

Brookline Preservation Commission

Demolition Application Report

Address: 161 Hyslop Road
Applicant: Paul Lipson
Building Type: House (Partial)
National Register Listing (if Applicable): Fisher Hill National Register District



Historical/Architectural Significance:

Hyslop Road was named for William Hyslop, a Scotch peddler who became a wealthy merchant and purchased the home of Dr. Zabdiel Boylston. That part of the road which runs from Fisher Avenue to Chestnut Hill Avenue was developed between 1915 and 1935. The houses are very large and either of brick or wood with a stucco exterior. Until 1915, the land was owned by Jacob Pierce who began to purchase land in this area in the 1800's with the intention of developing a "high class" residential area.

161 Hyslop was built in 1926 by Charles Townsend, a general agent with the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States. Architect John Barnard designed the home in the Tudor Revival style, taking cues from the neighborhood for the design. This home is one of two stucco with half timbering homes on this part of Hyslop Road; the other is located across the street at #166, designed by James Purdon in 1915. Another interesting neighborhood detail is the presence of crests over the entrances, which also appear at #147 & #154 Hyslop Road, built 1923 and 1926 respectively. Other homes designed by Barnard include 71 Leicester Street, also in Fisher Hill, and Tudor Revival designs at 250 Maple Street in Springfield MA (c.1928), 160 Sargent Street (1924) and 99 Aspen Avenue (1925) in Newton. Barnard began his career in the offices of Edward P.T. Graham in Boston before establishing his own practice.

The side gabled brick Tudor Revival style home is asymmetric in plan, with rustic, picturesque details. A large cross gable dominates the façade, displaying decorative half-timbering with stucco infill and two-story bay window. In contrast to the textured slate roof and rough brick walls, the projecting gable is finished with smooth stucco, which is repeated below between the bay windows of the first and second floor. This use of texture focuses attention in the design, as large smooth stone blocks also frame the entrance, with a spare stone step below and simple Tudor arch stone drip molding above the door. To the left of the door, a prominent chimney rises to

the height of the cross gable, featuring decorative banding above the eave. A second chimney with similar banding detail intersects the main cross gable on the rear elevation, uniting it with the gabled roof of the built-in garage to the left.

The house at 161 Hyslop Road meets the following criteria for an initial determination of significance:

- b. The building is listed on or is within an area listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places; is eligible for listing on the National or State Registers of historic places; or is a building for which a preliminary determination of eligibility has been made by the Massachusetts Historical Commission;
- c. The building is associated with one or more significant historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the town or Commonwealth; and
- d. The building is historically or architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, method of construction, or its association with a significant architect or builder, either by itself or as part of a group of buildings.

The building at 161 Hyslop Road retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, and workmanship.

The applicants have submitted plans for renovation of the home for review, and ask the Commission to consider lifting the stay of demolition. The plans include systematic changes to the fenestration of the building, replacing all windows with LePage simulated divided light wood windows. All doors will also be replaced with wood doors; those with muntins will have simulated divided light construction.

The plans leave the majority of the home's massing intact, with small additions located at the rear and side elevation. Materials are generally appropriate, with in-kind replacements planned for roof, stucco and wood half-timbering details. There are changes to the fenestration, however, that alter the character of the home substantially. The façade's asymmetry is eroded by the duplication of a transom window detail across every window of the first floor. Once a hallmark of the large, detailed window bays, the new arrangement detracts from these standout features, standardizing their appearance. In contrast to these newly introduced muntins, most of the existing muntins on the façade are removed, further flattening the design. The entrance door is replaced by a 15 light wood door in a new entrance vestibule. The vestibule displaces the crest over the solid wood front door, features characteristic of the neighborhood. This crest will be reinstalled to the left of the door.

At the attic level, a total of 17 small, identical, gabled dormers are arranged across the front and rear slope of the textured slate roof. Further concerns are raised by the treatment of muntins to the west and rear of the home, which feature large expanses of glass with divisions (where present) that are substantially larger than the scale used on the rest of the house. At the rear elevation, the elaborate chimney is removed. The Commission may wish to consider whether the visibility of the rear elevation mitigates the historically inappropriate changes to this elevation.



Aerial view of 161 Hyslop Road, looking east.



Aerial view of 161 Hyslop Road, looking north.



04/24/2017

Aerial view of 161 Hyslop Road, looking west.



Aerial view of 161 Hyslop Road, looking south.



