

Historical Commission Hearing

May 27, 2021

First Floor Hearing Room, Town Hall

733 Main Street - Application for Demolition

In person and by Zoom

Members present: Peter Johnson, Caleb Estabrooks, Charlie Minott, Judy Grecco, Chris Haraden

Others:

Gregory Cogan, trustee of 733 Main Street Trust (applicant)

15 people present in audience and several on Zoom.

This meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. and is being recorded.

Peter Johnson outlines process of the meeting:

The chairman read the hearing notice that was sent to abutters into the record. The Commission declared the building historically significant on April 29, and this hearing is the next step in the process.

Peter Johnson reviewed Bylaw 6-26, "Preservation of Historically Significant Buildings." The owner's representative allowed Commission members to tour the property.

A slide show of photos taken during site visit on April 24 was put up onto the screen in the room.

The Commission has up to 14 days from the date of this hearing to make a decision.

What the Commission has gathered about the property:

Review of Form B of Historic Resources Inventory Survey

Portion of the house visible from street is from 1833, built by the Soule family; the Joseph House house was built around 1712, and was incorporated into the 1833 expansion structure. Bailey family lived in the 1712 portion of the total structure.

Baileys were clockmakers and Revolutionary War veterans. Colonel John Bailey kept a tavern in this house after the war. Was a selectman and town moderator.

28 acres of land goes with the house

Peter also read into the record a portion of a chapter from the book "Houses of the Revolution" on this property, which includes the mention of the "slave ring" on the hearth and the information on the family members that lived there. (copy to be attached)

Testimony given during the hearing:

Gregory Cogan, 201 River St., Trustee of the 733 Main Street Trust

What is the point of preserving buildings? The intent is to preserve the bucolic feel and the rural area behind it. It is in the public interest. It is largely a house that time has forgotten and it would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to restore. The intent is not to develop the property.

The facade could be maintained, but the Commission said that is not good enough.

Attempted to compromise, but so far we have not been able to come to an agreement. All parties have been discussing this in good faith. Submitted a structural engineer's report "restoration of this building frame for continued safe, code-complaint use would require complete replacement of first-floor beams" as well as second floor work, and roof replacement, and foundation work.

Cogan quoted from engineer's report. Joist spacing varies; dry rot, termite damage, and powder post beetle infestation.

A second engineer reviewed and Cogan read from Anderson report (copy to be attached).

Our intention is to build one house on the property and to maintain the rural character of the town, not a new development.

Peter Johnson replied that he would like a preservation carpenter to analyze the home, as the conditions described are not unusual for a home of that age.

He also appreciated the fact that the trustee has provided this information, as it is useful and helpful.

Have had some conversations with the trustee and others involved in the property, and the meetings were cordial.

Wayne Antonellis, 710 Main St., has lived for 30 years across the street

House has never been dilapidated. Believes that the house can be restored. The oldest house on Main Street. Once you tear that down, it's gone forever. All houses can be renovated, it just takes money.

Kenwood Whiting, 738 Main St.

Peter Johnson read a letter from Kenwood Whiting, son of Richard Whiting (seller of the property to the Trust) who said his father did not intend for the property to be demolished. He pointed out that it is of hand-hewn post-and-beam construction. Two sheds on the property were a cobbler shop and smoke house. Encourages commission to vote that it be preferably preserved.

Other letters read into the record from:

Doug Ulrich, president of the Historical Society of Old Abington

Susan Davis Shaw

Johanna Dougherty

(copies to be attached)

Chris Tracy, 20 Buttercup Lane

Still learning about the project and does not believe that he can take an opinion. Recently moved here. Interested in something that might fit the same the dimensions of the existing site. Here with an open mind.

Kenwood Whiting, 738 Main St.

There isn't one thing about this house that can't be fixed. I've worked on homes that are in far worse condition and they are still here today. This building survived in 2015 with the snow load and there's not a thing wrong with it. It would be a shame to see that torn down.

Kathy Hood, 70 Buttercup Lane

With the cost of building today, is it better to preserve or build new?

John Dougherty, 48 Windward Lane

Here to support the owners. Profound appreciation for veterans. Private property rights are important. My understanding is that there is a need for this house to be built. It's beyond it's useful life. It has served its purpose. We have a property owner who wants to do something, and it is not owned by the Town of Hanover.

Matt Slattery, 20 Ancestor Avenue

Is there any guarantee on the preservation of that property at 733 Main St.?

Peter Johnson replied that the Historical Commission has no purview over what they will do with the land.

Gregory Cogan replied that the whole purpose of buying this land was to keep open space and use the trails.

Chris Glynn, 70 Buttercup Lane.

Been there since 1990. There's a tradeoff that needs to be considered. They are gifting the town this land, and the fear for us on Buttercup Lane is that there would be a massive development there. If they are going to replace this building, they are going to preserve this land. If they get frustrated, a developer can come in and build something there.

John O'Leary, 754 Main St.

Is there room for compromise? I'm wondering if we can work something out? Get teeth on it with a restriction on the land. Would hate to see this turn into another Stone Meadow. I see this being developed.

