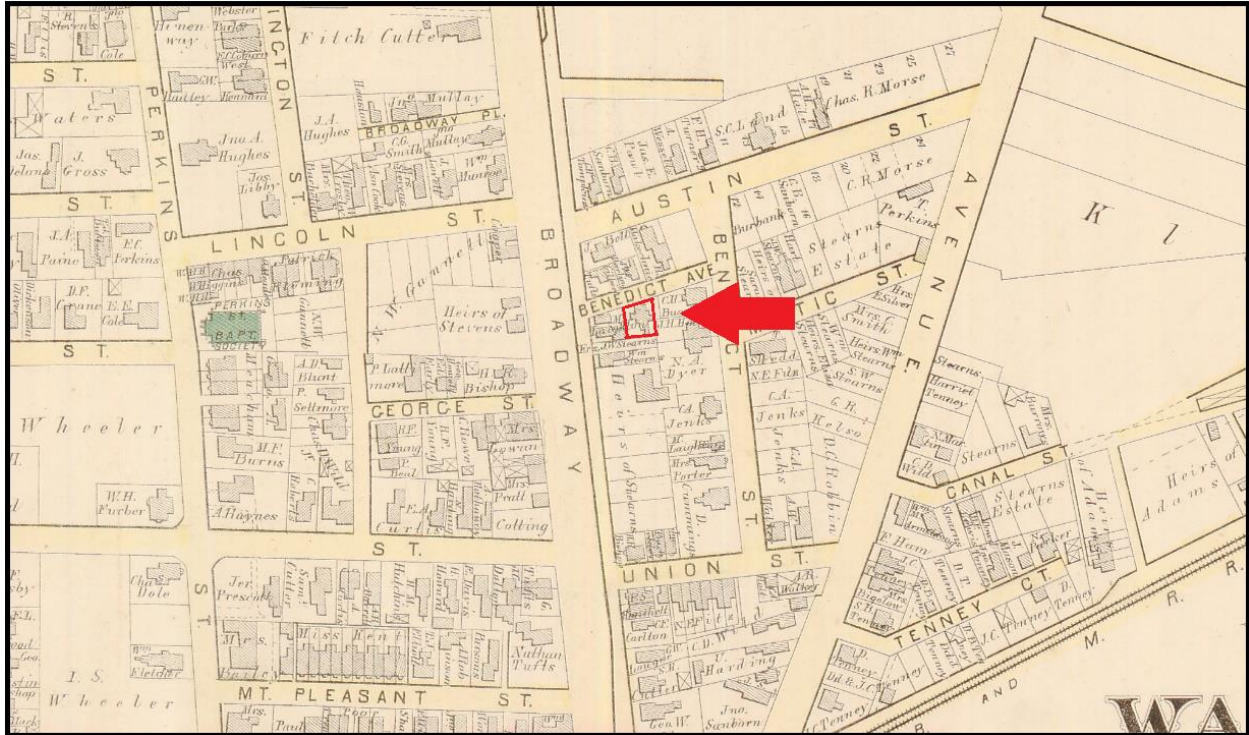
East Somerville, at the eastern end of Somerville abutting Charlestown, is one of the oldest settlement areas in the city. It comprised the "Neck" or isthmus that connected Somerville to Charlestown. Over time the area has been expanded by filling in the tidal and marshy basins of the Mystic and Miller's Rivers, creating a densely settled residential and commercial neighborhood.

East Somerville is bounded by Washington Street and 1-93 on the north; the area is traversed east/west by the eastern portion of Broadway. Dense residential development in East Somerville dates from early in the 19th century and was constructed to provide housing for laborers who worked nearby in factories along the Miller's River or in the brickyards located in the Ten Hills section of Somerville.

In 1870, William A Garbett began platting the area on the southeastern edge of Mount Benedict. The houses along the north side of Broadway are a collection of working-class houses built before 1874.

