



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

STEP 2: DETERMINATION of whether to PREFERABLY PRESERVE

Site: 26 Hawthorne Street
Case: HPC.DMO 2020-07

Applicant Name: Thomas W. Matthews
Owner Name: same as owner
Agent: Garth Goldstein, Architect

Recommendation: see section
HPC Hearing Date: May 19, 2020



I. MEETING SUMMARY: Determination of Significance

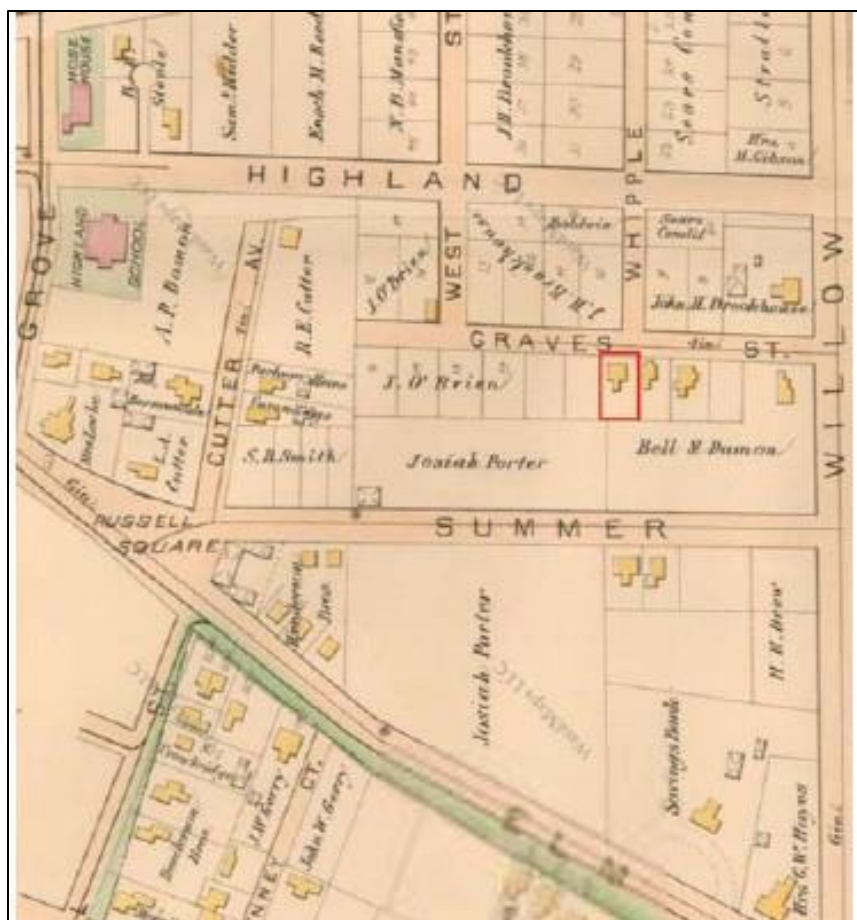
On Tuesday, April 21, 2020, the HPC voted 26 Hawthorne Street to be historically significant (Criterion “A” Historical Association and Criterion “B” Historical & Architectural Significance). The HPC noted that this c 1870s building is one of only two Mansards on the street and that these Mansards are nearly identical in terms of style, form, massing, and architectural detail. The HPC found that the structure is historically significant in terms of its contribution to the streetscape as well as its individual character (style, form massing, architectural detail).

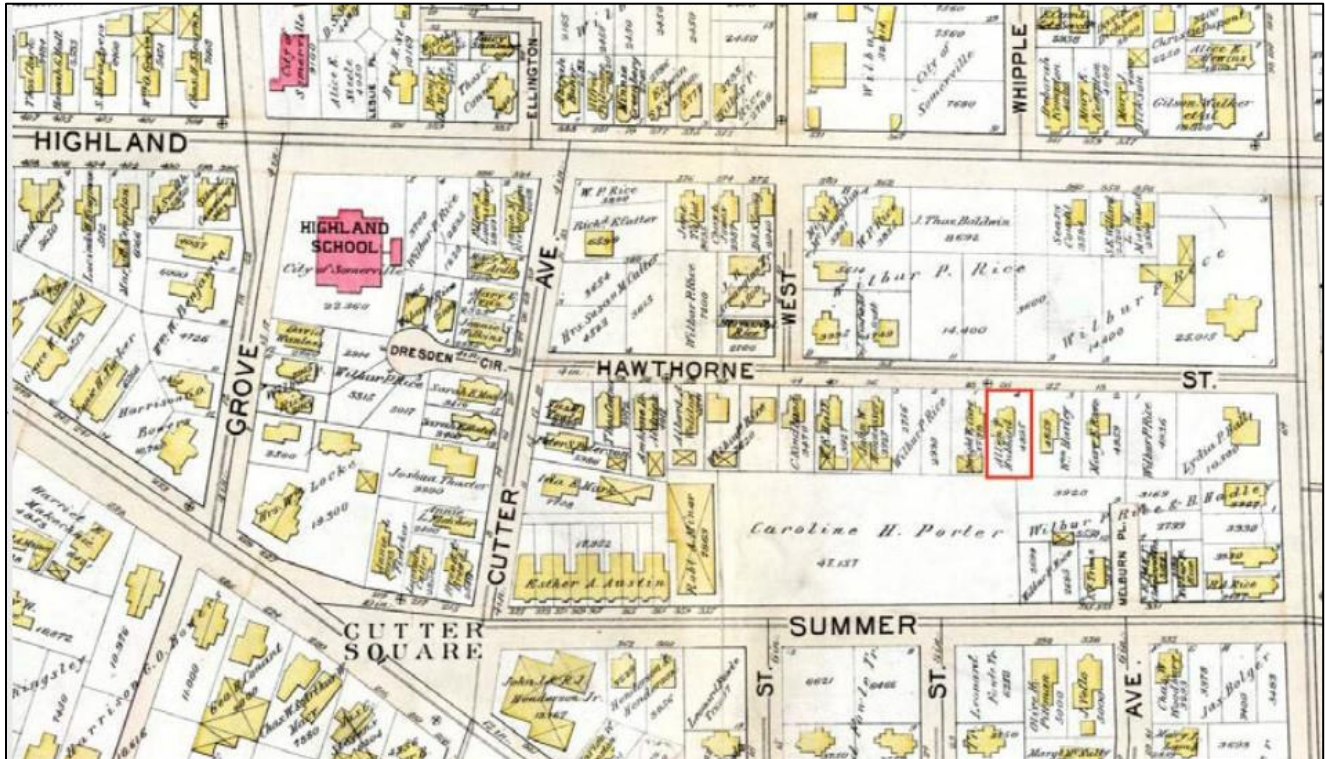
II. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Two additional map/plate images are included below. As seen in the two Hopkins Atlases below from 1874 and 1884, Hawthorne Street was known as Graves Street until at least the mid-1880s. No information regarding the change in street name has been uncovered to-date.



