



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

STEP 1: DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
STAFF REPORT

Site: 9 Hanson Avenue

Case: HPC.DMO 2021.22

Applicant: Brendon Boot

Owner: Same as applicant

Legal Ad: *Demolish principal structure.*

HPC Meeting Date: October 19, 2021

Top: Front elevation

Bottom, left: Left elevation

Bottom, middle: Rear elevation

Bottom, Right: Right elevation



I. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Historical Context: 9 Hanson Avenue is a two-and-a-half story residential structure. Hanson Avenue is dominated by two and half story residential houses.

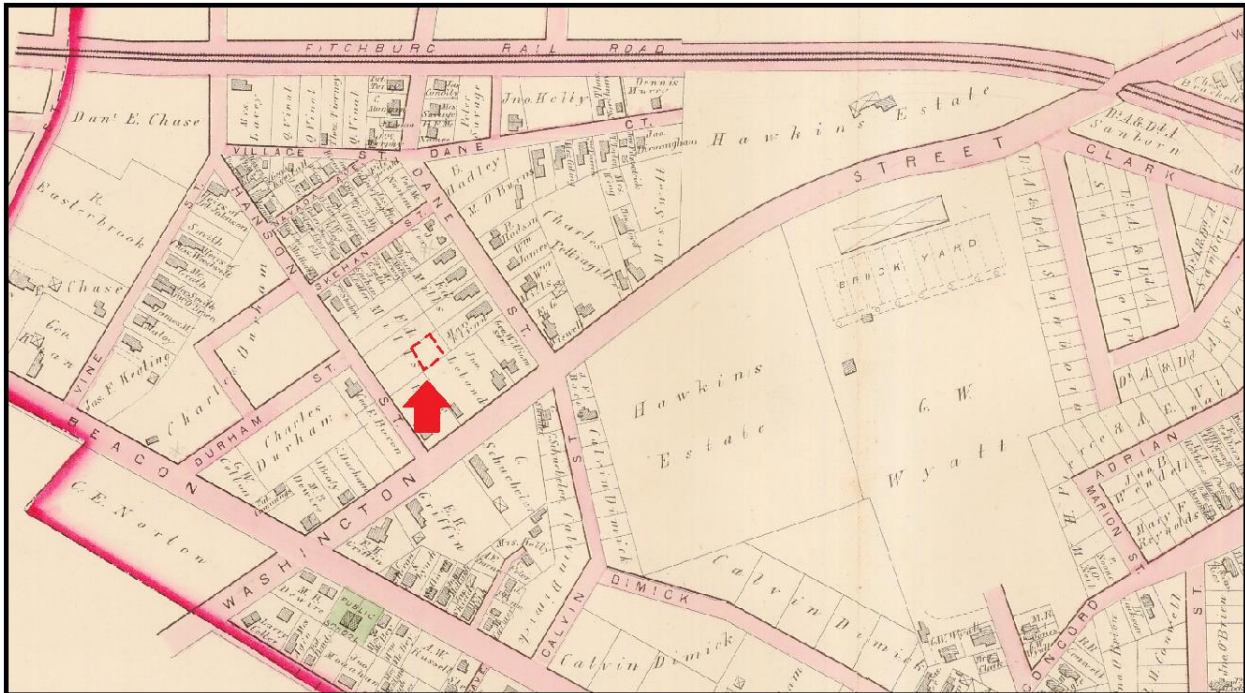
The Ward 2 Industrial area is located in one of the oldest and most active industrial areas in Somerville. Ward 2's proximity to the Millers River, and its location in the southeastern section of the city near the Boston and Cambridge lines made it ideal for industrial development. One of the first industries to settle in this area was the Middlesex Bleachery and Dye Works, ca. 1820. The Bleachery, which operated up through the 1930s, used the waterpower of the nearby Millers River for their operations. In 1836 the Fitchburg railroad line was established, running west through the lower portion of Ward 2. The coming of the railroad further stimulated the growth of this area, and by the Civil War a number of industries were located along the railway. Probably the largest and most significant of these was the Union Glass Works, 1854, which made glass lighting fixtures, and operated up through the 1930s.

