



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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November 27, 2019

To: Cambridge Historical Commission Members & Alternates

From: Charles Sullivan

Re: D-1543: 60-62 Reed Street, Hayes Double House (1875)

An application to relocate the double house at 60-62 Reed Street was received on November 12, 2019. The applicant, the Marie Claire Maloney Living Trust on behalf of Joseph Glenmullen, was notified of an initial determination of significance and a public hearing was scheduled for December 2, 2019.

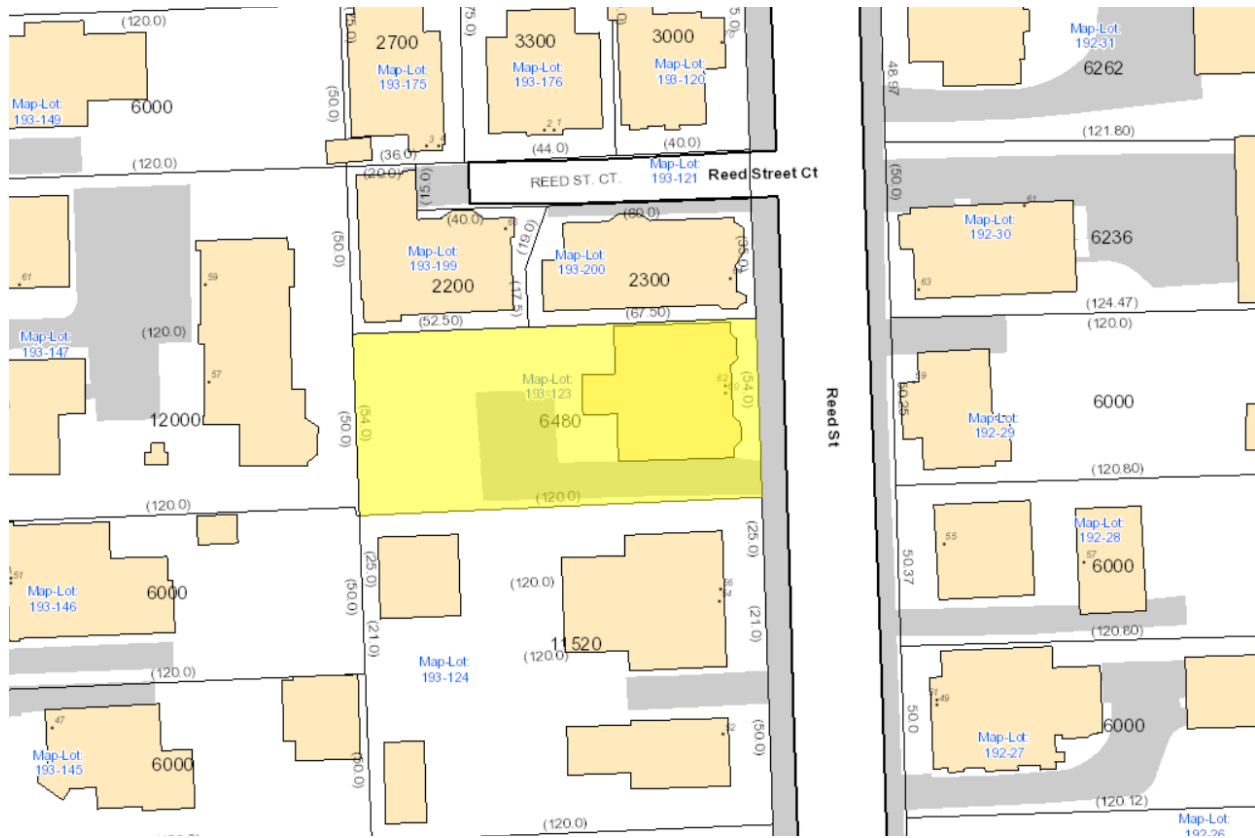


54-56 Reed St.

CHC photo, 2019

Description and Current Condition

The structure is a 2-story, flat-roofed frame dwelling located on the west side of Reed Street midway between Rindge Avenue and Dudley Street. The house sits on a lot measuring approximately 6,479 square-foot (Assessor's Map 193/Lot 123). The Residence B district permits two-family construction and has a height limit of 35 feet and a Floor Area Ratio of 0.50 (0.35 FAR for that portion of the lot exceeding 5,000). The assessed value of the land and building (assessed as a three-family), according to the online assessor's property database, is \$1,188,700.



Cambridge GIS Map, 60-62 Reed St.

The house is situated in the northeast corner of the lot, with a front setback of nearly 10' and a minimal setback from the north property line. A driveway runs along the south side of the house. A matching double house located immediately to the south at 54-56 Reed Street was razed with CHC permission in 2016. The assessors describe the interior and overall condition of 54-56 Reed Street as average. The exterior is covered with vinyl siding, but no major problems are evident from an exterior viewing. The owner proposes to move the house to give it conforming setbacks and reconstruct it as a two-family house with a new garage in the rear.

