



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

TOM GALLIGANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

STEP 1: DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
STAFF REPORT

Site: 14 White Street Place

Case: HPC.DMO 2022.27

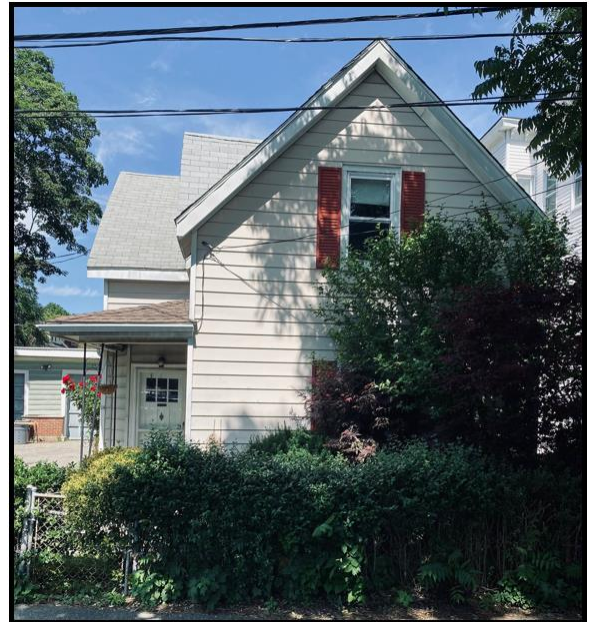
Applicant: Tim Curly

Owner: Tom Cooke, Personal Representative, Estate of Francis Cooke

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks to demolish a principal structure constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.*

HPC Meeting Date: July 19, 2022

Top: Front elevation of primary residence
Bottom, left: Left elevation of primary residence
Bottom, middle: Rear elevation of primary residence
Bottom, right: Right elevation of primary residence





*Above, left: Front elevation of primary residence
Above, middle: Rear elevation of primary residence
Above, right: Right elevation of primary residence*



*Above, left: Front elevation of primary residence
Above, middle: Rear elevation of primary residence
Above, right: Left elevation of primary residence*

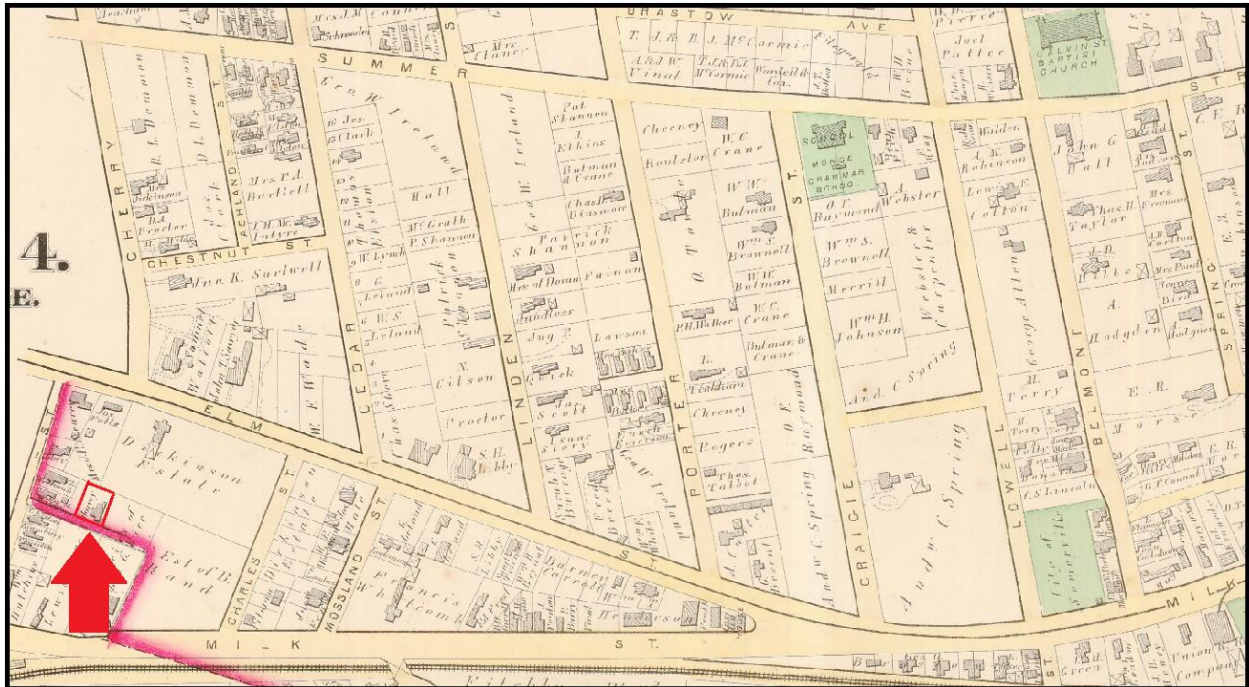
The purpose of a staff report is to provide the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with additional information and professional assessments regarding properties that are proposed for demolition. These assessments are based on the criteria allowed for consideration by the HPC in accordance with the Demolition Review Ordinance (DRO). A Staff Report is not a determination/decision, nor does it constitute authorization in any form.

I. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Historical Context: 14 White Street Place is located in the Spring Hill neighborhood. Spring Hill was originally divided into large agricultural tracts for Charlestown residents. Starting in the mid-1800s Spring Hill became a prime residential neighborhood in Somerville. The area which had been ideal for agriculture because of well-drained soil, also was ideal for residential subdivisions. As part of this transition from agricultural tracts to residential housing; George Brastow began plotting 72 house lots on Spring Hill in 1843.

With the exception of early farmhouses and the first Greek Revival houses, the first properties to be developed in the Spring Hill subdivisions were substantial single-family homes built on large lots. By the 1870s, with the expansion of the industries on Milk Row (now Somerville Avenue), and the horsecar and

later the streetcar on Summer Street from Union to Davis Square, came the expanded development of this area with smaller single family worker's housing and attached rowhouses built near the bottom of the hill on small court or terrace streets.



Above: 1874, Plate 40&41 Hopkins Map, specifying location of 14 White Street Place.

Artemas White, a North Cambridge speculator and blacksmith, laid out a small residential subdivision in 1844-1845, near the Fitchburg Station, intended for Boston commuters. Joshua Fernald, a Brookline housewright, erected approximately ten cottages, six of which were Gothic Revival, in the subdivision which straddled the Cambridge-Somerville line. 32 and 44 White Street, properties around the corner from White Street Place, came in for demo review in April 2022 and were found not to be Historically Significant by the HPC.

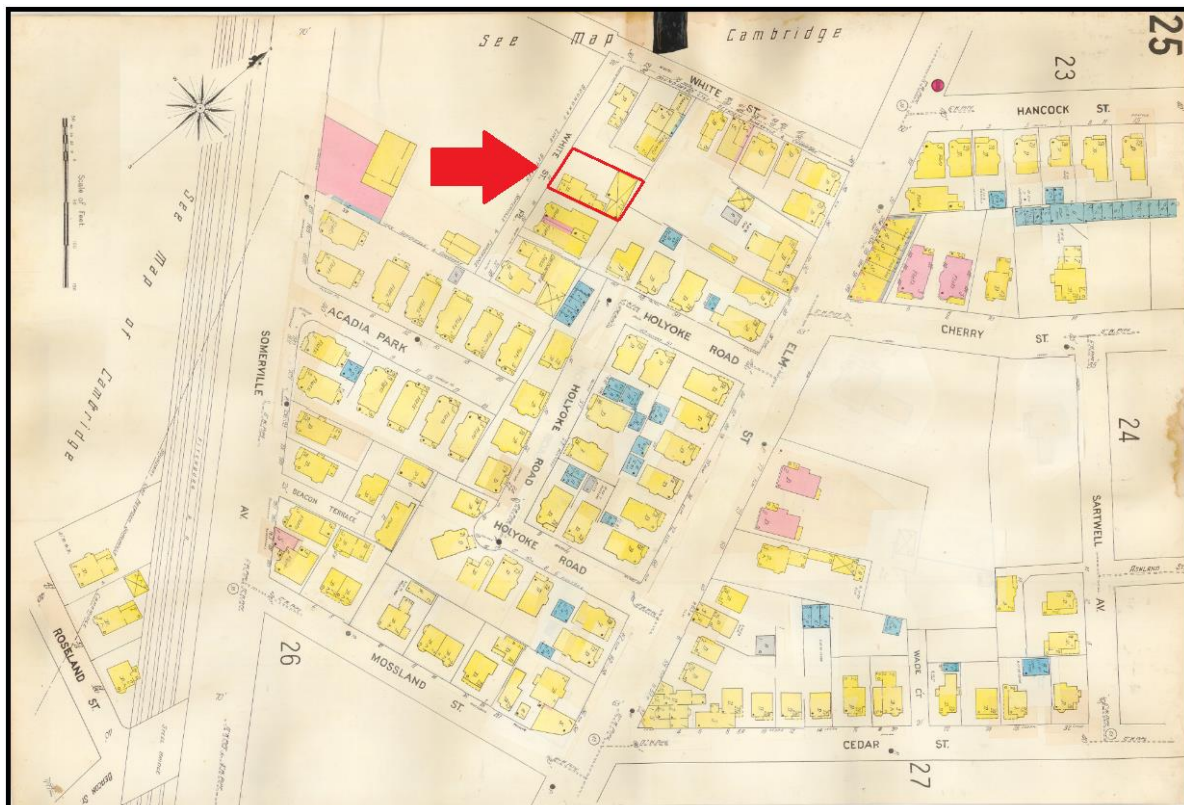
The 1874 Hopkins Map shows the primary residential structure was already constructed by this date.