John Goldthwait, 506 Main St.

Also lives in a Bailey house. Who is the mystery person who is the owner? Are they really a good person or are they a developer hiding behind an attorney?

Stephanie Antonellis, now of Somerville, but a previous resident of 710 Main St.

Has been in the property and finds it to be in very good condition.

Chris Haraden offered commentary that the process going forward is prescribed by the bylaw, and that the Trustee has been very cooperative. The Commission is hopeful for a resolution that can be acceptable to all parties.

Peter indicated that with all testimony heard during this hearing, the next step is to schedule a vote.

Tuesday, June 8, at 7 p.m., also a hybrid meeting.

People could also speak at that time.

If the Commission votes that it is not preferably preserved, it could be torn down the next day

If the Commission votes to preserve, then we continue to have conversations with the owners.

Motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

By Chris Haraden

Seconded by Caleb Estabrooks

Vote is 5-0 in favor.

Attachments included with Minutes:

Bylaw 6-26

"Houses of the Revolution" – relevant portion of a chapter

Letters read into the record

Anderson Associates Report

Siegel Associates Report

Historic Property Inventory Form B – 733 Main St.

6-26 PRESERVATION OF HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

Section A. Intent and Purpose

This by-law is adopted for the purpose of identifying and protecting the historic and aesthetic qualities of the Town by preserving, rehabilitating or restoring whenever possible, buildings, structures or properties which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, aesthetic, or historic resources of the Town.

Section B. Definitions

Abutter - Any owner of a property that is contiguous to another, or for the interpretation of this by-law is directly opposite to the property in question.

Building - Any combination of materials forming a shelter for person, animals, or property.

Commission - The Hanover Historical Commission

Demolition - Any act of commencing to pull down or destroy or raze a building

Inspector - Hanover Building Inspector

Significant Building - A building determined by the Commission or its designee to be significant based on any of the following criteria:

The Building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or is eligible for listing.

The Building is importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town or Commonwealth.

The Building is historically or architecturally important (in terms of period, style, method of building construction or association with a recognized architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings.

Preferably Preserved - Any significant building which the Commission determines, following a public hearing, is in the public interest to be preserved rather than demolished. A preferably preserved building is subject to not more than a twelve (12) month demolition delay period by this by-law.

Section C. Procedure

No demolition permit for a building, which is in whole or in part, seventy five (75) years or more old, shall be issued without following the provision of this by-law. If a building is of unknown age, it shall be assumed that the building is over 75 years old for the purposes of this by-law.

An applicant proposing to demolish a building subject to this by-law shall file with the Building Inspector an application, provided by his office.

If the application for demolition is for a structure subject to this bylaw, the Building Inspector shall within seven (7) days forward a copy of the application to the Commission.

The Commission, shall within thirty (30) days after the receipt of the application, make determination of whether the building is significant.

Upon the determination by the Commission that the building is not significant, the Commission shall so notify the Building Inspector and applicant in writing. The Building Inspector may then issue the demolition permit.

Upon determination by the Commission that the building is significant, the Commission shall so notify the Building Inspector and applicant in writing. No demolition permit may be issued at this time.

If the Commission determines that the building is not preferably preserved, the Commission shall so notify the Building Inspector and the applicant in writing. The Building Inspector may then issue the demolition permit.

If the Commission finds that the building is significant, it shall hold a public hearing within thirty (30) days of the written notification to the Building Inspector. Public notice of the time, place, and purpose of the hearing shall be posted in a conspicuous place in town hall for a period of not less than seven (7) days prior to the date of said hearing. Abutters shall be notified in writing at least five (5) business days before a proposed hearing.

The Commission shall decide at the public hearing or within fourteen (14) days after the public hearing whether the building should be preferably preserved. If agreed to in writing by the applicant, the determination of the Commission may be postponed.

If the Commission determines that the building is preferably preserved, the Commission shall notify the Building Inspector and applicant in writing. No demolition permit may be issued within twelve months of the day of notification unless otherwise agreed by the Commission. During this delay the Commission will meet with the applicant to explore alternatives to demolition.

If no alternative to demolition is reached during the delay period, and/or the Commission finds it is in the public interest to do so, it may notify the Building Inspector in writing that the demolition permit may be issued.

At the conclusion of the delay period, absent action by the Commission, the Building Inspector may issue the demolition permit.

Section D. Administration

The Commission may adopt such rules and regulations as are necessary to administer the terms of this by-law.

The Commission is authorized to adopt a schedule of any fees to cover the costs that may be associated with the administration of this by-law.

The Commission may delegate authority to one or more members of the Commission.

The Commission may delegate authority to municipal staff under this by-law.

Section E. Emergency Demolition

If after a site inspection, the Building Inspector, the Fire Chief, or the Board of Health Agent determine that a building poses an immediate threat to public health or safety due to its deteriorated condition, the Building Inspector may issue an emergency demolition permit, and report to the Commission the conditions of the action.

