

Steven R. Pendery, Ph.D.
26 Winchester Street
Brookline, MA 02446
spendery@gmail.com

September 26, 2016

Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals
Brookline Town Hall
333 Washington Street
Brookline, MA 02445

Re: 40 Centre Street

Dear Members of the Board:

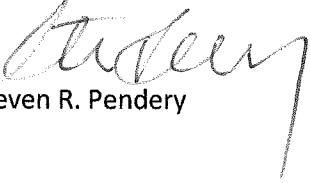
My career has been dedicated to historic preservation as a career employee of the National Park Service Cultural Resources Center, as an employee of the Boston Landmarks Commission, Director of the UMass Archaeological Services, and president of the Brookline Historical Society in the 1990s. One of the reasons I moved to Brookline in 1983 is because of its well-preserved urban neighborhoods including Brookline Village and Coolidge Corner.

I now reflect that preservation in North Brookline is more often than not an unintended consequence of its developmental history. Indeed, neighborhoods taking advantage of the opportunity to form local historic districts tend to be affluent neighborhoods where residents choose to protect their historic values. The overworked staff of the Brookline Preservation Commission focus most of their efforts on these districts (mostly in South Brookline) rather than identifying and nominating to the State and National Registers or providing local protection to the urban enclaves of North Brookline. It is these areas where the majority of Brookline residents live and work.

The tragedy of 40 Centre Street is that it was not folded into a Coolidge Historic District that could have been established decades ago when the authorities were first developed to make this happen. Again, it is not too late to redirect our local tax dollars to the purpose of historic preservation by supporting the Brookline Preservation Commission to fulfill their mandate to identify and protect eligible town properties in a sensitive and timely way. I urge you to urge them to reexamine their mission and goals, to do the greatest good for the greatest number and to protect Brookline's historic properties in all neighborhoods and for all income levels of residents.

Because of this failure of long-term vision in the area of historic preservation, I also urge the Town of Brookline to downsize the proposed development at 40 Centre Street and to support any future proposals to move all or part of the existing 40 Centre Street building to be preserved on town property in close proximity to its original site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pendery", written in a cursive style.

Steven R. Pendery

Cc: Coalition for Coolidge Corner