In the late 19th century and into the early 20th century, Ward 2 continued to develop its industrial base. The businesses represented a variety of industries including a mill work company (I.H. Brown Moulding Company, ca. 1880, 285 Washington Street), a coffin factory (Miller Bros. & Co., 1881, 11 Miller Street), two ice companies (Fresh Pond Ice, ca. 1892, 321 Washington Street; Metropolitan Ice Company, ca. 1915, Bleachery Court), an architectural hardware manufacturer (Peter Forg, 1892, 48-50 Park Street) a tube manufacturer (The American Tube Works, 1890-1920, 440-460 Somerville Avenue and Lake Street), and a bronze smeltery (T.F. McGann, 1909, 27 Village Street).

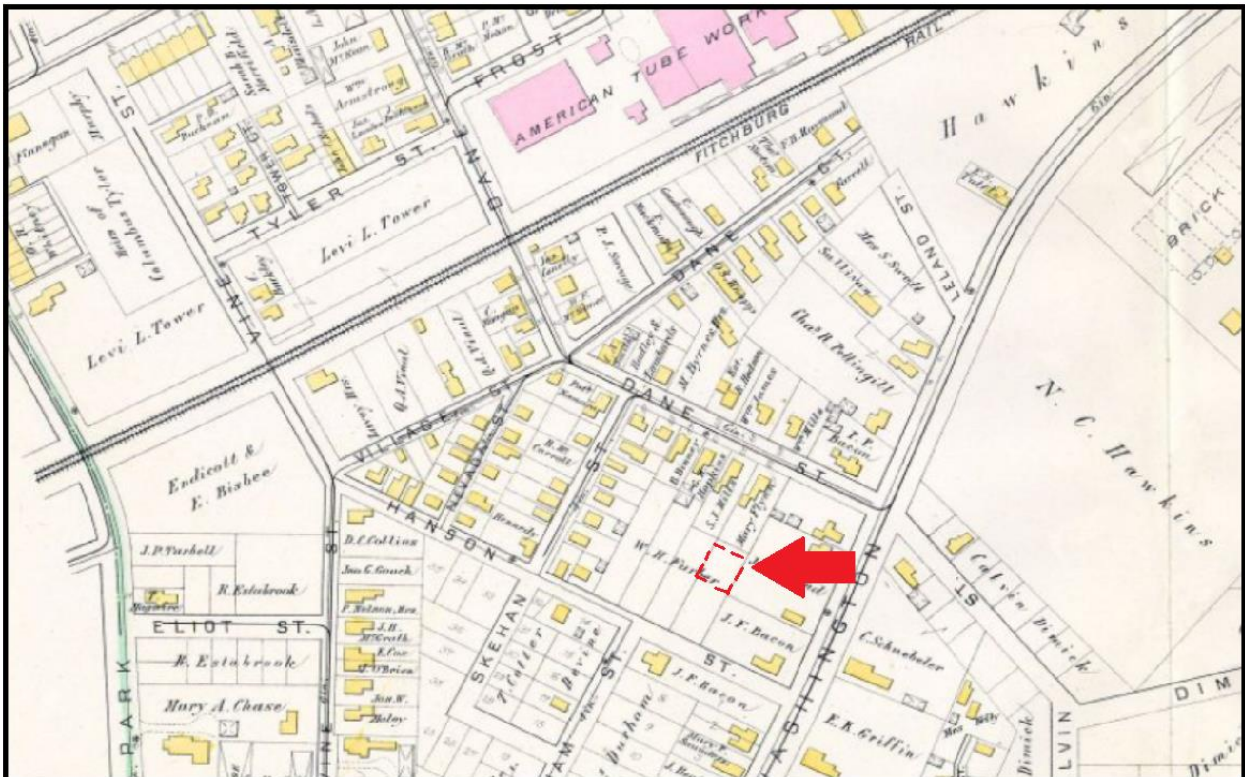
9 Hanson Avenue is located to the south of the then-new transportation corridor containing the tracks of the old Fitchburg Railroad linking the ice industry at Fresh Pond with Boston. Completed in 1841, the Fitchburg became a magnet for industries that wanted to take advantage of the fast and efficient shipment of goods via the new railroad line. For example, the American Tube Works was incorporated in March of 1852 on Dane Street at Somerville Avenue. The purpose of this industrial concern was to manufacture seamless brass and copper tubes. The American Tube works was located on Dane Street, a north-south thoroughfare that was set out to link Washington Street (then called Kirkland Street with Milk Row (later known as Somerville Avenue).

Looking at the 1874 Hopkins Map we see that though there are a few large farms evident, most land has been subdivided and platted for development. 9 Hanson Avenue as it currently sits, was not constructed yet. Additionally, Hanson Avenue had not yet been paved. In 1874 the location that would become 9 Hanson Ave was a series of lots off of Hanson Street owned by Ed Mills.

