

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT JOSEPH A. CURTATONE MAYOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT

Site: 74 Mount Vernon Street c.1873 Walter H. Durell House

HPC 2016.095 R1 Single Building Local Historic District Case:

Applicant Name: Paul Turcotte, Owner

Applicant Address: 74 Mount Vernon Street, Somerville, MA 02145

Date of Application: August 3, 2017 Demolish barn. Legal Notice:

Staff Recommendation: Conditional Certificate of Appropriateness

Date of Public Hearing: September 26, 2017 continued to November 28, 2017

I. **BUILDING DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

See attached Form B

HISTORICAL CONTEXT/EVOLUTION OF STRUCTURE OR PARCEL:

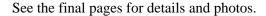
See attached Form B

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Proposal of Alteration:

1. Demolish c. 1890 stable.

See attached letter from Applicant regarding the reasons not move the building as originally planned.



II. **FINDINGS**

1. Prior Certificates Issued/Proposed: 2002.025 Paul Turcotte C/NA, C/A



- 2. Install vertical lattice;
- 3. Scrape and paint surfaces as needed.
- 4. Replace upper section of handrail with wood handrails as per diagram: and
- 5. Remove existing porch deck, stairs and iron railing/handrail.



74 Mount Vernon Street, 2016

Page 2 of 10 Date: November 28, 2017 Case #: HPC 2016.095 R1

Site: 74 Mount Vernon Street

2010.045	Paul & Sharon Turcotte	C/NA, C/A	 Remove shrubs & decaying railroad tie wall Replace the wood wall with New England field stone; Replace existing concrete stairs with granite steps; Install a brick landing; Construct a second stone retaining wall to define planting areas; Remove chain link fence on north side of property; and Define the boundary with cobble stones.
2013.054	Paul Turcotte	C/NA	 All missing and damaged slates to be replaced with slates to match in composition, color, size, shape, texture and installation detail. The 3rd floor window sill shall be reconstructed in-kind.
2016.031	Paul Turcotte	C/NA	 Applicant shall obtain all appropriate building permits prior to commencing work. The porches on the rear of the building shall be repaired. Damaged floorboards, hand and foot rails, balusters and posts shall match the existing in material style, texture, size, shape, and installation detail. Applicant shall contact HPC Staff upon completion of the work for sign-off that the work was done in accordance with the Certificate of Non-Applicability.
2016.095	Paul Turcotte	C/A	 The concrete block garages may be demolished. The stable shall be relocated to the southeast corner of the lot at the base of the driveway leading from Mount Vernon Street. Measured drawings and documentation photos of the stable shall be completed prior to relocation of the building. A relocation plan shall be submitted detailing the processes by which the historic structure will be relocated prior to receiving a demolition/building permit.

1. Precedence:

- *Are there similar properties / proposals?*
 - 1. Demolish c. 1890 stable.

No stables have been demolished on properties in a Local Historic District. All stables coming through the demolition review process have been determined 'significant' and unless they were irremediably altered and in poor condition 'preferably preserved'. As noted in the Form B, Durell was dealt in wholesale and retail sashes, windows, and doors. He would have needed his own conveyance for his business rather than relying on the street car and railway system than ran past the bottom of the street.

2. Considerations:

• What is the visibility of the proposal?

The building is visible between buildings from Crescent Street. See photos.

• What are the Existing Conditions of the building / parcel?

The stable was built approximately 15-20 years after the house in the 19th century. The disassembly and reconstruction of the building where it would be visible from the street had been agreed upon at the January 10, 2017 HPC meeting. The Applicant believes that the relocation of the outbuilding is not practical. There is little left of the original building and the proposed location would adversely affect the proposed new circulation patterns for the parking area. The Applicant would like to reconstruct the building on a shallower footprint than the original 21' rather than 26' to improve the turning radii. An abutter is also concerned about the amount of shadow that would be cast onto the rear of the house.

See photos, letter, structural engineers report and site plan at the end of the document. The site plan is based upon a second structure on the lot which has yet to be reviewed by the HPC for visibility or appropriateness and is not part of the discussion at this time.

• *Is the proposal more appropriate than the existing conditions?* It is not appropriate to remove historic fabric that conveys the history and purpose of a property.

Page 3 of 10 Date: November 28, 2017 Case #: HPC 2016.095 R1

Site: 74 Mount Vernon Street

• Is the proposal more in-keeping with the age, purpose, style and construction of the building?