Section F. Enforcement and Remedies

The Commission and/or Building Inspector are each specifically empowered to institute any and all actions and proceedings, in law or equity, as they may deem necessary and appropriate to obtain compliance with the requirements of the by-law or to prevent a threatened violation thereof. Any owner of a building demolished without first obtaining a demolition permit in accordance with the provisions of this by-law shall be subject to a fine of not more than Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.000). Each day the violation exists shall constitute a separate offense unless a faithful restoration of the demolished building is completed. If the building is demolished without first obtaining a demolition permit, no building permit shall be issued for a period of three (3) years from the date of the demolition on the subject parcel of land unless a building permit is issued for a faithful restoration or unless otherwise agreed to by the commission.

Section G. Severability

In case any section, paragraph or part of this by-law be for any reason declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court, every other section, paragraph, and part shall continue in full force and effect.

(Accepted May, 2003), (Approved by the Attorney General, August 20, 2003)

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

22-12

Weymouth

HNV.52

Town/City: Hanover

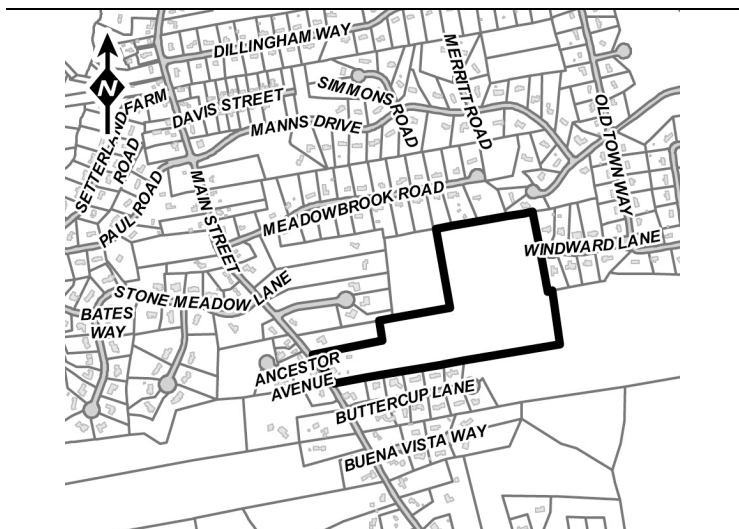
Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Hanover Center

Photograph



Photo 1. 733 Main Street, view northeast.

Locus Map



Recorded by: E. Totten, J. Chin, M. Andrade, V. Adams;
PAL

Organization: Town of Hanover

Date: June 2020

Address: 733 Main Street

Historic Name: Joseph House–Abisha and Frances Soule House

Uses: Present: Single-family Dwelling

Original: Single-family Dwelling

Date of Construction: 1712, ca. 1833

Source: Barry 1853; Dwelley and Simmons 1910

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard/Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Multiple outbuildings at the rear of the building that were unable to be identified from the public right-of-way

Major Alterations (*with dates*): 1712 building was possibly moved and expanded circa 1833; Porch 1970

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☐ yes ☒ **Date:** Ca. 1833
(unconfirmed)

Acreage: 28.72 acres

Setting: The building faces west in a residential section of town, north of Hanover Center. The building is set back from the street on a large L-shaped parcel. Mature trees dot the property line. A stone wall with mature plantings marks the west boundary. The yard is primarily made up of manicured lawn with hedges at the building's foundation.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

HANOVER

733 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

HN.V.52

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

This form is an update to an Inventory Form B created in 1984 (Morgan 1984). This updated documentation expands the description and history of the building and discusses alterations made to the property since the original form was created.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Joseph House–Abisha and Frances Soule House, 733 Main Street (1712, ca. 1833, HN.V.52) is a west-facing, two-story, L-shaped, wood-frame building. Two five-bay-by-two-bay wings meet at the southwest corner to form the L-shape, and a two-story three-bay addition and a one-story three-bay enclosed porch infill the interstice of the two wings. The construction date of the house is contested with credible sources dating the building to ca. 1833 and other sources dating the rear wing's construction to 1712 and the front wing to ca. 1833. Regardless, the building was constructed or altered to resemble the Federal style.

The house has a hip roof clad in asphalt shingles. The walls are surfaced in wood clapboard with wood corner boards and rest on a granite foundation. Paired interior-end chimneys pierce the front wing's north and south slopes. A single chimney pierces the ridgeline of the rear wing. The facade (west) elevation of the front wing is a symmetrical center hall plan, with a central entrance flanked by two windows. Five windows are set in the second story of the facade. The entrance consists of a wood surround with wide pilasters supporting a wood entablature and is filled with a three-panel wood door and aluminum storm door. The doors are framed by operable wood shutters and are reached by a single granite step. The south elevation contains a three-bay wood porch, with two windows to the west, and five windows in the second story. The north elevation contains a single window in each story. The two-story rear wing contains one window at each story and a single-story enclosed porch is to the east of this addition. Fenestration consists primarily of six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows in wide wood surrounds with rectangular sills and modern, metal storm windows. The windows have operable louvered wood shutters.