(Continued on next page.)



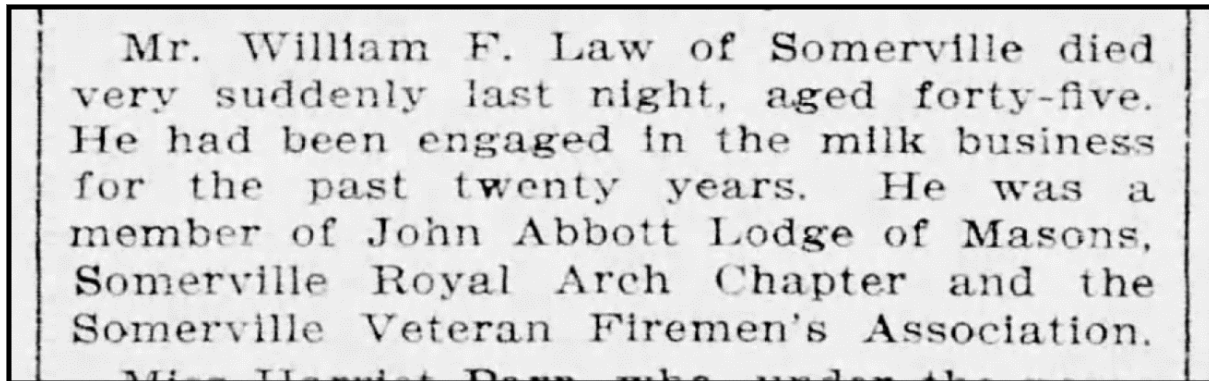
Above: 1895 Bromley Map, Plate 17 specifying location of 14 White Street Place.

By 1895, the rear structure has been constructed, as depicted in the 1895 Bromley Map. The 1900 Sanborn Map shows that the rear structure consisted of a larger one-story structure, with a two-story portion to the right.



Above: 1900 Sanborn Map, 1925 Addition, Sheet 25 specifying location of 14 White Street Place.

The first listed owner of 14 White Street Place is 'Harry' in the 1874 Hopkins Map. No first name is provided, nor were additional records discovered from 1874 that listed any residents of the property for that year. Because of these factors we do not know who the owner was or whether they lived at the property. The next discovered owner of 14 White St Pl is 'Georgie Law', who is listed as living at the property from 1892 to 1900 with her husband, William F. Law. Business and residential City Directories list William F. Law as both living and working out of 14 White St Pl as a milkman. It is unknown why the property was listed under his wife's name, at a time when it was uncommon for women to own property, especially when married. William and Georgie Law lived at the property through William's death in 1900.



Above: Obituary for William F. Law, The Boston Globe, March 26, 1900

Further research resulted in the following information on the tenants or owners over the decades at 14 White St Pl. The names that have been found show the property was inhabited by working-class individuals. A list of all residents is provided below.

(Continued on next page.)

Name	Year(s) of Residency	Occupation	Residency Type
Boudreau, Mary S.	1918 - 1927		H
Boudreau, Peter S.	1915 - 1927	Rigger, Farmer	H
Bowlby, Ira F.	1904	Carpenter	H
Bradhurst, John	1905		B
Bradhurst, Mary	1905		B
Bradhurst, John F.	1905-1906	Piano maker	H
Butler, Herbert	1907	Laborer	B
Butler, R.A.	1907		H
Cooper, Thomas B.	1903	Meat cutter	H
Drisdoll, Daniel J.	1912 - 1913	Mason	H
Edwards, Herbert E.	1908	Elevatorman	Bds
Killoren, Thomas J.	1902 - 1902	Brakeman	H
Law, Georgie	1892 - 1900		
Law, William F.	1892 - 1900	Milkman	
McNeill, James	1896	Teamster	B
Mowatt, Frances M.	1924 - 1925		H
Mowatt, Robert G.	1924 - 1925	Baker	H
O'Connor, Catherine	1927		Res
O'Neil, John J.	1927	Manager	H
O'Neil, Josephine	1927		H
Reed, Albert L.	1913 - 1914	Plasterer	
Sampson, Leander	1916	Helper	B
Sartell, Harry D.	1905	Sawyer	B
Taylor, Robert J.	1890	Writer, Copyist	H
Walters, Clarence	1911	Carpenter	H