It is not appropriate to demolish the stable for which the original owner had a clear use and purpose relating to his business and is part of the historic value of the property. It is appropriate to reconstruct the structure using as much of the original fabric as possible.

• Does the proposal coincide with the General Approach set forth in the Design Guidelines?

GENERAL APPROACH

The primary purpose of Somerville's Preservation Ordinance is to encourage preservation and high design standards in Somerville's Historic Districts, in order to safeguard the City's architectural heritage. The following guidelines ensure that rehabilitation efforts, alterations, and new construction all respect the design fabric of the districts and do not adversely effect their present architectural integrity.

- A. The design approach to each property should begin with the premise that the features of historic and architectural significance described in the Study Committee report must be preserved. In general, this tends to minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
- C. Whenever possible, deteriorated material or architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
- D. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of the original or later important features.
- E. Whenever possible, new materials should match the material being replaced with respect to their physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities.
- F. The Commission will give design review priority to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or those portions which it can be reasonably inferred may be visible in the future.

The outbuildings were not discussed in the Form B. No historic fabric will be repaired or replaced. The stable is visible between buildings from Crescent Street. A significant amount of new fabric would be needed to replace missing and damaged elements of the historic outbuilding.

Removal of Later Additions and Alterations

- 1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should be removed. It is not possible to provide a single general guideline.
- 2. Factors that will be considered include:
 - a. compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character;
 - b. historic association with the property; and
 - c. quality in the design and execution of the addition.

The stable is contemporary with Walter H. Durell, wholesale and retail dealer of sashes, windows, and doors. He would have needed his own conveyance for his business rather than relying on the street car and railway system than ran past the bottom of the street. The stable is a gable end 1 ½ story building with a tall loft opening. The siding is clapboard on the sides and front gable. The rear has asbestos shingles over-lying the original siding and a window in the gable. The wagon entry has been enclosed with vertical board and a pedestrian entry. One side has a chimney pipe and a window. While not an elaborate or high style stable/barn, the building cannot be mistaken for another kind of structure.

Page 4 of 10 Date: November 28, 2017 Case #: HPC 2016.095 R1

Site: 74 Mount Vernon Street

Replace accessory structures only when they are deteriorated beyond repair. *The replacement structure should be similar in size, siting, proportion, materials, and color. When replacement materials are proposed, new materials should match the existing in durability, texture, and color.*

As much of the original structure as possible should be retained while using replacement materials to complete the structure. The proposal is to shorten the structure which will be visible at the end of the driveway and partially visible from Crescent Street. The five foot difference in the depth of the building may not be visible from Mount Vernon Street but then again the building might be perceived as too small.

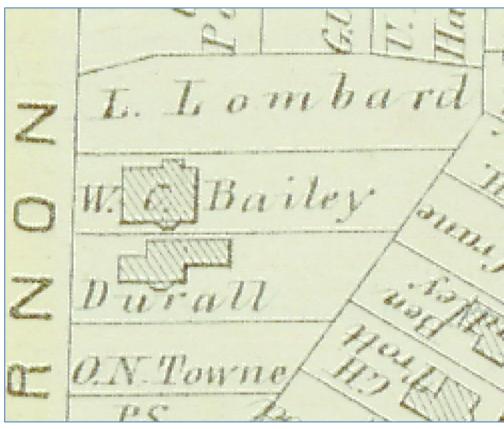
III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Staff recommendation is based on a complete application and supporting materials, as submitted by the Applicant, and an analysis of the historic and architectural value and significance of the site, The building or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture, material and color of the features involved, and the relation of such features of buildings and structures in the area, in accordance with the required findings that are considered by the Somerville Historic District Ordinance for a Historic District Certificate. This report may be revised or updated with new a recommendation or findings based upon additional information provided to Staff or through more in depth research conducted during the public hearing process.

Staff determines that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Walter H. Durell House Road Local Historic District; therefore **Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission deny a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the stable but** grant Paul Turcotte, Owner, a **Certificate of Appropriateness** with the following conditions.