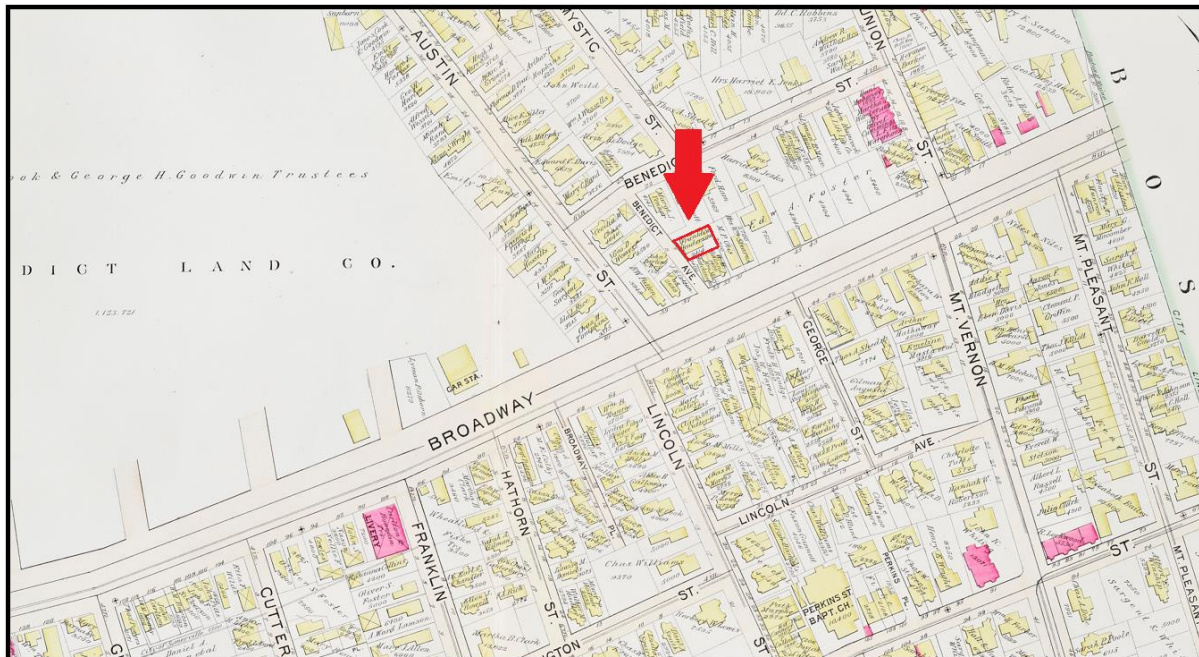


Above: 1852 Draper Map with general location of 11 Benedict Ave indicated.



Above: 1874, Plate 14&15 Hopkins Map, specifying location of 11 Benedict Ave

The neighborhood is a mix of Italianate and Mansard style homes constructed on Mount Benedict before 1874 between the north side of Broadway and the saltmarsh along the Mystic River. Much of Mount Benedict was removed by the local brickmaking industry and to fill in the various saltmarshes to create usable land. Only one portion of Mt. Benedict's original elevation survives, at the eastern edge of the original hill. Austin, Benedict, and Union Streets form a fragment of the original residential corner now bisected by I-93.



Above: 1895 Bromley Map, Plate 10 specifying location of 11 Benedict Avenue



Above: 1900 Sanborn Map, Plate 98 specifying location of 11 Benedict Avenue

By 1874 most of the platted lots had been developed. Maps between 1874 and 1900 show little further development in the built neighborhood. The main changes are additions and alterations to existing structures.

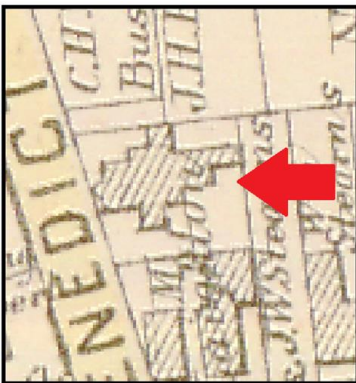
The first listed owner in the records for 11 Benedict Avenue is ‘*M Loughton*’ as shown in the 1874 Hopkins Map. This is likely Mark Loughton, a carpenter, whom City Directories in 1871 state as living on Benedict Avenue with his wife, Esther, and daughter, Abbie. It appears from the City Directories from the 1870s and 1880s that they likely lived at 8-10 Benedict Ave around this time and acted as absentee landlords to the tenants of 9-11 Benedict Avenue.