Architectural Description

The dwelling at 60-62 Reed Street is a flat-roofed Italianate side-by-side double house with center entrance porch, projecting bays on the front elevation, and a narrow ell or backhouse in the rear. A bracketed cornice on the front elevation is the only visible original architectural feature. The house was covered in wood shingles in the twentieth century but originally would have been clad in clapboards with narrow corner boards. The original porch roof has been replaced by an aluminum awning. The foundation is brick and does not extend under the front bays. The win-

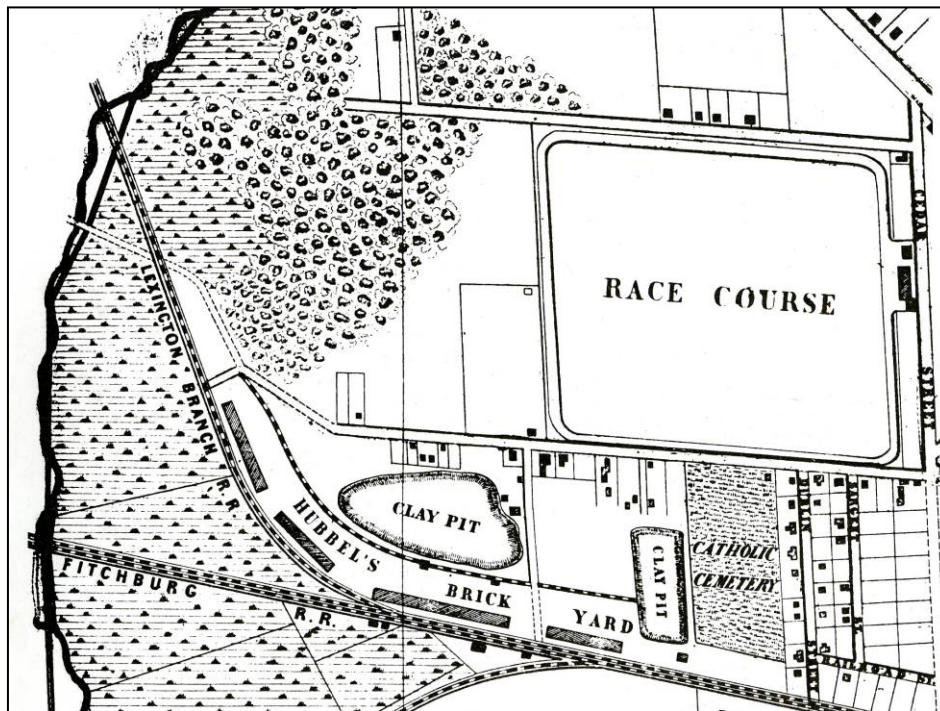
dows are all recent replacements. The flat roof pitches quite steeply to the rear, reflecting the state of roofing technology in the 1870.

History

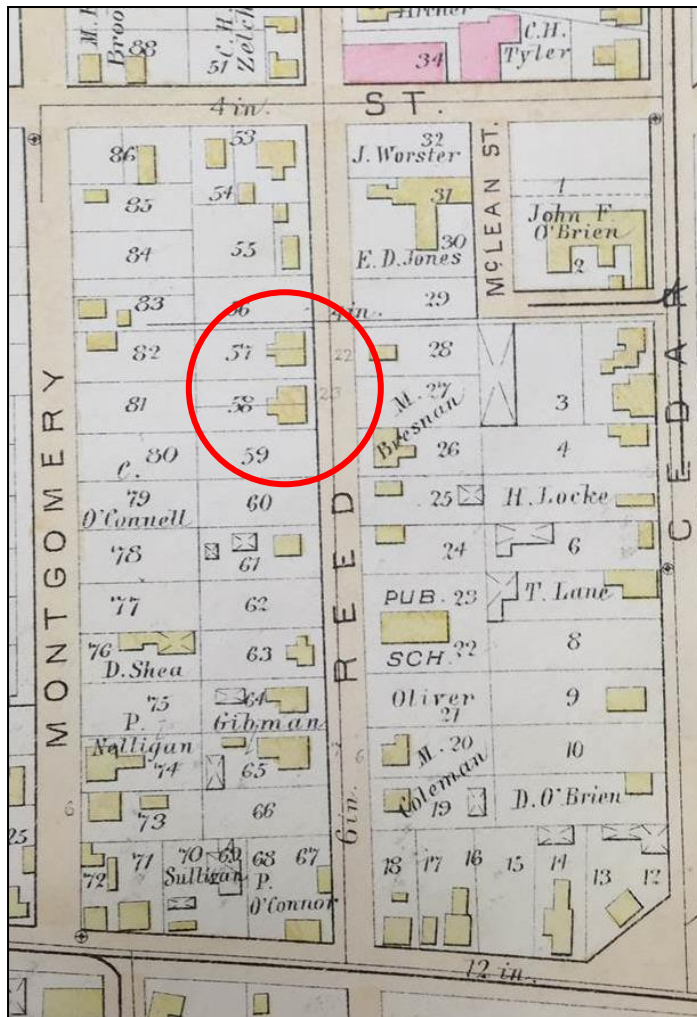
The 1842 extension of the Charlestown Branch Railroad from Miller's River to Fresh and Spy Ponds opened up North Cambridge for the brick industry and for suburban development. Several subdivisions were platted in the 1840s and early 1850s by owners of the brickyards to accommodate the mostly-Irish worker population.