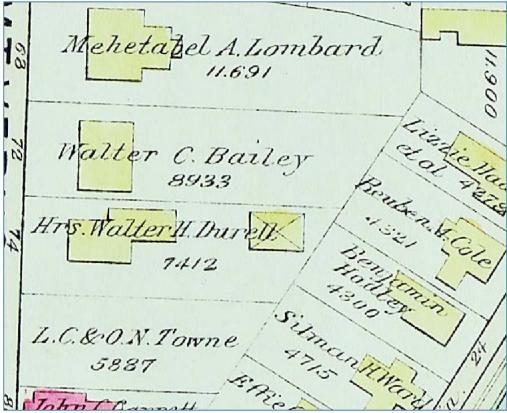
- 1. All appropriate building permits shall be obtained prior to the start of any work.
- 2. If changes are necessary to the proposed design for which this Certificate of Appropriateness was issued, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work.
- 3. The stable shall be relocated to the southeast corner of the lot at the base of the driveway leading from Mount Vernon Street.
- 4. Measured drawings and documentation photos of the stable shall be completed prior to relocation of the building.
- 5. A relocation plan shall be submitted detailing the processes by which the historic structure will be relocated prior to receiving a demolition/building permit.
- 6. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that it was executed in accordance with this Certificate and approved plans.





1874 Hopkins Atlas (no

change for 1884, which shows the same owners and buildings)



1895 Bromley Atlas

Doors, Windows, Sashes, Blinds.

(Successor to S. P. Langmaid & Co.,)

Wholesale and Retail Dealer in

DOORS, SASHES, BLINDS,

Fence Pales, Framing Pins, Blind Trimmings, Glazed Windows, &c. 28 & 29 Charlestown Street, BOSTON, MASS.

Opp. Boston & Maine R. R. Depot.

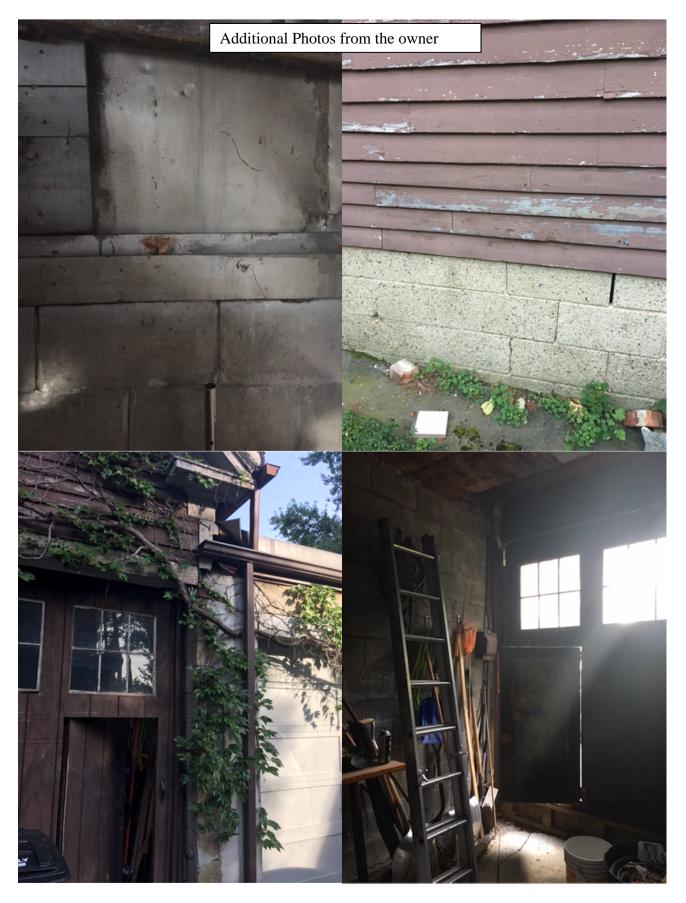
Doors of every quality at the lowest cash prices. Carpenters and others will find it to their advantage to call before purchasing.

1883 City Directory









SOMERVILLE

FORM NO.

East Somerville 305

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION 80 BOYLSTON STREET ROSTON, MA 02116

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Month passed month based based based was seen to be see	_
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es s _	74	Mt.	Vern	on S	Street	
oric	Name				Durell	_

Present residential

Original <u>residential</u>

PTION

1873

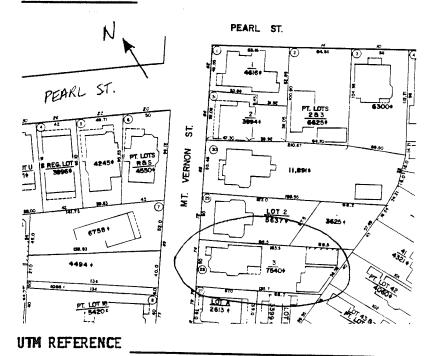
....itect

maps/directories

Second Empire

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or emagraphical features. Indicate all buildings tween inventoried property and nearest tersection(s).