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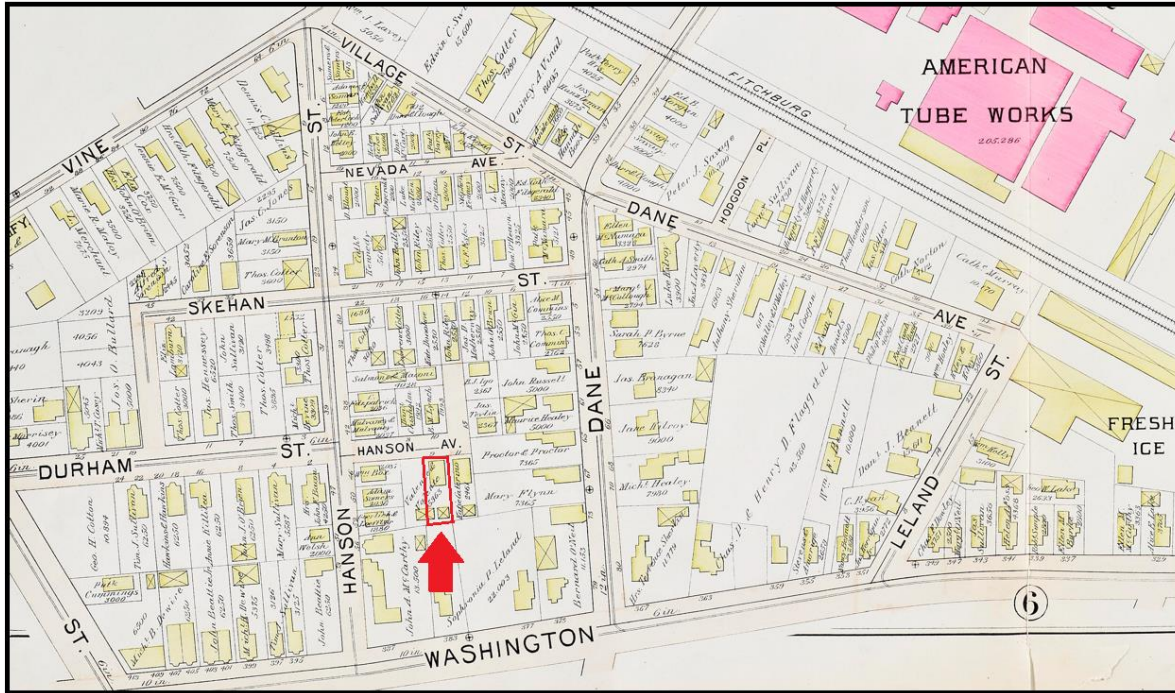


Above: 1874 Hopkins Map, Plate 24 & 25, with arrow indicating approximate location of 9 Hanson Avenue.



Above: 1884 Hopkins Map, Plate 8, with arrow indicating approximate location of 9 Hanson Avenue.

By 1884 much of the built landscape around 9 Hanson Avenue remains the same. The lots that will become Hanson Avenue and 9 Hanson Ave are now owned by W.H. Furber.



Above: 1895 Bromley Map, Plate 5, with arrowing indicating approximate location of 9 Hanson Avenue.

By 1895, the remaining lots have been developed with residences. These houses were meant to house the workers for the nearby industries. Importantly, Hanson Avenue has been paved and 9 Hanson platted and built. Hanson Avenue extends from Hanson Street leading to seven new properties accessible from this road. 9 Hanson Avenue contains a main residence with a secondary structure in the rear, likely a barn or garage. The construction at 9 Hanson Ave matches that of many buildings along the street in shape and size.

The 1900 Sanborn Map shows that the rear structure has been expanded and extends from lot line to lot line.



Above: 1900 Sanborn Map, Plate 53, with arrow indicating location of 9 Hanson Avenue

From City Directories we know that 9 Hanson was built by 1893, when the first residents are listed as living there. The first owner of 9 Hanson Avenue is Vincent Valente who is noted in the 1895 Bromley Map and the City Directory. While living at 9 Hanson Ave Vincent worked as a janitor, fruit peddler, and a clerk. He lived there with his family: Daniel, Florence, Holland, John, Mary, Philomena, and Sarah. Four members of the Valente family worked as fruit peddlers at 252 Holland Avenue. The family owned the property through 1920. During this time, they supplemented their income by renting rooms out to other working-class individuals, some of whom also are listed as fruit peddlers. It may be that these individuals also worked at 252 Holland Avenue with the Valente family.