There are numerous outbuildings at the rear of the property. Three are partially visible from the public right-of-way. Two of the buildings are one-room buildings clad in wood shingles. One has a front-gable roof and the other has a gambrel roof. The other visible building is a two-car garage that appears to be an altered barn.

The house has undergone some alterations since its construction; however, it remains a good example of a Federal style building in Hanover. A structure that originally occupied this parcel was built in 1712. It is unclear if part of this building still remains. The front wing is attributed to Abisha Soule, who purchased the property in 1833. Outbuildings are included in the description of the property when it transferred in 1827 and 1833. An L-shaped building and one outbuilding are included on an 1879 Atlas (Walker 1879). By 1903, the two-story addition and three additional outbuildings had been constructed (Richards 1903). The side porch was added in 1970 (Barker et al. 1976). According to Barker et al., the family that purchased the property in 1965 restored the property, but the details of the restoration are unknown (Barker et al. 1976).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Hanover was formally established as a town from parts of Abington and Scituate in 1727, with the earliest European settlement in southeast Hanover in the Four Corners area. The town developed as a rural agrarian community with industries focused in the south and east portions of town along the North River (southern town boundary) and Third Herring Brook (eastern town boundary). Settlers established a grist mill, sawmill, and shipyard on these two main waterways by the early 1700s. By the 1800s, Hanover's economy was based on shipbuilding, tack making, and shoemaking along the North River and other waterways (MHC 1981:6). In the mid-nineteenth century, shipbuilding in Hanover declined, and with the establishment of the railroad from Rockland to Hanover (1870, with Four Corners as the end of the line) other industries, such as shoe and tack making, rubber reclamation, and machine making, including tack machines and cotton gins, became the leading industries (MHC 1981:7–9). Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Hanover lacked a singular, cohesive town center, instead developing a handful of nodes where industry, commerce, and civic and religious life were focused, including those at South Hanover, Four Corners, and Hanover Center, all of which are in the southern portion of town. Areas outside these clusters,

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

HANOVER

733 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

HN.52

especially in the north section of town, retained an agrarian development pattern, with later suburban overlay, into the twentieth century (MHC 1981; Barker et al. 1976).

The Joseph House—Abisha and Frances Soule House, 733 Main Street (1712, ca.1833, HN.52) has a conflicting history, where reputable secondary sources provide conflicting information about the history of this house. Both histories will be discussed herewith. The rear ell of the house at 733 Main Street is referred to as the Joseph House House from 1712. The front of the house is referred to as the Abisha and Francis Soule House, who purchased the property in 1833.¹

Dwelley and Simmons attribute the rear of the house to Joseph House, who was a ship building and worked at Colonel John Bailey's shipyard. Joseph House was born in 1696 and married Lydia Curtis in 1716. According to Dwelley and Simmons, Joseph House constructed the rear building around 1712. They claim that "He [Joseph House] sold it to John Bailey, who was, in early life, also engaged in shipbuilding. Calvin Bailey, the son of John, resided here until his removal to Maine, and the house was then purchased by Abisha Soule, and has since been owned by him or by one of his descendants. The original house, which was two stories high with the end to the street, was moved back from its original location by Mr. Soule and enlarged" (Dwelley and Simmons 1910:255).

This account conflicts with Barry's 1853 history of the town. According to Barry, John Bailey did live on Main Street and he also "kept a tavern, on Curtis St. near where Abisha Soule resides" (Barry 1853:200). Barry also states that Abisha Soule (in 1853) "lives on Main St., in the house which stands where stood the Jno. Bailey homestead" (Barry 1853:377). This indicates that the home of Abisha Soule is not the same building that Joseph House built and that the Bailey family occupied. It is unclear how Dwelley and Simmons determined that Abisha Soule relocated the 1712 Joseph House House. Further research would be necessary to determine if the rear ell is in fact the 1712 Joseph House House, including an examination of the interior framing by an expert in early building practices in the region, in order to more closely pinpoint the date of construction. It is not contested that the parcel of land is the former Bailey homestead.

Colonel John Bailey Jr. (1730–1810) married Ruth Randall (1730–1820) in 1750. John and Ruth had eight children: John, Luther, Ruth, Lucinda, Calvin, Lebbeus, Sage, and Betsey. Early in his career, Colonel John Bailey owned a shipyard in Hanover. John Bailey Jr. served as a colonel in the Revolutionary War. His son, Luther, served as a major in his regime (Dwelley and Simmons 1910). John and Ruth's sons John, Calvin and Lebbeus were clockmakers. Their clocks still exist today and are highly valued. John (III) apprenticed his brothers and many other local clockmakers. He was the most prolific of the Bailey clockmakers. The brothers had a clock shop on Main Street, but the location is unknown (Barry 1853:154). Calvin Bailey (1761–1835) resided at the 733 Main Street until 1827, when he sold the 27-acre parcel, buildings, and 10-acre woodland parcel to his son, Henry Bailey (PCRD 1827:161/130). In 1828, Calvin and his wife, Sarah Jacobs (1764–1846) moved to Maine (Dwelley and Simmons 1910).