Indicate north



'S QUADRANGLE____

SCALE

Exterior	Wall	Fabric	shingles
Outbuildi	ings _		

Major	Alterations	(with	dates)	

Condition good

Moved _____ Date ____

Acreage 7540 sq. ft.

Setting __East side of Mt. Vernon, south

of intersection with Pearl St. Well

established late 19th century residential

neighborhood.

	Carole Zelli	1980
Recorded by	Gretchen Sch	<u>nuler - 1988</u>
	Somerville	Historic
Organization .	Preservation	Commission

Date _____ May, 1988

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

This Second Empire dwelling is representative of a popular building style in Somerville during the 1870s but one of only a few examples on Mt. Vernon Street. This house is a side-hall entranced, two and a-half story dwelling with a mansard roof that has been altered with asphalt shingles. A three sided projecting dormer is located over a two story projecting bay. There is a side ell on north facade within the roofline. Well-maintained ornamentation includes brackets at the cornice line, and an open porch with square columns, brackets, and decorative details. Although the shingle siding is probably not original, there are decorative scalloped shingles on the projecting bay.

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

East Somerville was one of the most densely settled parts of Somerville by the mid to late 1800s in part due to its topography and fine soil for drainage and clay for brick and pottery making. Broadway and Washington Street were main thoroughfares from the 18th century connecting Charlestown with Medford and Cambridge. Several farms cropped up in the East Somerville area and by the mid 1800s there were shops, taverns and industries with brickyards and pottery enterprises. In the mid 1800s most residents were Boston businessmen and from the 1870s many multi-family buildings were built to accomodate the increasing number of workers in the area due to the expanding brickyards, spike factories, and potteries.

Mt. Vernon Street, which only ran from Broadway to Perkins Street by the mid 1800s, was well developed with many extant Greek Revival dwellings. By the 1870s, Mt. Vernon was continued through to Washington Street and the area saw the greatest period of development when many substantial houses were built on Mt. Vernon and Mt. Pleasant, Pearl and Perkins Streets. At the same time brick appartment houses and small workers' houses were constructed on nearby streets. #74 was built by 1873 for Walter H. Durell, a wholesale and retail dealer in sashes, windows, and doors, who worked in Boston. His widow lived there through the end of the century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- 1. Atlas of Middlesex County, Somerville: 1874 ("Durall"), 1884 ("W.H. Durell")
- 2. City of Somerville, <u>Beyond the Neck: The Architecture and Development of Somerville</u>, Massachuestts, 1982.
- 3. City Directories: 1880s-1890s.

RE: HPC2016.095 74 Mount Vernon Street Conditional Certificate of Appropriateness August 29, 2017

Hi Kristi,

We would like to revisit the dismantling and moving of the barn to the rear corner of the lot at 74 Mt. Vernon. We believe the building is not realistically salvageable. We would like to propose razing the original structure and building a new barn/ garage modeled from the existing barn.

We are sensitive to the fact that the barn is noted on the 1892 map. However, the subject building is not visible from Mt. Vernon St. and only the back wall of the barn is visible when looking between the houses on Crescent St.

In addition, we have found that the size of the existing building placed in the corner negatively impacts the turning radius for the parking of the proposed residence. The angled corner pushes the barn forward toward the driveway and it is 26' deep.Reducing the depth to 21' feet would greatly improve the turning radius.

Attached are a couple of photos. We invite you and commission members to visit the structure as desired.

When facing the building there is no wall to the right side. The roof rests on top of a concrete block wall that is not original. There are no wood framing members other than a plate to support the roof. There are 2 photos showing the right wall from inside and how the roof rests on top of the block wall.

The left side sill and wall appears to have been cut away and reframed on top of a newer concrete block wall. This lower section of the wall was likely replaced.

The back (no photo provided) is entirely covered in asphalt siding and has a hole on the right side and signs of rotting out along the back wall. It is hard to examine inside due sheet metal that was attached to the walls inside and is rusting in the back.

The front sliding barn door frame could have some original framing, however the doors have been recovered with sheets of wood siding and the door is close to non-operable.

