



City of Medford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION &
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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

Via Electronic Mail and Fax

November 16, 2023

Adam L. Hurtubise, City Clerk
Medford City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, MA 02155
(781) 391-1895

Re: Determination of Significance – 56 Wareham Street

Dear Sir,

The Medford Historical Commission (the “Commission”) has received an application concerning the proposed total demolition of the dwelling house located at 56 Wareham Street, Medford, MA. The application was filed at the Commission’s regular meeting on Monday, November 13, 2023. Pursuant to Section 48-78(d) of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Medford, a public meeting was held on Monday, November 13, 2023, at 7 PM via Zoom to determine if the aforementioned building 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 the November 13 meeting, the Commission made the determination that the dwelling house at 56 Wareham Street is a *significant* building under Section 48-78 of the Demolition Delay ordinance. The Commission’s determination (passed by a 4-1 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 facts supporting the finding are as follows:

1. 56 Wareham possesses architectural merit. The building retains original massing, aperture locations, and some apparent interior fabric. Wood siding, in-kind windows, doors, and trim all work together to make the case that the building retains its integrity and is worthy of retention.
2. 56 Wareham contributes to the larger streetscape. The neighborhood in which the subject building is located is a rich assemblage of architectural styles. There have been changes but, for the most part, the

streetscape remains intact and legible. The loss of this building would forever alter the street, especially given its central location.

3. Lastly, 56 Wareham is part of the broad patterns of Medford development. The City experienced the a large building boom in the late nineteenth century with the arrival of streetcars. Residential development off of Main Street and Harvard Avenue blossomed and progressed rapidly. A number of houses were constructed contemporary to the subject building. Of them, this one is perhaps one of the better preserved buildings. It remains an important reminder of the first wave of development.

Based on the information available, the Commission has found 56 Wareham Street to be historically significant under Section 48-78(d) under criteria b set forth in the determination of “significant building” in Section 48-77 of the Demolition Delay Ordinance, as it has important associations with the broad architectural history of the City of Medford. It is architecturally important in terms of period and style, both by itself and in the context of buildings in the Winter Hill neighborhood in which it was erected. 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 hearing on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 7pm via Zoom** to determine if the demolition of 56 Wareham Street would 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 on December 11, 2023, the Commission will issue a formal written determination as to whether 75 Clewley Road should be “preferably preserved” and thus the demolition delay provided for in Section 48-78(h) of the Revised Ordinances.

Additional information regarding the meeting, including online link, will be filed with the legal notice and upcoming agenda which will be submitted as required by open meeting rules and regulations.

Any questions regarding this determination and the hearing to be conducted on December 11, 2023 may be directed to the Chair of the Historical Commission at HistoricalCommission@Medford-MA.gov.

Sincerely,



Jennifer M. Keenan
Chair, Medford Historical Commission

CC: Applicants of Record
Building Department/Building Commissioner