By the mid-1850s most available land near the brickyards on Kidder's Lane (now Rindge Avenue) had been platted for residential development. The only remaining large parcel was the Race Course, fifty acres of flat land west of Cedar Street bounded by Harvey Street on the north and Rindge Avenue on the south. Opened in 1837, the Race Course operated on a seasonal basis during the 1840s, catering to cattle drovers and Cambridge traders. Transportation via omnibus was available from Harvard Square.

As the suburban population of North Cambridge grew, the Race Course area came increasingly under pressure for reuse. The flat land of the course was perfectly suited for residential development, and in 1855 owners Kidder and Reed divided the parcel into 275 house lots, the largest residential subdivision in North Cambridge. Five new north-south streets were created between Harvey Street and Rindge Avenue. From east to west, they were Reed, Montgomery, Clay, Jackson, and Clifton streets.



Detail of the Walling map of 1854, showing clay pits on the south side of Rindge Avenue. Reed Street would later be added opposite Sargent Street as part of a residential subdivision of the race course property.



The double houses at 54-56 and 60-62 Reed Street are circled on this 1886 plan of the Race Course neighborhood.

The lots were first marketed to middle-class Irish in Boston and Charlestown. Half the lots were soon sold, but only three buyers built houses. Kidder & Reed found a more receptive market when they redirected sales toward Cambridge brickyard laborers. The lots closest to the brickyards were the first to be developed. The interior streets, such as Reed and Montgomery streets, remained sparsely populated until after the Civil War. A number of houses were built along Dudley Street when it was put through in 1870, but the Panic of 1873 terminated most residential construction in the area. Another building boom occurred in the 1890s, when an influx of French Canadians arrived to work in the brickyards and other industries. Tract houses filled in the remaining empty lots on the site of the old Poorhouse between Cedar and Reed streets near Harvey Street, and on small courts.

Reed Street was named for Samuel G. Reed, who platted the subdivision in 1855. Most of the lots were 6000 square foot (50' wide x 120' deep) lots. The subject property was originally lot 57; the adjoining lots to the south were 58 and 59.



54-56 Reed Street, demolished 2016. 60-62 Reed Street is at right

CHC photo, 2019

John Hayes, a carpenter, and his wife Lizzie purchased lots 57 and 58 on Reed Street in 1875 from W. H. Durrell, who had purchased the property the previous year from Samuel Reed. Hayes constructed the two double houses in 1875. Within a few years they sold the properties to others. The house at 54-56 was purchased by tinsmith Michael Grimes and gardener Frank F. Green. The subject house at 60-62 Reed belonged to John A. Waters, a Civil War veteran, resident of the South End and the owner of a market there, from at least 1894 until his death at age 98 in 1923. Waters does not appear to have ever lived in the house; in 1910 his tenants included a marble polisher, a teamster, and a laborer. In the 1930s the house belonged to Tilden and Maude Stearns, both lawyers who lived at 16 Blake Street. The first owner-occupant, in the 1950s, was John T. Maloney, a firefighter; the current owner is an apparent descendant.

In 2016 the proponent, Joseph Glenmullen, received permits to demolish 54-56 Reed Street and replace it with two new houses with Mansard roofs; the Commission found the house significant but not preferably preserved. Dr. Glenmullen now wishes to restore 60-62 as a two-family house with a new garage in the rear, but to accomplish this the house must be moved to conform with the setback requirements of the zoning code.



52, 56 and 60-62 Reed Street

CHC staff photo, 2019

Significance and Recommendation

John Hayes' double house at 60-62 Reed Street is an intact example of a double Bracketed Italianate house of the mid 1870s. Though not the predominant house style in the Race Course subdivision, the building retains some period detailing and contributes positively to the streetscape. It relates to the second phase of development in the Race Course subdivision.

The staff recommends that the Commission find the house significant in terms of Chapter 2.78.080 of the Municipal Code, for its associations with the broad architectural, economic, and social history of the City. The Commission should evaluate the proposed relocation in the context of the overall project and receive public testimony heard before making a further determination.

cc: Ranjit Singanayagam, Inspectional Services
Joseph Glenmullen