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Department of Community and Economic Development
WESTWOOD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Historic Structure Demolition
Westwood General Bylaw Chapter 250A

APPLICANT: Ann Brown
1297 High Street
Westwood, MA 02090

PROPERTY OWNER: Ann Brown
1297 High Street
Westwood, MA 02090

PROPERTY LOCUS: 1297 High Street, Westwood, MA 02090
Assessor's Map 28, Lot 007

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

The Applicant requested permission to demolish an existing single-family home at 1297 High Street in order to construct a new single-family home at the same location. The Building Commission determined that the structure may be historically and/or architecturally significant and forwarded the matter to the Westwood Historical Commission (WHC) for review pursuant to Westwood General Bylaw Chapter 250A. The structure proposed for demolition is believed to have been constructed in the mid-19th century. The structure is shown in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database as circa 1850. The same property is shown in the Town Assessor's records as having been constructed in 1830. The actual date of construction remains unknown. The property is located in the Single Residence C (SRC) zoning district and shown on the Assessor's Map as MAP 28, Lot 007. The existing single-family home is a permitted use in this district. An Application pursuant to Westwood General Bylaw Chapter 250A was filed with the Westwood Historical Commission and the Town Clerk on August 10, 2020.

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

After having reviewed all the plans and reports filed by the Applicant and its representatives and having considered the technical analysis, supplemental information provided during the course of the public hearing, correspondence and testimony from representatives from various boards and commissions and departments within the Town of Westwood and from all other interested parties, the Westwood Historical Commission makes the following procedural findings and project findings:

PROCEDURAL FINDINGS:

1. On August 10, 2020, an Application was filed by or on behalf of Ann Brown (hereinafter "Applicant"), pursuant to Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A [Historic Structure Demolition] with the Westwood Historical Commission (hereinafter "WHC").
2. On April 3, 2020, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker signed into law Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, "An Act to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities Resulting from COVID-19", which act tolled the deadlines for the review of applications under various municipal bylaws, including Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A.
3. Pursuant to Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A, the WHC caused notice of the public hearing to be published in the Westwood Press, a newspaper of general circulation in Westwood, on September 24, 2020. Notice of the public hearing was posted in the Westwood Town Hall Website commencing on September 18, 2020, and continuing through the opening of the public hearing on September 29, 2020. Said notice of the public hearing was mailed postage prepared to all Parties in Interest as defined in Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A on September 22, 2020.
4. The public hearing on the Application commenced on September 29, 2020 remotely via Zoom, and was concluded on the same date.
5. WHC Members Nancy Donahue, Margaret Rustrian, and John Patterson deliberated on the Application at a duly authorized meeting on September 29, 2020.

PROJECT FINDINGS:

1. The subject property consists of approximately 21,780 square feet located at 1297 High Street, and is shown as Map 28, Lot 007 on the Westwood Board of Assessors' Map (hereinafter "Property").
2. Presently, the Project Site contains a single-family structure which is believed to have been constructed in the mid-19th century. The structure is shown in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database as circa 1850. The same property is shown in the Town Assessor's records as having been constructed in 1830. The actual date of construction remains unknown.
3. The Property is located in the Single Residence C (SRC) zoning district. The single-family structure is a permitted use in this district.
4. The Applicant proposes to redevelop the property with a new single-family residential structure.
5. During the course of its public hearing, the WHC considered whether the apparent age and/or historical or architectural character of the existing residential structure subjected that structure to the requirements of Westwood General Bylaw Section

250A. The WHC determined that the structure is historically significant and subject to the provisions of Section 250A.

6. Next, the Commission considered whether the proposed demolition of the historically significant structure would be detrimental to the purposes protected by the Demolition Bylaw and to the historic resources of the Town. Based on a review of photographs of the interior and exterior of the structure, and testimony of the Applicant, the Commission determined that the structure did not retain significant architectural integrity and was not preferably preserved.
7. The WHC did not identify any architectural items within the structure which were worthy of preservation.
8. The WHC voted 3 to 0 not to impose a Demolition Delay Period and to issue a Demolition Authorization Decision allowing for immediate submission of an Application to the Building Commissioner for Demolition Permit.

DECISION:

The Westwood Historical Commission evaluated the Demolition Application in relation to the above Findings, and as the approving authority, by a vote of three (3) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby declares the single-family residential structure at 1297 High Street to be historically significant.

The Westwood Historical Commission, by a vote of three (3) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby declares the single-family residential structure at 1297 High Street to not be preferably preserved.

The Westwood Historical Commission, by a vote of three (3) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby declines to impose any Demolition Delay Period and to issue a Demolition Authorization Decision allowing for immediate submission of an Application to the Building Commissioner for Demolition Permit.

This decision shall expire on September 29, 2022, and is transferable to a new property owner prior to that expiration date.

RECORD OF VOTE

The following members of the Westwood Historical Commission voted on September 29, 2020 not to impose a Demolition Delay Period, and thus to allow the issuance of a Demolition Permit for the single-family structure at 1297 High Street, Westwood, MA 02090: Nancy Donahue, Margaret Rustrian, and John Patterson.

The following members of the Westwood Historical Commission voted to impose a Demolition Delay Period: None.



Nora Loughnane
October 7, 2020