



# City of Medford

## HISTORICAL COMMISSION HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

City Hall – Room 308  
85 George P. Hassett Drive  
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

### Via Electronic Mail

April 2, 2019

Adam L. Hurtubise, City Clerk  
Medford City Hall, Room 103  
85 George P. Hassett Drive  
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

### Re: 7 Lauriat Place, Determination of Significance

Dear Sir,

The Medford Historical Commission (the “Commission”) has received an application concerning the proposed demolition of the gold beating shop located at 7 Lauriat Place, Medford, MA. The application was filed at the Commission’s regular meeting on Monday, February 11, 2019. Pursuant to Section 48-78(d) of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Medford, a public meeting was held on Monday, March 11, 2019, in Room 201 of Medford City Hall to determine if the aforementioned property was to be found to be *significant* under Medford’s Demolition Delay Ordinance.

As set forth in Section 48-78, a *significant* building is any structure, or a portion thereof, which is not within a local historic district subject to regulation under the provisions of MGLA c. 40C, but which:

1. Has been listed in or is the subject of a pending application for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; or
2. Has been listed in the Massachusetts Register of Historic Places; or
3. Was built within 75 years or older and which is determined by the commission to be a significant building as provided by subsection 48-78(d) either because:
  - a. It is 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; or
  - b. It is historically or architecturally important in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with an important architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings.

**At its February 11 meeting, the Commission made the determination that 7 Lauriat Place is a significant building under Section 48-78 of the Demolition Delay Ordinance.** The Commission’s determination (passed by a 5-0 vote), was based on the documentation and research contained in the attached Massachusetts Historical Commission (“MHC”) form B prepared by John Clemson, the Commission’s consultant in architectural history. The Commission also reviewed associated MHC area forms and an expanded neighborhood narrative for the area of East Medford in which the premises is located. The facts supporting the findings are as follows:

1. 7 Lauriat Place is a rare survivor of a lost cottage industry. The gold beating craft was introduced to Massachusetts by Louis Anslem Lauriat in the early nineteenth century. He worked in a shop in Boston where he trained several apprentices. Slowly, the trade was carried across the region. His son, Charles Phillip Lauriat, was the first to establish a workshop in Medford. His grandson, Anslem Lauriat, also learned the craft. Locally, the business was carried on for more than a century under their name. Several apprentices carried on the business into the mid twentieth century.
2. 7 Lauriat Place has important associations with notable persons. Aside from his gold beating skills, Louis Anslem Lauriat was a French chemist who experimented with hydrogen balloons circa 1830. Well before the days of modern aircraft, Lauriat successfully piloted a flying device of his own invention in many towns across New England. Later failures prompted a return to his learned craft but not before traveling on a US tour. Son Charles Phillip Lauriat was the first to build establish the business in Medford. His house and shop were located just outside of Medford Square. He later would have several satellite operations, including the subject building. This was constructed for his son, Anslem Lauriat. He ran this operation for nearly four decades before it became a printing shop.
3. The building possesses architectural merit. Despite unsympathetic changes, the building possesses an acceptable degree of integrity. Form, vernacular style and function are all discernible among alterations. In addition, the design of the structure closely relates to the surrounding streetscape. It maintains similar heights, setback and roofline which allow it to blend into the neighborhood despite an obvious non-residential use.
4. 7 Lauriat Place directly correlates with the development of the surrounding neighborhood. At the end of the nineteenth century, East Medford increased in density through the development of open land abutting major streetcar lines. New residential homes were built for middle or working class occupants. Located off Cross Street, members of the Lauriat family constructed single family residences. Anslem Lauriat was among the first to live on the street. He occupied the adjacent house at 5 Lauriat Place (MDF.1384).
5. The association with the Lauriat Family and their gold beating business puts the building in with State currents. Metropolitan Boston became a great workshop of industry and innovation in the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to bricks, ships and run, Medford had several notable industries that were part of this broad movement in our regional history. Chief among them were gold beating, wagon building and the production of hats, oil and soaps.

Based on the information available to it, the Commission has found 7 Lauriat Place to be historically significant under Section 48-78(d) under criteria a and b, set forth in the definition of “significant building” in section Section 48-77 of the Demolition Delay Ordinance, as it has is important associations with historic persons and events of the City of Medford, and the broad architectural, cultural and social history of the City and Commonwealth. It is architecturally important in terms of period and style both by itself and in the context of buildings in the area of East Medford in which it was erected, as well as in terms of the method of building construction by itself. These factors, viewed in combination, provide ample support for a finding of significance.

In accordance with Section 48-78(e) of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Medford **the Medford Historical Commission will hold a public meeting on Monday, April 8, 2019, at 7 p.m. in Room 201 of Medford City Hall** to hear public comments and to determine if demolition of 7 Lauriat Place will be detrimental to the historical, cultural, or architectural heritage or resources of the City of Medford. Within 21 days from the close of the meeting of April 8, the Commission will issue a formal written determination

as to whether 7 Lauriat Place should be “preferably preserved” and thus the demolition delay provided for in Section 48-78(h) of the Revised Ordinances.

Any questions regarding this determination and the hearing to be conducted April 8 may be directed to the Chair of the Historical Commission at [HistoricalCommission@Medford-MA.gov](mailto:HistoricalCommission@Medford-MA.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer M Keenan" with a decorative flourish at the end.

Jennifer M. Keenan  
Chair of the Medford Historical Commission

Copy to: Applicant of Record  
Attorney of Record  
Building Commissioner, Building Department