In 1833, Lemuel Dwelley Jr. acting as Guardian to Henry Bailey sold "the dwelling house, outbuildings, and about twenty five acres of land being the late homestead of Calvin Bailey formerly of Hanover..." to Abner Curtis, who that same year, sold the property to Abisha Soule (1805–1873) (PCRD 1833:178/90, 1833:179/214).² Henry Bailey and his wife moved to Quincy, where they resided as of 1853 (Barry 1853). According to Dwelley and Simmons, Abisha Soule moved the existing building back and constructed a new building on the front, thus creating the L-shaped building that exists today. As discussed, this claim is unsubstantiated and requires further investigation. Abisha Soule married Frances Hobart (1807–1902) in 1825. The couple had three children: Sibyl, Caroline, and Maria (1833–1917). Abisha worked as a shoemaker and lived at the property until his death (U.S. Census 1850, 1860). In 1879, the property is denoted as belong to the A. Soule's "Hrs" (heirs). By 1903, H.W. Percival lived at the property (Richards 1903). Henry W. Percival (1851–1944) was the son of Maria E. Soule and Henry C. Percival (1829–1852), who died a year after their marriage. After her husband's death, Maria married Silas B. Jones and moved to California. Henry W. Percival married Ella M. French (1851–1929) and the couple lived at the property until their deaths. Henry W. worked as a laster in a shoe factory or as a shoemaker. Ella M. French kept house and the couple had a boarder, Mary E. Glover, in 1900 and 1910 (U.S. Census 1900, 1910). In 1944, the property was sold to Stuart and Helen Dimock. The property was sold in 1965 to Richard and Shirley M. Whiting. The property is still held by the Whiting family through a trust (Hanover Assessors 2020).

¹ On all records Abisha is spelled as such. On his tombstone, the spelling is "Abishai."

² Lemuel Dwelley Jr. was married to Sarah J. Bailey, Calvin Bailey's daughter.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

HANOVER

733 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

HNW.52

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s)	Form No.
	HNV.52

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 2: 733 Main Street, view southeast.



Photo 3: 733 Main Street, view east.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

HANOVER

733 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	HNV.52
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Photo 4: 733 Main Street outbuildings, view east.

river at Trenton and attack the Hessians in the ice and snow. He was victorious and the regiment was thanked for "their brave and steady conduct." Col. Bailey's son Luther (11), was a Major in his father's regiment and lived in this house also.

Col. John asked for a discharge in 1780 "on account of the situation of his domestic affairs and ill health and having served in the army from the commencement of the war." His long service probably was disastrous to his financial interests in town and after the war he kept a tavern in this house. He had served as Selectman before the war, from 1768 to 1771, and after the war he served as Moderator for six meetings in 1781 to 1782.

Col. John and his wife, Ruth Randall, had 5 daughters, 4 sons, plus two children who died in infancy. Three of the sons were excellent clockmakers, John (10), Calvin (12) and Lebbeus (5vii). Calvin lived in the house with his family until he moved to Maine. Major Luther married in 1784 and his wife, Silvester Little, bore him two daughters. Silvester died at the birth of the second child and the older child, died at the age of six. Luther never married again and lived in the homestead and died here in 1820. His father died in the old house also, in 1810.

Mr. Abisha Soule (1), who made many changes and additions, occupied the house in the 1800's and his daughter married Henry Percival (3), who lived here in 1910.

It is now the gracious home of the Richard Whiting family, who have a great appreciation of its heritage, and have spent enormous energy and time in restoring it. It has a rich and proud history.

COL. JOHN BAILEY HOUSE
733 Main Street (Curtis St.) #210



Probably Hanover's best known Revolutionary War hero was Col. John Bailey, (5). He lived in several houses in town, but longest in the house on Main Street (Curtis), the original portion of which was built in 1712, by Joseph House, a shipbuilder. John Bailey was in the ship-building business, himself, prior to the Revolution, and Joseph House is said to have been his master workman.

The original house, which was two stories high, faced south with its end toward the street. It was later moved back and enlarged by Abisha Soule (1) in the early 1800's.

The house now appears to be a typical four hip roof colonial (front) with the older back section. There are end chimneys in the front portion and a third chimney in the older section which is early, but has probably been changed some since 1712 as the bake oven is now located at the side. An iron ring is fastened in one of the bricks of this hearth and legend has it that a slave was sometimes chained here.

Col. Bailey left his shipyard and extensive landholdings at the time of the Revolution and was a Lt. Colonel in May 1775, in Col. Thomas's regiment. He was soon commissioned as Colonel and later in 1779 at West Point, became a ranking Colonel.

He was second in command at Dorchester and in important positions in the New York Campaign. His regiment was chosen by Gen. Washington to cross the

Anderson Associates

Consulting Engineers

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508-224-2267

To: Lack & Cogan, P.C.
Atten: Gregory M. Cogan
Date: May 25, 2021
Subject: 733 Main Street Hanover Ma.

