

Brookline Preservation Commission

Local Historic District Report

Local Historic District: Pill Hill

Applicant: Aaron Adler

Address: 279-81 Walnut Street



garage at 279-81 Walnut Street

Statement of Significance: Local contractor Joseph Johnson constructed this two-family house as an investment in 1926 from plans by local architect John Halfenstine. The house is typical of the period as a modest two-family Craftsman style with Colonial revival details. According to the 1928 town directory, the occupants at that time were George F. Shepley, a salesman, and Harold Deane. Deane is listed in the permits as the architect for the 1928 interior alterations that made the third floor part of the second floor dwelling. Halfenstine grew up at 158 Boylston Street and became and began as an apprentice architect in 1910. He designed several triple deckers on Jamaica Road (1915); several other garages on Brook Street and Eliot Crescent along with several single family houses on Buckminster (1926), Ackers (1930), Doran and Heath Street (1926) .

Proposed Alterations: The applicant proposes to demolish the two family concrete block garage.

Applicable Guidelines: “Structures, including additions and outbuilding, should not be demolished... Historic carriage barns and automobile garages should be preserved.”

Preliminary Findings: The garage, as well as the house, has been allowed to deteriorate over the years. It has lost much of its integrity, e.g. the doors, and has been declared “unsafe” by the Building Department. The Commission has allowed the demolition of a few garage in LHDs, including one nearby on Walnut Street near Upland Road.



garage