*Left: 1884 Hopkins Atlas.
“Graves Street” is today’s
“Hawthorne Street”.*





Above: 1900 Bromley plate. Graves Street is now “Hawthorne Street”. Note the significant increase in development in the area. “Russel Square” seen on the 1884 Hopkins Atlas is now “Cutter Square”.

III. FINDINGS ON PREFERABLE PRESERVATION

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 property continues to convey is clear Second Empire characteristics in terms of overall form and massing, Mansard roof and period trim (for example, above dormer caps). Staff provides again the assessment of integrity that was provided in the staff report for the Determination of Historic Significance:
 - Location: It appears that the current siting of the swelling house is its original location.

- *Design:* The following description was provided in the staff report on Historic Significance:

The dwelling house is a two-story, Mansard-roofed, single-family structure. The building is roofed with brown asphalt shingles and the siding and trim are covered by vinyl.

The front façade is two bays wide on each story. The first story of the front elevation presents a right side hall entry door flanked by fluted pilasters and capped by dentil molding. It is unclear if these features surrounding the front door are of vinyl, composite, or wood or to what era they date. A later, shallow open portico was added over the front door and front stoop decking. A long run of wood stairs with railings leads to the covered stoop. Vertical wood picket-style skirting surrounds the stoop. To the left of the front door is polygonal, single-story bay window. All windows are one-over-one.

The second story of the front elevation presents the lower slope of the flared Mansard roof. Two decoratively-capped single dormers are present which are vertically aligned with the door and bay below. A wide cornice and associated eave defines the lower portion of the Mansard roof. The upper slope of the Mansard roof is not visible from the front elevation, street level, but the cornice separating the lower and upper slopes of the roof is evident.

The left elevation of the building is two bays deep. The first story presents a one-over-one window closest to the street. The second bay on this elevation presents a polygonal, three-window bay that mimics the one on the front façade. The second story of the left elevation presents the same decoratively-capped dormers as the front façade. Upper cornices and lower cornices with associated eave are visible.

The right elevation presents a Mansard-roofed, one-bay-deep jog that begins at about ½ way down the body of the main structure and ends roughly at the end of the main body of the building. At least one decoratively-capped dormer is visible from the street on this elevation. Upper cornices and lower cornices with associated eave are visible.

The rear elevation presents a bump-out that expands into the rear yard but steps in from the right elevation jog.

- *Materials:* The building is wood-frame construction and presents a brick foundation. Roofing is comprised of asphalt shingles. The face and trim of the house have been covered with vinyl but it is typical that clapboarding or other shingling remain underneath.
- *Alterations:* Windows and door are modern, open entry portico is a later addition. Vinyl siding and asphalt roofing are typical 20th-century alterations.

Evaluation of Integrity: Dwelling house retains integrity of style, form, massing, architectural components such as bay windows, Mansard roof, and decoratively-capped dormers.

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

Local significance. This structure one of two nearly identical Mansards on Hawthorne Street. 26 Hawthorne Street was built around the time that rail and street car services were brought to this part of the City and Davis Square and the neighborhoods immediately surrounding it were being developed.

What is the visibility of the structure with regard to public interest (Section 2.17.B.ii) if demolition were to occur?

Hawthorne Street is found between three prominent thoroughfares – Highland Avenue and Summer Street with Elm Street below – and a neighborhood close to Davis Square. 26 Hawthorne is a very visible building on the street.

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

While 2-story Mansards are found throughout the City, there are only two Mansards on Hawthorne Street. As noted in the staff report on Historic Significance, the two Mansards on Hawthorne Street are nearly identical.

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?

Loss of a building with the original form, massing, and architectural details that it still possesses would be detrimental to the architectural heritage of the City.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided and an assessment of the building, Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) finds the property at 26 Hawthorne Street to be PREFERABLY PRESERVED