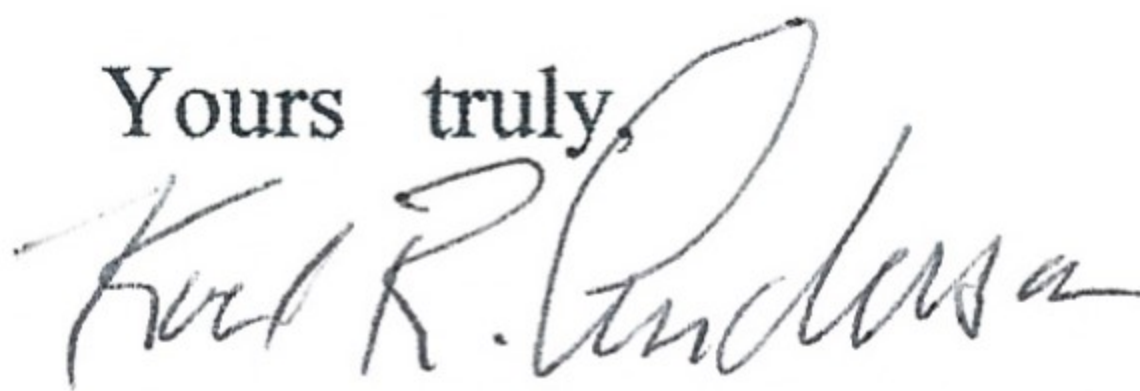
At your request we offer the following comments regarding the structural condition of the subject house. The Architect for the owner, Jeffrey Metcalf, R.A., requested that I join him for an inspection of the building on April 23, 2021. The inspection was limited to a walk thru of the first floor and visual inspection of the 1st floor framing from the small basement area under the oldest section of the house.

. In our opinion the 1st floor framing should be replaced or reinforced to make house safe for occupancy. Due to the very limited working space under 1st floor and the considerable floor settlements this work would be very difficult and expensive.

We have reviewed the Inspection Report by Siegel Associates, Structural Engineers dated April 29, 2021 and concur with their findings.

Please call if you have any questions.

Yours truly,



Karl R. Anderson, PE



April 29, 2021

Mr. Peter Hutchinson
Thoughtforms Corporation
525 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 204
Acton, MA 01720

Re: Structural Walk-Through Inspection
733 Main Street, Hanover, MA

Dear Peter,

Siegel Associates conducted a walk-through inspection of the main house at 733 Main St., Hanover, MA on April 27th. This inspection was conducted at your request, in order to observe the condition of existing foundations and framing, and discuss approaches to repair, reinforce, and/or replace damaged, underperforming, or non-compliant building structure. For the purposes of this report, Main Street will be considered to run north-south, and the observed building is to the east of Main Street.



BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The main house at 733 Main Street is a wood-framed, two-story Federal-style building resting on a rubble stone and granite block foundation. According to records from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the date of construction is not confirmed but portions of the building may date back to 1712. Based upon framing organization and architectural details, we believe that at least two additions were added to an original el shaped building, and that the roof framing of the el as well as the floor framing of the kitchen have been significantly reframed since original construction.

A small portion of the framed building sits over a full basement, most of the balance sits over a very shallow crawl space, and a newer sunroom to the east of the main building is built over a concrete slab-on-grade.

STRUCTURAL OBSERVATIONS

First Floor Structure: The first floor surface is uneven, heel-drops reveal considerable bounce, and the northwest corner drops by a few inches relative to the most regular floor surface elevation (See Image #1). We expect this drop results from sill damage since the foundations look sound from the exterior.

A full basement is found beneath the southeast wing of the el only. From this basement a close physical inspection of first floor framing is possible, and framing beneath the southwest portion of the el and beneath the newer infill floor can also be observed via foundation wall openings into adjacent, very shallow crawl spaces (See Image #2).

Joists beneath the southeast wing of the el vary considerably in size from piece to piece, ranging from 5x5 square members to 4", 5", and 6" diameter logs. Joist spacing varies from 24" to 30" on center. Nearly every observed joist suffers from significant powder post beetle damage, termite damage, and dry rot (degradation of the cellulose and hemicellulose that gives wood strength and resilience, caused by fungi) (See Image #3). Outer layers of the log joists can be pulled apart by hand, and a sharp steel probe can be readily pushed deep into the cores of many joists.

Joists beneath the southwest portion of the el are made of logs in the 4-5" diameter range. These joists appear to be degraded similarly to joists beneath the southeast wing.

Joists beneath the infill are fairly new 2x8s at 16" on center and spanning 10 feet. They are carried at the exterior timber log sill with joist hangers.

Second Floor Structure: Posts typical of post-and-beam construction are visible in the exterior corners of the building (See Image #4). The ceilings are low and measure between 6'-10" and 7'-0". The floor surfaces are somewhat uneven and there is an appreciable bounce when the floor is subject to heel-drop impact. Based upon nail patterns in the floor the joists are spaced at 24" to 30". No direct observations of framing is possible without removing architectural finishes.