By 1895, 11 Benedict is owned by ‘*Franklin Henderson*’. City Directories and Census records do not list him as living at the property. Records show that there was a Franklin Henderson living in Somerville at this time, but on Central Street. This would make Franklin an absentee landlord of 11 Benedict Ave. It appears that Franklin was married to Caroline E Tufts, whose family owned the lots across the street on Benedict Avenue.

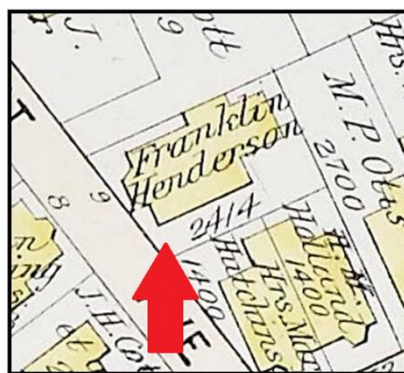
Further research resulted in the following information on the tenants or owners over the decades at 11 Benedict Avenue. The names that have been found show the property was inhabited by working-class individuals. A list of all residents is provided below.

Name	Year(s) of Residency	Occupation
Allen, Dorothy M	1925	
Allen, Leonard W	1925	Sales
Crawford, Lillian M	1924	
Crawford, Walder D	1924	Steamfitter
Pistorino, Peter P	1917 - 1920	Woodworker
Pistorino, Theresa	1917	
Sullivan, Adeline	1929	
Sullivan, Charles	1929	Laborer
Umano, Edith	1927	
Umano, Salvy	1927	Plumber

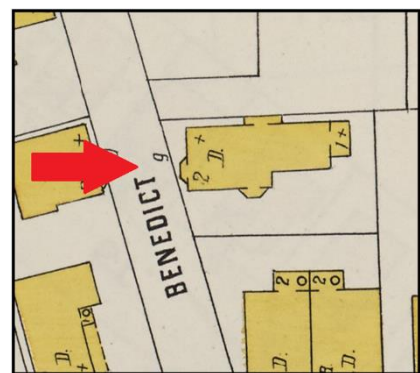
Comparing the historic maps with the current property we can track the architectural changes over time and the degree to which the structure has been altered.



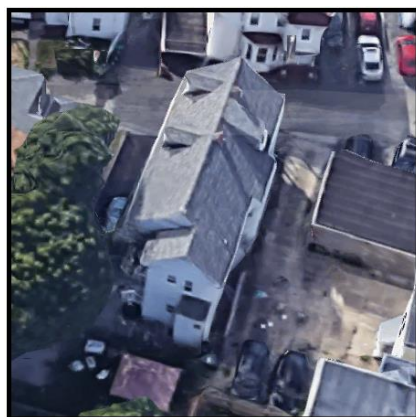
Above: Fig 1



Above: Fig 2



Above: Fig 3



Above: Fig 4



Above: Fig 5

Fig 1: 1874 Hopkins Map, close-up of 11 Benedict Ave.

- The structure in 1874 had a front bay, an ell on both sides and the rear. The sketch shows further details on the side ells. On the left ell there is a portion of the structure that projects in front of the

ell. On the right elevation this detail appears to the rear of the ell. In both cases it is that may have been a porch or a lean to.

Fig 2: 1895 Bromley Map, close up of 11 Benedict Ave

- By 1895 the left elevation is now flat with an ell. The ell on the right elevation appears to have been removed. There also appears to have been an addition added to the rear increasing the massing of the rear.

Fig 3: 1900 Sanborn Map, close up of 11 Benedict Ave

- The only change by 1900 is that a bay has been added to the right elevation.

Fig 4 & 5: Satellite images of the rear and front of 11 Benedict Ave

- By 2022, an addition to the second floor of the front elevation has been added. The addition acts as a roof to a porch below. On the rear a lean-to has been added.

II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Please see the section immediately below which discusses location, design, materials and any alterations as the same information would be written here, just in longer form.

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.