Façade, 161 Hyslop Road





Right elevation & streetscape





Left elevation & streetscape





154 Hyslop Road, similar crest above the front entrance



147 Hyslop Road, similar crest above front entrance (top)



Neighbor 166 Hyslop Road, designed by James Purdon in 1915

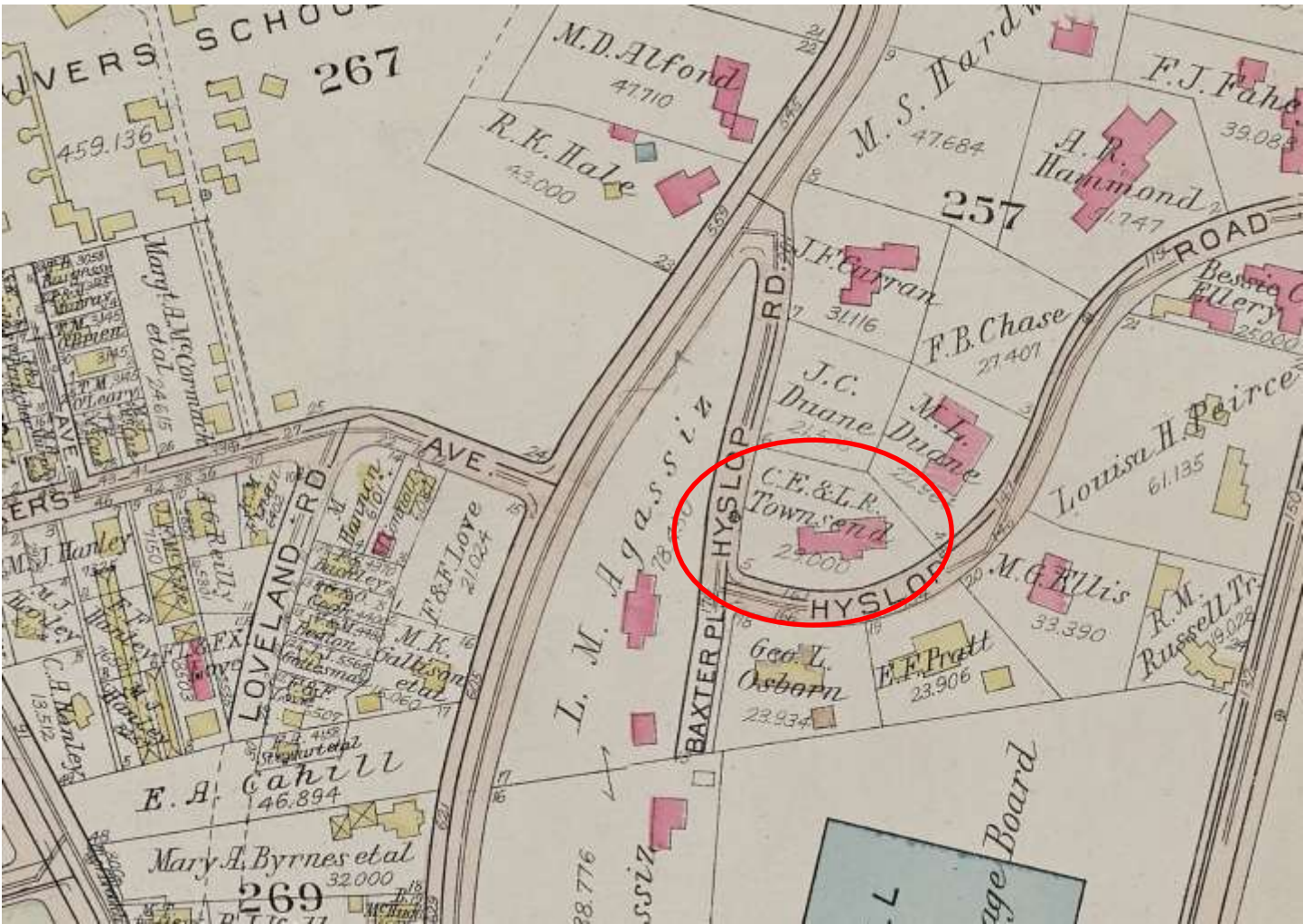


250 Maple Street,
Springfield MA c.
1928, designed by
John Barnard

3/7/22 3:33 PM



71 Leiscter St,
Fisher Hill, designed
by John Barnard in
1923



1927 Town of Brookline Atlas