Roof structure: The roof of the el is hip-framed, a two-story infill on the northeast side of the el has a relatively flat roof, and the sunroom east of the infill has a shallow shed. Only the framing of the el could be observed during this inspection (architectural finishes cover roof framing elsewhere).

Roof rafters over the el are variable in size and spacing, but the most typical condition is 3x4 rafters at 30" on center. Rafters are positioned over and are carried by attic floor joists that span the width of the el. 1x and 2x ridge boards (see Image #5), some clean milled rafters, and some very old rafters with ghost notches and pegs (See Image #6), all are evidence that much or all of the roof framing is not original even though some of it is older. Much of the roof sheathing is of a thickness, cut, and condition that suggest it may not be older than the beginning of the last century.

There is some evidence of water damage to roof sheathing, and bug and rot damage to rafters. The roof structure overall is significantly undersized for present-day building codes.

Stone Foundations: Building foundations are stacked stone rubble, lightly mortared, and capped with longitudinal dressed granite blocks. Granite caps were commonly placed to enhance the exterior appearance of the exposed foundation.

Within the full basement, the walls are primarily stacked granite blocks. Rough gaps between granite caps and around some of the stone rubble just beneath the granite.

Termite traps are visible outside of the building, but we did not observe areas of live termites during our inspection. When present, termites most commonly occupy wood framing close to the ground as they need water to survive. The wood sills closest to the ground were inaccessible to us as they can only be observed by crawling through the very shallow crawl spaces.

Wall Framing: Wall framing was not observed during this inspection. We commonly find damage to post and stud bases directly above areas of degraded perimeter sills.

REPAIR AND REINFORCING APPROACHES

First Floor Framing: Within the el, we recommend the removal and replacement of the timber sills with pressure-treated stock, and the removal and replacement of all floor joists. Only framing over the small basement area can be addressed from below; we expect that the balance of reframing efforts will need to be done from above after removing the first floor sheathing.

Second floor framing: The framing within the second floor sandwich was not observed, but based upon the nail spacing through the flooring and the bounce (similar in feel to the first floor) we expect to find shallow, deteriorated framing in need of reinforcement, repair and replacement. We often observe less insect and rot damage at second floor decks as compared to first floor decks as this framing is more separated from the outside environment.

Roof Framing: The roof framing of the el is accessible through the attic. As noted above the framing is very undersized, and is further compromised by rot and insect damage. New framing can be inserted alongside and in between existing rafters, and the overall roof structure can be made safe, code-compliant, and durable.

Stone Foundations: Gaps in mortar joints should be repaired from the interior and exterior where possible. If repairs are sequenced to follow the removal of the first floor sheathing and joists, interior access will be facilitated throughout the building.

Wall Framing: Damage to wall framing is easy to spot during sill replacement, as it is typically found directly over damaged areas of sill. Repair can involve sistering new full height studs or timbers to existing, or can involve replacement of the bottom and lap reinforcing to the upper stud that remains.

SUMMARY

The handsome cosmetic appearance of the main residence at 733 Main Street belies the extreme degradation of wood framing at the first floor level and the anticipated degradation of framing at the second level.

We expect that restoration of this building frame for continued safe, code-compliant use will require the complete replacement of all first floor wood joists, beams and sills; we expect the second floor framing will need to be reinforced or replaced; the roof framing must be reinforced. Stone foundations should be repointed and remortared as necessary, and any damaged wall studs should be reinforced or replaced.

Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or comments. Going forward, Siegel Associates is available to provide comprehensive structural consulting services associated with a repair and renovation effort.

Very truly yours,
SIEGEL ASSOCIATES, INC.



Steven P. Siegel, P.E., Principal

Reference Images



Image 1 -- Floor drop in the NW corner of the first level



Image #2 – Very shallow crawl space beneath first floor framing



Image #3 – Dry rot and powder post beetle damage in first floor framing



Image #4 – Typical post and beam construction at second floor



Image #5 – 2x ridge board, likely indicating an early 20th century roof frame replacement



Image #6 – Ghost notch and peg indicates rafter “harvested” from an earlier construction



Historical Society of Old Abington, Inc.

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Abington, MA 02351
781.878.8480
<http://www.dyerlibrary.org>

Douglas Paul Ulwick, *president*

Peter Johnson, Chair,
Hanover Historical Commission
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339

26 May 2021

RE: 733 Main Street, Significant Building Status

Dear Members of the Commission;

I was dismayed to learn that Richard Whiting, the long-time owner of the historic buildings at 733 Main Street, upon reaching his 90's decided to sell off the properties without attaching any preservation restrictions to the sale, but it likely didn't occur to the nonagenarian that anyone would place so little value on such a treasured property as to plan for its demolition. Yet that is sadly the situation we're apparently faced with.

Thank you for voting at your April 29th Meeting to consider the main house and several of the dependencies as "**significant**". As an architect, former Hanover resident, and a local historian, I wholeheartedly agree.

I have known the family over several decades and come to know the house as well, most recently designing some alterations to the first floor that allowed Richard's late wife Shirley to remain in the home with failing health prior to her demise.

