



# CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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January 25, 2017

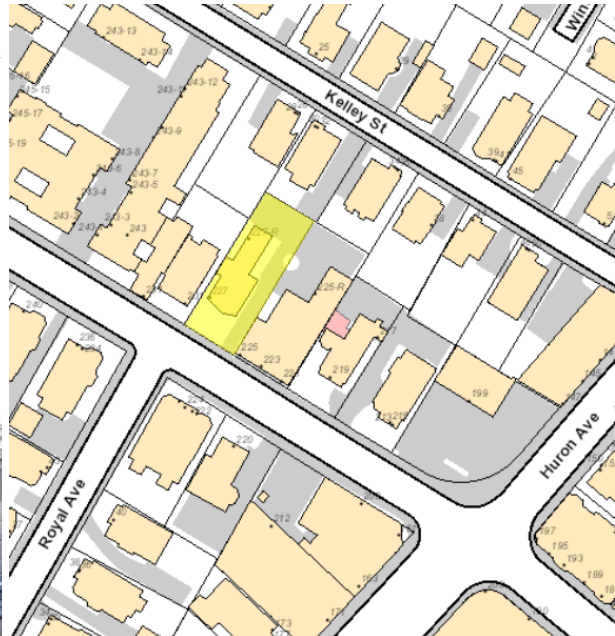
To: Members of the Historical Commission  
From: Charles Sullivan  
Re: D-1431: Relocation of 229 Concord Avenue

An application to relocate the house at 229 Concord Avenue on its lot was received on January 10, 2017. The applicant was notified of an initial determination of significance and a public hearing was scheduled for February 2.



229 Concord Avenue

CHC photo 2017



Cambridge Assessors

2016

## Site

The 1847 Luther Hayes house at 229 Concord Avenue is located on the north side of the street between Huron Avenue and Donnell Street. It is sited on a 5,861 square-foot lot (Map 229/Parcel 160). The zoning is Business BA-1, a neighborhood business and office district that allows an FAR of 1.0 for those uses and .75 for multifamily construction (as in Residence C-1), with a 35' height limit for both. The owners, Walden Huron LLC and Somervista/Concord 1 LLC, also own the adjoining property at 221-225 Concord Avenue. This 6,000 square foot property contains a commercial building built in 1925 and a two-story office building of indeterminate age.



219, 221-225 and 229 Concord Avenue

Cambridge GIS

The owners propose to demolish the two-story office building and one retail bay at 221-225 Concord Avenue and the ell of 229 Concord Avenue and relocate the main body of the house on its lot to allow construction of four townhouses with underground parking. I have determined that these three structures are not significant under the demolition delay ordinance, but relocating the house requires Historical Commission approval.



Description

The 2 ½ story Greek Revival house at 229 Concord Avenue was constructed in 1848. The house has features characteristic of many vernacular Greek Revivals throughout Cambridge, including a side-hall plan, a gable end with a full pediment facing the street, wide pilasters, and a one-story portico supported by four Doric columns. The ell has been extended from its original footprint and at some point was given a second story with a flat roof. The house is in excellent (if somewhat weathered) condition, having been restored in the 1980s. It is currently occupied by therapists' offices.



229 Concord Avenue (left), 221-225 Concord Avenue, and 219 Concord Avenue (right)

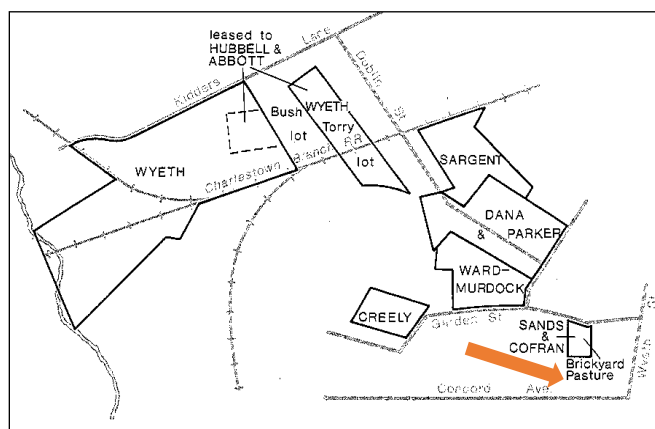
CHC photo 2017

The adjoining building at 221-225 Concord Avenue is a one-story commercial structure erected as a market in 1925. Soon after construction it was extended by one additional bay to the west; this part of the structure is to be removed. The two story structure in the rear was originally a garage accessed from R.C. Kelly Street; it was altered from one to two stories in the 1980s. This is also to be removed.

### History

The 1842 extension of the Charlestown Branch Railroad from Miller's River to Fresh and Spy Ponds opened up North Cambridge for the brick industry and for suburban development. Several subdivisions were platted by the owners of the brickyards for the mostly-Irish worker population. Many of the brickyard workers built modest cottages, but some more substantial houses accommodated skilled tradesmen, foremen and managers.

Samuel Cofran and John Sands moved their brickmaking operations from the Charles River to the 18th-century Brickyard Pasture on Garden Street in 1845. Orrin and Tierney streets now occupy the site of the Cofran and Sands clay pit. John Sands subdivided the Concord Avenue frontage and in 1846-47 had builder Luther Hayes put up the two Greek Revival houses at 219 and 229 Concord Avenue. Hayes purchased one of the houses, and Sands sold the other to an absentee owner.



Cambridge Brickyards, 1848 (Fig. 34, *Northwest Cambridge*).

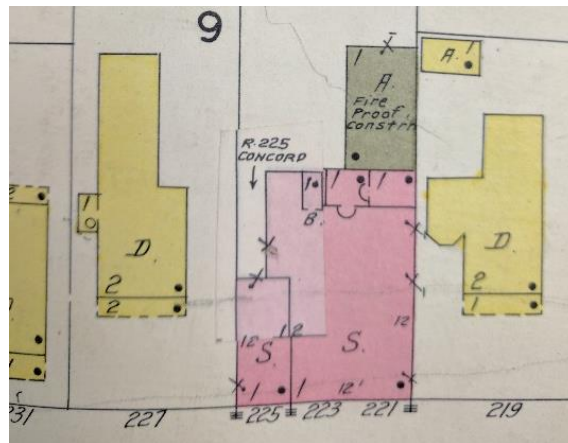


H.F. Walling, *Map of Cambridge* (1854)



Home of Noah and Maude Cofran, 227 Concord Avenue. Note one-story ell and carriage house (latter no longer extant). Photo before 1904.

Luther Hayes was a Maine native who arrived in Cambridge about 1845 and worked as a house carpenter until his death in 1884. In 1870 he sold the house, and it was owned by a leather dealer and a clerk in an ice business until in 1884 it was purchased by brickmaker Noah Cofran, Samuel's brother. After his death in 1904 the property passed to Thomas Cosgrove, who about 1925 sold the side yard to William C. Eagan, a grocer who put up the present commercial buildings on the site.



Sanborn Map of Cambridge, 1935

### Significance and Recommendation

The Greek Revivals at 219 and 227 Concord Avenue are important survivors of the brickyard era in North Cambridge. The construction of 221-225 Concord Avenue in 1925 disrupted a relationship that cannot be recovered, but the proposed removal of the storefront at 225 Concord and relocation of the house approximately 3' to the east will give it a little more distance from its neighbors and more visibility from the street.

The scale of the proposed project is greater than exists on the lot today, but the density will be less than the adjacent Harvard housing project. The Commission should hear testimony from the neighbors and review the plans for replacement construction before making a determination.

cc: Ranjit Singanayagam, ISD  
 Lauren Harder  
 Mark Boyes-Watson