II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

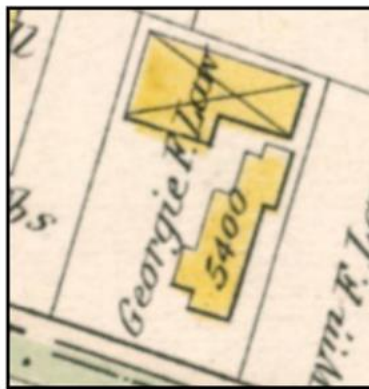
Please see the section immediately below which discusses location, design, materials and any alterations as the same information would be written here, just in longer form.

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.

Comparing the historic map with satellite images of the current property we can determine 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 14 White St Pl

- The 1874 Map shows that the primary structure's has an ell to the left and a small projection behind the ell towards the rear. No rear structure has yet been constructed on the lot.

Fig 2: 1895 Bromley Map, close-up of 14 White St Pl

- By 1895 the rear structure has been constructed. It consists of a larger main massing and a smaller portion to the right.

Fig 3: 1900 Sanborn Map, close-up of 14 White St Pl

- The Sanborn Map shows that a porch was added to the entrance in the corner between the ell and the front elevation.
- The Map also indicates that the primary structure has two stories in the front and mid sections of the building and one story towards the rear.
- The left portion of the rear structure has one story, while the connected section to the right has two stories.

Fig 4 & 5: Satellite images of 14 White St Pl

- By 2022, the shed dormer towards the right rear of the primary structure was added. Further alterations to either the primary or secondary structures are not visible from the satellite view of the property.

1. 14 White Street Place

The period of relevance for the property starts c.1890

- a. Location: It is likely that both structures are in their original location and were built on-site.
- b. Design: The primary structure is a wood framed gable ended residence with a gabled ell on the left elevation, and a portico over the left front entry (one door); mid to late 20th century iron railings and columns for porch; fenestration consists of one one-over-one, double-hung, replacement sash windows with simple surrounds, and on the second floor of the left elevation towards the rear is a pivot window flanked with two double-hung sash windows; gabled dormer on left elevation over covered porch; rear portion of building has a lower roofline than the rest of the structure; shed dormer on right elevation towards rear; right rear entry; brick chimney.

Rear building is composed of two parts: a one-story garage and a two-story apartment. The main massing is a low-slope roofed wood framed building; deep eave on front elevation; two garage entryways on front elevation; three replacement vinyl one-over-one double hung sash windows on the left elevation; decorative brick on front elevation; vinyl clapboard above brick on front elevation; decorative vinyl siding on right and left elevations; wood shingle siding on rear.

The two-story portion of the rear building is a, wood frame, side-gabled structure; second-floor projects over first floor on the front elevation creating a covered entry; asymmetrical entry; replacement double-hung sash windows with decorative shutters.

- c. Materials:
 1. *Main structure:* Aluminum clapboard; wood or aluminum replacement front door; mid-20th century iron porch railings and posts supporting entry portico; one-over-one replacement windows (vinyl or metal); brick chimney stack.
 2. *Garage:* vinyl clapboard on front and side elevations, wood shingle siding on the rear elevation; decorative brick on the base of the front elevation; vinyl or aluminum windows; wood garage doors.
 3. *Apartment:* clapboard (wood and aluminum); one-over-one double-hung replacement windows (vinyl or metal); front door (wood or aluminum); asphalt shingle roof.
- d. Alterations: Replacement windows and doors; shed dormer on right elevation; pivot window with sash windows; mid to late 20th century iron railings and columns.
- e. Evaluation of Integrity of 14 White Street Place 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 of the integrity of its original form. Alterations have occurred to this structure which obscure some original details; however, the original massing remains largely intact as do architectural details.

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 each of the STRUCTURES at 14 White Street Place meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why each of the STRUCTURES at 14 White Street Place 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 each of the STRUCTURES at 14 White Street Place meets any of the criteria stated above.
2. The HPC must specifically state why each of the STRUCTURES at 14 White Street Place 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 each of the STRUCTURES at 14 White Street Place is or is not “historically significant”.