

Nancy Donahue, Chairman
Eric Alden
Marilyn Freedman
John Patterson
Lura Provost
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Town of Westwood
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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Westwood Town Clerk

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Department of Community and Economic Development
WESTWOOD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Historic Structure Demolition
Westwood General Bylaw Chapter 250A

APPLICANT: Karen Manor on Behalf of
Westwood Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 2616
Westwood, MA 02090

PROPERTY OWNER: Westwood Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 2616
Westwood, MA 02090

PROPERTY LOCUS: 552 Gay Street, Westwood, MA 02090
Assessor's Map 15, Lot 25

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

The Applicant requested permission to demolish an existing single-family home at 552 Gay Street in order to sell the property with the potential for redevelopment with 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 middle of the 18th century. The structure is shown in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database as circa 1750 with the source of that date listed as being taken from an historic marker. The same property is shown in the Town Assessor's records as having been constructed in 1750. The property is located in the Single Residence E (SRE) zoning district and shown on the Assessor's Map as MAP 15, Lot 25. 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 Town Clerk on November 15, 2021.

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 March 12, 2020, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker issued an Executive Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law MGL C. 30A, §18. The Governor extended said order on June 16, 2021 to April 1, 2022, permitting municipal boards and commissions, including the Westwood Historical Commission, to hold meetings and conduct public hearings in a remote format.
2. On November 15, 2021, an Application was filed by Karen Manor on behalf of the Westwood Land Trust, Inc. (hereinafter "Applicant"), pursuant to Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A [Historic Structure Demolition] with the Westwood Historical Commission (hereinafter "WHC").
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 December 2, 2021. Notice of the public hearing was posted in the Westwood Town Hall Website commencing on November 24, 2021, and continuing through the opening of the public hearing on December 13, 2021. Said notice of the public hearing was mailed postage prepared to all Parties in Interest as defined in Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A on November 29, 2021.
4. The public hearing on the Application commenced on December 13, 2021 remotely via Zoom, and was concluded on the same date.
5. WHC Members Nancy Donahue, Lura Provost, Marilyn Freedman, and Eric Alden deliberated on the Application at a duly authorized meeting on December 13, 2021.

PROJECT FINDINGS:

1. The subject property consists of approximately 1.87 acres located at 552 Gay Street, and is shown as Map 15, Lot 25 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 mid18th century. The structure proposed for demolition is shown in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database as circa 1750 with the source of that date listed as being taken from an historic marker. The same property is shown in the Town Assessor's records as having been constructed in 1750.
3. The Property is located in the Single Residence E (SRE) zoning district. The single-family structure is a permitted use in this district.

4. The Applicant proposes to sell the property with the potential for redevelopment 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 and architecturally significant and subject to the provisions of Section 250A.
6. Next, the Commission considered whether the proposed demolition of the historically and architecturally significant structure would be detrimental to the purposes protected by the Demolition Bylaw and to the historic or architectural resources of the Town. Based on a review of photographs of the interior and exterior of the structure, the Commission determined that it would be detrimental to the purposes protected by the Demolition Bylaw and to the historic or architectural resources of the Town for the structure to be demolished. In light of the demonstrated historical significance, the WHC determined that the structure should be preferably preserved.
7. The Commission then considered the Applicant's statement concerning potential hardship related to delayed sale of the property during and Demolition Delay Period. The Commission did not find evidence of substantial hardship sufficient to negate or reduce the length of a Demolition Delay Period.
8. The WHC voted 4 to 0 to impose a Demolition Delay Period of six (6) months, running through May 15, 2022.
9. The WHC expressed willingness to consider the reduction of the imposed Demolition Delay Period, if so requested by the Applicant at a subsequent meeting, upon review of conservation and/or preservation restrictions to be placed on the property by the Applicant prior to sale and redevelopment.

DECISION:

The Westwood Historical Commission evaluated the Demolition Application in relation to the above Findings, and as the approving authority, by a vote of four (4) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby declares the single-family residential structure at 552 Gay Street to be historically and architecturally significant.

The Westwood Historical Commission, by a vote of four (4) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby declares the single-family residential structure at 552 Gay Street to be preferably preserved.

The Westwood Historical Commission, by a vote of four (4) in favor and zero (0) opposed, finds no substantial hardship would be incurred by the Applicant upon imposition of a Demolition Delay Period.

The Westwood Historical Commission, by a vote of four (4) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby imposes a Demolition Delay Period of six (6) months, pursuant to Westwood General Bylaw Section 250A-4E, running through May 15, 2022.

This decision shall expire on December 13, 2023, 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 December 13, 2021 to impose a Demolition Delay Period of six (6) months, running through May 15, 2022, to prevent the demolition of the single-family structure at 552 Gay Street, Westwood, MA 02090 prior to May 15, 2022: Nancy Donahue, Lura Provost, Marilyn Freedman, and Eric Alden.

The following members of the Westwood Historical Commission voted to impose a Demolition Delay Period of less than six months or to impose no Demolition Delay Period: None.

Nora Loughnane
December 18, 2021