Paul Turcotte

Thank you

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



	OFF	ICE USI	E
Case Number	: HPC	2017.	*
Date Receive	d:		
Hearing Date			
Certificate:	C/A	C/NA	C/HD

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT: APPLICATION for PROPOSED CHANGES

HISTORIC PROPERTY ADDRESS: 74 Mount Yernon St.	Assessor	Map	Block	Lot		
APPLICANT NAME: Paul Turco He	PHONE: 6	17-62	0-69	159		
APPLICANT ADDRESS: Same	E-MAIL:p	E-MAIL: pturcalle destiny age				
OWNERNAME: Paul & Bonnie Turcotte	PHONE:	Ψ				
OWNER ADDRESS: Same	E-MAIL:	E-MAIL:				
AGENT NAME:	PHONE:	PHONE:				
AGENT ADDRESS:	E-MAIL:					
WORK DESCRIPTION: Check all that apply. A sheet with full itemized descriptions of	proposed work	MUST be	attached.			
Repair/Maintain In-Kind (no change in material or design) - Identify location, feature	e(s) and mater	ial(s)				
Alteration – Identify location, feature(s) and material(s)						
Addition – Identify location, size, feature(s) and material(s)						
Addition receiving social states, social social states and social		×				
•						
Other – Describe project		ĸ		2 (*)		
	1 -		<u> </u>			
Demolition-Identify location and feature(s), Demolish and read Approved to be moved. Replacement To r	epcicat	e Bar	n.)		
ZONING DISCLOSURE: The proposal specified above may also require a Special Permit or Variance granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Planning Board. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to apply for relief, if necessary, from the appropriate Special Permit Granting Authority. If a discretionary permit is required, please contact Staff to coordinate the review processes.						
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION: Please submit documents that convey ALL EXIS			0			
Photographs Site/Plot Plan Elevations Material S	amples	☐ Man	ufacturer	Info		
Other-Please list other photos on file						
(OVER)		•				

(OVER)

As Owner, I make the following representations:
1) I hereby certify that I am the owner of the property at 74 MT Verner, Somerville, MA;
2) I hereby certify that the applicant named on this application has been authorized by me to apply to maintain or repair in-kind,
alter, add to, and/or demolish the structure at the property listed above for the purposes indicated in this application;
3) I hereby certify that if an agent is listed on this application, this agent has been authorized to represent this application before
the Historic Preservation Commission;
4) I permit Historic Preservation Commission Staff to conduct site visits on my property; and
5) Should ownership of this parcel change before the Historic Preservation Commission has acted on this application, I will
provide updated information and new copies of this signature page.
Property is owned by a Corporation, LLC, or Trust – Submit authorization to sign as Owner
Property is a Condominium or Cooperative Association – Trustee must sign and submit authorization to sign as Trustee
OWNER SIGNATURE: DATE: 8/29/17
As Applicant, I make the following representations:
1) The information supplied on and in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge;
2) I will make no changes to the approved plans without prior approval from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC); and
3) I hereby certify that if an agent is listed on this application, this agent has been authorized by me to represent me before the
HPC as it relates to the proposal on this application.
1 Alderen
DATE: 0/29/17
APPLICANT SIGNATURE: $\sqrt{29/17}$
Application Instructions & General Information

The City of Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) are a group of volunteers who meet on a monthly basis and have been appointed by the Mayor. The HPC administers the Somerville Historic District Ordinance, as set forth in the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, as well as the Demolition Review Ordinance. Alterations to properties within a local historic district and structures (exceeding 50 years in age) proposed to be demolished both require HPC review.

The HPC must review and approve all exterior construction, alterations, repairs/maintenance and/or demolition in a local historic district before the Inspectional Services Division (ISD) will issue permits. The HPC does not have jurisdiction over use, occupancy issues or zoning matters. Preservation planners are available to provide information and to assist with the application and review process. Applications for alterations to historic properties require a public hearing with a minimum 14 day notice to abutters. A site visit will be conducted by HPC Staff prior to being reviewed by the HPC. This visit is often helpful for Applicants to understand the guidelines and type of alterations that would likely be approved. **Please submit documents to explain or illustrate Existing and Proposed Conditions** such as photographs, site and/or plot plans, elevations, material samples and manufacturer information for new materials. The Commission may not be able to determine if your project will meet the guidelines without full supporting information and may be rejected or delayed as a result.

