



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

April 8, 2024

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

Re: Determination of Significance – 27 Almont Street

Dear Sir,

The Medford Historical Commission (the “Commission”) has received an application concerning the proposed demolition of the dwelling house located at 27 Almont Street, Medford, MA. The application was filed at the Commission’s regular meeting on Monday, March 10, 2024. Pursuant to Section 48-78(d) of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Medford, a public meeting was held on Monday, April 8, 2024, 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 April 8, 2024 meeting, the Commission made the determination that 27 Almont Street is a *significant building* under Section 48-78 of the Demolition Delay Ordinance. The Commission’s determination (passed by a 4-0 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 facts supporting the finding are as follows:

1. 27 Almont Street is a rare resource in the City of Medford. There are less than 3000 pre-1900 resources within this community. Half of these date to before 1855. This building falls within that time period. Neil Larson, in his City Wide Preservation Plan, notes that buildings of this age are rare and diminishing. The Commission views the retention of these resources as a high priority.
2. 27 Almont Street is an excellent representation of the period and style. The gable end house standing 1 ½ stories tall is adorned in Greek Revival architectural elements. These include a pedimented door surround, heavy frieze under the soffits, and interior trim and woodwork. The dwelling is representative of smaller dwellings that were constructed for the shipyard workers north of the Mystic River. Although there are many examples like this building, this one stands out as one of the best examples in Medford.
3. 27 Almont retains a high degree of integrity. Original features remain intact including massing, floor plan, and finishes on the exterior and interior. Although the building has had some updates, these do not diminish the importance of the surviving fabric.

4. 27 Almont has a form that openly conveys its social history. The scale immediately indicates a working-class family home. The first and subsequent occupants were tradespersons who lived locally and worked in the community, Boston, and beyond. The streetscape, with a diverse number of buildings, reflects the transition from a sparsely populated agrarian community to a streetcar suburb. While other houses were constructed, this one remains the same on an unchanged and sizable lot. Its location is important to the streetscape.
5. 27 Almont has a known builder. In the built landscape, it is rare to come across the name of the original builders of a pre-1855 dwelling. This building is associated with three carpenters who undertook the development of the parcel a short time before it was documented on the first map of Medford.
6. 27 Almont has a social history that is mirrored in the surrounding neighborhood. Originally the house was purchased by shipwright Henry G. Crockett. As shipbuilding waned, it became a rented property to various tenants. Other houses in the neighborhood, especially those built on nearby Otis and Dudley Streets, had a similar history. Following the Civil War, the house was home to tradespersons who lived locally and worked in the community, Boston, and beyond. Until recently, the home was owned by the same family since 1905. This longstanding ownership is also found in the area as families become rooted in the community.
7. Last, the building is likely to yield important information about its builder through method of construction. Built in the middle of the nineteenth century, the structure is a balloon frame building. It employs knee wall construction to provide extra space under the eaves at the second level. Similar buildings typically employed lighter framing methods and uncommon forms of joinery and construction to maximize their strength and rigidity. It is worthy of documentation prior to any alteration to record the building for posterity.

Based on the information available to it, the Commission has found 27 Almont 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, style, and method of building construction, both by itself and in the context of buildings in the East Medford 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, May 13, 2024 at 7pm via Zoom** to determine if the demolition of 27 Almont 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 May 13, 2024, the Commission will issue a formal written determination as to whether 27 Almont 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 May 13, 2024 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