



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

January 11, 2022

Adam L. Hurtubise, City Clerk
Medford City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, MA 02155
(781) 605-4735

Re: Determination of Significance – 33 Third Street

Dear Sir,

The Medford Historical Commission (the “Commission”) has received an application concerning the proposed demolition of the dwelling house located at 33 Third Street, Medford, MA. The application was filed at the Commission’s regular meeting on Monday, December 13, 2021. Pursuant to Section 48-78(d) of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Medford, a public meeting was held on Monday, December 10, 2021, at 7 PM via Zoom 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 the January 10, 2022 meeting, the Commission made the determination that 33 Third 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 Commission also reviewed the expanded narrative for the Wellington Neighborhood in which the premises is located. The facts supporting the finding are as follows:

1. 33 Third Street is representative of the first wave of development in the neighborhood. The Wellington neighborhood was first laid out in the mid-nineteenth century but few houses were constructed. When lots were reconfigured into smaller sizes, it attracted white collar families to the area. They built large and ornate examples of Victorian architecture. This house fits within that pattern of history.
2. 33 Third Street is a good representation of period and style. The building is a Queen Anne dwelling dating to the second half of the nineteenth century. It has a varied massing which is a character defining feature of Victorian buildings. Standing two and a half stories tall, it is larger than other examples found in the area.

3. 33 Third Street retains a high degree of integrity. Original features survive. These include the massing, brackets, and some trim. Although other features have been covered by vinyl siding and aluminum trim, the envelope most likely survives intact below. This later change does not diminish the design intent or readability of the property.
4. 33 Third Street has a connection to the gold beating industry. This cottage industry developed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Its workers were among the most skilled tradesmen in the Commonwealth. It required extensive training and a delicate hand. They worked in small outbuildings and often in groups. Only a handful of buildings remain from this time. The owner of 33 Third Street owned a gold beating shop once located on the property.
5. 33 Third Street has a social history that is interesting and parallels the surrounding neighborhood and therefore contributes to the broad patterns of development. This parcel was developed by a resident-builder who worked in the area. It was also first occupied by a builder, demonstrating how many craftsmen and tradespersons were flocking to the community to build out the large tracts of land.
6. Last, the building is important in terms of its period. Neil Larson, in his City of Medford Community Wide Survey Plan, notes that buildings built prior to 1875 are a rare and diminishing resource. There are less than 3000 pre-1900 buildings. Buildings from this era are of importance to the Commission and therefore prioritized for retention through rehabilitation and/or preservation.

Based on the information available to it, the Commission has found 33 Third Street to be historically significant under Section 48-78(d) under criteria a and 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 and social 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 Wellington 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, February 14, 2022 at 7pm via Zoom** to determine if the demolition of 33 Third 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 February 14, 2022, the Commission will issue a formal written determination as to whether 33 Third Street 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 February 14, 2022 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