The Commission issues three types of certificates. A Certificate of Appropriateness is issued when the proposal is compatible with the existing historic structure. A Certificate of Non-Applicability is issued for in-kind repairs or maintenance that do not alter the design or material, when the alteration is not within jurisdiction of the Commission, or when the alteration is not visible from a public way or park. The Commission does not review temporary signage, color of paint, storm doors/windows, screens, AC units, light fixtures, or trees/plants/shrubs. A Certificate of Hardship is issued when special conditions create a substantial hardship (financial or otherwise) to the applicant if not approved, as long as the proposal is not substantially more detrimental to the local historic district.

The Commission reviews exterior features visible from a public way, park, or body of water. Typical features under review include (but are not limited to) windows, doors, gutters, skylights, dormers, decks and fences. The HPC encourages Applicants to repair before seeking to replace architectural features or materials and the HPC rarely approves synthetic materials for siding, roofs, windows, or doors. Other helpful tips include using roof shingles that reflect the architecture of the house and locating skylights away from public rights-of-way.

The Commission can provide recommendations for appropriate materials and design, and technical help regarding material repairs; however, the Commission cannot recommend contractors or product sources. Please also refer to the Design Guidelines for additional information, available on the 3rd floor of City Hall or at www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/DesignGuidelines.pdf.



October 25, 2017

Corey Matthews 866 North Street Walpole, MA 02081 (617)-997-5802 coreygmatthews@gmail.com

Mr. Paul Turcotte 74 Mount Vernon Street Somerville, MA 02143

RE: 74 Mount Vernon Street - Somerville, MA Structural Evaluation of Carriage House

Dear Paul,

On Friday, October 13, 2017, I visited the above referenced address to observe structural condition of the detached carriage house, which is in the rear of the property. The house, otherwise known as the "Walter H. Durell House" circa 1873, has been designated historic by the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC). Besides the rear carriage house, there are two other garage structures that were constructed in the early 1920's which are not considered historically relevant to the property.

When viewing the west elevation from the driveway, you notice the carriage house has racked significantly. In addition, the header over the carriage doors has sagged and it appears that a round steel lally column was added at the mid span to provide additional support. It appears the south exterior wall along the right side of the structure was completely removed when the attached concrete block garage structure was built. The roof of the carriage house now bears directly upon the top of the garage wall. The lower portion of the opposite exterior wall appears to have been partially reconstructed using similar concrete block.

There is a large opening through the attic floor framing which allowed access from a portable ladder. While standing on the attic floor, I observed the underside of the roof framing, which consists of 2x6 rafters spaced 18"-24" on centers. There are 1x6 collar ties below the ridge, many of which are broken or missing. The roof and remaining wall sheathing appear to be 1x ship lap boards of varying width. The attic floor framing could not be verified as there is a tin ceiling underlaid by 1x boards that are attached to the floor joists. I did notice quite a lot of "bounce" to the floor system as well as several areas of rotted decking.

The rear gable wall, which can be viewed from Crescent Street, has been covered with an asphaltic paneling, likely to contain asbestos. In addition, the lower portion of the rear wall framing is deteriorated and there are holes allowing moisture to enter the structure. The original roofing materials have been replaced with asphalt shingles. The carriage doors do not appear to be original as they are sheathed with a manufactured barn board style paneling and six light windows.

Based on the observation made during my visit, it is quite clear that the carriage house structure has deteriorated significantly over the years. Lacking proper mechanical connection of the carriage house roof to the concrete block wall of the adjacent garage, the structure has experience measurable lateral displacement and racking.

Conclusions



I understand the SHPC denied your request to demolish the carriage house structure but has conditionally granted your motion to relocate the building to the rear corner of the property. It is my opinion that the structure, in its current state, would not be stable enough to move. The north and south exterior walls would have to be completely rebuilt, along with tying the bases of the walls together with a new floor framing system. The existing roof framing would also be of concern due to the number of broken collar ties, check or cracked rafters, and minimal fasteners connecting the rafters to the wall top plates.

In my opinion, the building should be demolished given the age of the structure, the observed deficiencies noted, the amount of new framing that would be necessary to stabilize building for relocation on the property, and the limited remaining original building materials that could be salvaged. The building is not suitable for moving.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Very truly yours,

Corey G. Matthews

Corey Matthews, P.E.