Below is a list of all residents for 9 Hanson Avenue and their professions:

Name	Year(s) of Residency	Occupation
Burnett, Joseph	1929	Manager
Burnett, Mary	1929	
Camelio, Salvatori	1897	Clerk at 33 Summer
Capobianco, Daniel	1895	Laborer
Cook, Elizabeth	1887	
Cook, John W	1887	Cigars, etc. at 19 Union Sq
DeCecca, Civita	1895	
DeOvido, Anna	1929	
D'Ovidio, Annie	1919	
D'Ovidio, Giacinto	1909	Laborer
D'Ovidio, John	1919	
DeVellis, Florence	1933	
DeVellis, Salvatore	1933	Laborer
Gori, Mary	1916-1933	
Gori, Salvatore	1913-1929	Janitor, Insurance Agent, Confectioner, Manager, Tailor
Macconi, Antonio	1893-1894	Peddler
Maconi, Anthony	1897	Fruit Peddler
Mink, Jacob	1887-1889	Currier
Mitiano, Cosmo	1898	Fruit Dealer
Picentini, Mary	1940	
Picentini, Albert	1940	Laborer
Valente, Daniel G	1902-1918	Fruit Peddler at 252 Holland Ave, Clerk at 239 Holland Ave
Valente, Florence	1925	
Valente, Holland	1905	
Valente, John	1910	Sales
Valente, Mary C	1906-1910	Fruit at 252 Holland Ave
Valente, Philomena	1911	Mrs. fruit at 252 Holland Ave
Valente, Sarah	1902-1918	
Valente, Vincent	1893-1920	Janitor, Fruit Peddler, Clerk at 252 Holland Ave

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.

9 Hanson Avenue

The period of relevance for the house starts c.1893-1920

- a. Location: It is likely that this structure is in its original location and was built on-site.
- b. Design: The dwelling house is a 2 ½-story, gabled structure with a small covered front porch. It is possible that the front porch was added within a few decades of the original construction. Though not original to the construction date of the building, it is still an important later feature. It is unclear if the porch would have been enclosed or open at the time of its construction. A chimney stack remains extant.
 - Front Elevation
 - Asymmetric entryway. Hipped roof porch with mid-late 20th Century decorative iron columns
 - Concrete steps from landing to pavement
 - Mid-late 20th century iron railings on front steps.
 - Fenestration consists of one fixed pane window flanked on either side by a single casement window on the first and second floors. On the top floor the fenestration consists of one one-over-one single or double-hung, replacement sash window. All windows have simple surrounds.
 - Right Elevation
 - Fenestration consists of two one-over-one, single or double-hung, replacement sash windows with simple surround on the second floor and one on the first floor. A bay on the first floor contains three one-over-one, single or double-hung, replacement sash windows separated by mullions
 - Two skylights on roof
 - Door leading to a contemporaneous rear addition with sloped roof.
 - Left Elevation
 - Fenestration consists of two one-over-one, single or double-hung, replacement sash windows with simple surround on the first and second floors.
 - Rear Elevation
 - Contemporaneous rear addition with sloped roof.
 - Fenestration consists of two one-over-one, single or double-hung, replacement sash windows with simple surround on the second floor and one such window on the top floor. The rear addition consists of five of these windows separated by mullions.

- c. Materials:
- Foundation: Brick
 - Windows: Aluminum or vinyl
 - Entry door: modern. Wood with aluminum storm door
 - Siding: Wood clapboard
 - Trim: Wood
 - Steps: concrete with iron rails
 - Roof: Asphalt shingle
- d. Alterations: Windows, shingling, doors, and bay. Modern replacement doors. Addition of hipped front porch, and rear addition with sloped roof. The front façade window arrangement has been altered. There would have been two or three evenly-place double-hung windows on the second story and one or two of same to the right of the front door on the first story. The window arrangement would have probably looked like the front façade window arrangement on the white house across the street
- e. Evaluation of Integrity of 9 Hanson 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 integrity of its original form. Minimal alterations have occurred to this structure, and details and architectural design are still apparent.

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 RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE at 9 Hanson Avenue meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE at 9 Hanson 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 RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE at 9 Hanson Avenue meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why the RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE at 9 Hanson 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 RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE at 9 Hanson Avenue is or is not “historically significant”.