1. 11 Benedict Avenue

The period of relevance for the house starts c.1874-1940

- a. Location: It is likely that this structure is in its original location and was built on-site.
- Design: The house is a front gable, wood-framed residential building with a bay on the front elevation with a covered porch on the first floor. Front Elevation
 - Covered porch with two aluminum or plexiglass front doors with glass storm doors.
 - Porch has two narrow columns to support the enclosed space above; railings along the sides of the porch
 - Hooded polygonal bay is on the first floor to the right of the front entry doors
 - Fenestration consists of three one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash windows with detailed surround on the bay. The second-floor fenestration consists of one window on the addition and two windows to the right of the addition, all three are one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash windows with detailed surround. Top floor has one double-hung, replacement sash windows with detailed surround
 - Concrete steps lead to a concrete landing in front of the two front doors
 - Wood or aluminum railings on front steps.

- Right Elevation

- First floor fenestration consists of single one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash windows with detailed surround; a bank of four single pane windows with detailed surround. The second-floor fenestration consists of one one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash windows with detailed surround and a bank of four single pane windows with detailed surround. Each dormer on the top floor has one one-over-one, double-hung, replacement windows with detailed surround. Basement fenestration consists of sliding sash window with simple surround.
- Two gable ended dormers, each with one double-hung window
- First and second story covered porches at rear

- Left Elevation

- Two story ell mid-way along façade
- Single shed dormer before ell with casement window.
- Fenestration consists of single one-over-one, double-hung, replacement windows with detailed surround on first floor of the ell, and two single pane or horizontal sash windows towards the rear of the elevation. On the second floor, fenestration consists of one-over-one, double-hung, replacement windows with detailed surround on first floor of the ell, and two single paned windows towards the rear of the elevation.

- Rear Elevation

- Porch on first and second floor with railings
- Lean-to with aluminum or plexiglass door
- Fenestration consists of one one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash window with detailed surround and one single pan fixed window on lean-to on the first floor. Second floor fenestration consists of two one one-over-one, single or double-hung, replacement sash window with detailed surround of different sizes.

b. Materials:

- Foundation: brick with aluminum siding in some places,
- Windows: aluminum or vinyl, some wood
- Entry doors: modern. aluminum (maybe fiberglass) with glass storm doors
- Siding: vinyl clapboard
- Trim: wood & aluminum
- Steps: concrete
- Chimney: brick

c. Roof: gable with asphalt shingle and two brick chimneys. Two gable dormers on the right elevation and shed dormer on the left elevation

d. Alterations: Replacement windows. The installation of the shed dormer on the left, the rear porches and lean-to, and the addition of the covered porch on the front elevation are all later additions. Modern replacement doors, installation of storm doors, vinyl siding, vinyl siding along portions of the foundation. Comparing the 11 Benedict Ave to contemporary Italianate structures in the

neighborhood it is likely that the single gable dormers are likely later additions from the original construction.

- e. *Evaluation of Integrity of 11 Benedict Avenue* Based on the observations of the building and a study of the historic maps, it is Staff's position that the building does retain most integrity of its original form. Alterations have occurred to this structure which obscure original details and architectural design; however, the original massing remains largely intact.

III. FINDINGS

For a Determination of Significance, the subject building must be found either (i) importantly associated with people, events or history and/or (ii) historically or architecturally significant. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) must make these findings. The portions of the Demolition Review Ordinance (DRO) related to these findings are included below:

A. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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.

Residential Structure

1. The HPC must make a finding as to whether or not the STRUCTURE at 11 Benedict Avenue meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 11 Benedict Avenue does or does not meet the threshold for historic significance under finding "a".

B. HISTORICAL & 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, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished.

Residential Structure

1. The HPC must make a finding as to whether or not the STRUCTURE at 11 Benedict Avenue meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the STRUCTURE at 11 Benedict Avenue or does not meet the threshold for historic significance under finding "b".

If the HPC makes the above finding, the HPC must state their reasons why they take this position.

IV. VOTE

1. When bringing the matter to a vote, the HPC must include the reasons why the STRUCTURE at 11 Benedict Avenue is or is not “historically significant”.