What I came to learn about the house that is interesting and significant apart from who owned it and when, is that it is actually comprised of two separate houses blended into one. The original older "two rooms up/two rooms down" house with center fireplace and it's original steep staircase (matching one at 702 Main) still exists relatively intact at the southeast corner. The prominent façade to the west, facing Main Street is actually a house later added to the original, but is ancient enough to be historic in its own right. There was a passed-down bit of wisdom that the house was "turned" when I think the original telling of the tale was that "the front door used to be on the side" which of course would have been true. I think that original front door remains intact to this day near the southeast corner.

I respectfully urge you to take whatever steps are available to you to preserve this significant piece of Hanover history and interesting piece of architectural history to save it from the wrecking ball.

Sincerely,

Douglas P. Ulwick,
President, Historical Society of Old Abington
Founding and Current Member, Abington Historic Commission

Kenwood B. Whiting
738 Main Street
Hanover, MA 02339

May 27, 2021

Peter Johnson, Chair,
Hanover Historical Commission
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339

RE: 733 Main Street

Dear Members of the Commission:

As a state-licensed builder and construction supervisor with restorative experience, I recognize the value of the architectural and historic "significance" of buildings. The house at 733 Main Street, besides being my homestead for many years, was built in 1712. This is one of the oldest buildings in the town! Built by shipbuilder Joseph House and later the home of Col. John Bailey, it is included in the Hanover Historical Society's book Houses of the Revolution (1976).

It was never my father's intent when he sold the property to have his historic home of 58 years demolished for the purpose of land development. He has always had an appreciation for old houses; in fact, he even moved a historical 1750s cape from Whiting Street to Ancestor Avenue in 1986 to save it from demolition.

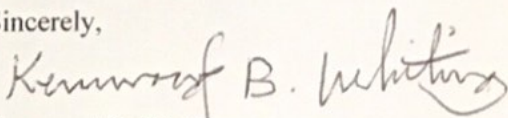
Had the fact come to light that the new owners might possibly demolish this historic house, my father would not have sold it. The possibility of demolition never crossed his mind. It was our understanding that the historical house and the two or three historical outbuildings situated on historic Main Street were protected from such demolition action.

The house at 733 Main Street is of hand-hewn post and beam construction and is unusual in that the window frames in the oldest, original section of the house are actually part of the house frame set within vertical planks used as sheathing. The house has many hand-planed interior details (including fireplace mantels, base moldings, paneled doors, wainscoting, and floorboards) along with built-in drawers and cupboards, and it can be dated by the use of hand-wrought nails. There are also interesting period details such as a secret hidey-hole between walls and a trap door into the root cellar. There is an old granite step at the front door featuring an unusual boot scraper. Two sheds on the property were a cobbler workshop and smokehouse. Besides outbuildings, two dug wells and an old foundation remain. Taken together, the historic value is "Significant" and is worthy of being Preserved.

In closing, it is my hope that the Hanover Historical Commission will make the decision that the historic house and outbuildings at 733 Main Street (a "Significant Building" per last month's vote) should be "Preferably Preserved." The historic and architectural value of this house on historic Main Street cannot be replaced.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Kenwood B. Whiting

Contact form at Hanover MA <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

5/27/2021 10:10 AM

[Hanover MA] 733 Main Street (Sent by Susan Davis Shaw,
Davisdane@comcast.net)

To charaden <charaden@comcast.net>

Hello charaden,

Susan Davis Shaw (Davisdane@comcast.net) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.hanover-ma.gov/users/charaden/contact>) at Hanover MA.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.hanover-ma.gov/user/231/edit>.

Message:

It's very disturbing that the new owners of 733 Main St. are seeking permission to demolish this historic home (built in 1712?). Please do what you can to save it and to maintain the scenic beauty of that area of Main Street.

Contact form at Hanover MA <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

5/27/2021 8:37 AM

[Hanover MA] 733 Main St (Sent by Johanna, jsd182@gmail.com)

To charaden <charaden@comcast.net>

Hello charaden,

Johanna (jsd182@gmail.com) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.hanover-ma.gov/users/charaden/contact>) at Hanover MA.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.hanover-ma.gov/user/231/edit>.

Message:

I will not be able to attend the zoom this evening pertaining to the fate of 733 Main St, so I hope this email reaches the commission.

Hanover is losing everything that makes it Hanover. Our beautiful small town that was once filled open land, trees, and history has become a small city with mini highways, suburban mansions and condos, and a hub of fast food chains and car dealerships. Houses with history are becoming far and few between. Those houses that define what Hanover is and could still be. Those same houses that people drive down Main St and see- and say "what a beautiful old house!" Our town has a rich history behind it- one that draws people to want to live here. If we continue to allow that history to be destroyed, and effectively cancelling our small town feel completely- what appeal will we have? None.

We need to stand up to the developers that are essentially destroying the very fibers of our town, one huge house at a time. We need to let them know that Hanover values history and preserving it.

Thank you,

Johanna Dougherty