

Brookline Preservation Commission

Local Historic District Report

Local Historic District: Chestnut Hill

Applicant: Fairway- Boylston LLC

Address: Boylston Street Lot # 2 (between 1033 Boylston St. and 76 Norfolk Road)



Proposed work: Construct new house in wooded area (lot 2) on Boylston Street.

Statement of Applicable Guidelines:

- The Commission will review all proposed alterations of, and additions to, existing structures and all new construction.
- New construction should respect the existing historic streetscape. The historic relationship of buildings to the street, including setbacks and open spaces, should be maintained.
- In areas where historic garages are generally detached, new garages should be detached. Attached garages should be located behind the main mass of the house and/or not facing the street, if possible. Garages with three or more bays are not historically appropriate except on large estates.
- The Commission will consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the building or structure in relation to both the land area upon which the building or structure is situated and to buildings and structures in the vicinity. The Commission may impose dimensional and setback requirements more restrictive than those required by the Zoning By-law.
- The Commission will consider discrete additions and new buildings incorporating non-historical design vocabularies and materials, as long as they are otherwise consistent with the intent of these Guidelines.

Statement of Significance: The houses at 192 Fairway Road and 1033 Boylston Street are among the most significant examples of mid-century modern architecture in Brookline. Joseph and Dorothy Edinburg hired Walter Bogner, Dean of the School of Architecture at Harvard University and a colleague of Walter Gropius, to design their house in 1952. In 1960 a swimming pool and guest house (1033 Boylston Street) were built behind the main house in a wooded setting. The so-called poolhouse was designed by the firm of Saltonstall and Morton in the International style. Like the main house, its setting is an integral part of its design. This small house is built into the gentle slope of the hill, and its one-story height and flat roof contribute its sense of blending into the woodland. Both the main house and the poolhouse, as well as the outdoor areas, were used to display the Edinburgs extensive art collection. A metal fence at the perimeter of the pool area was designed by sculptor Kahlil Gibran.

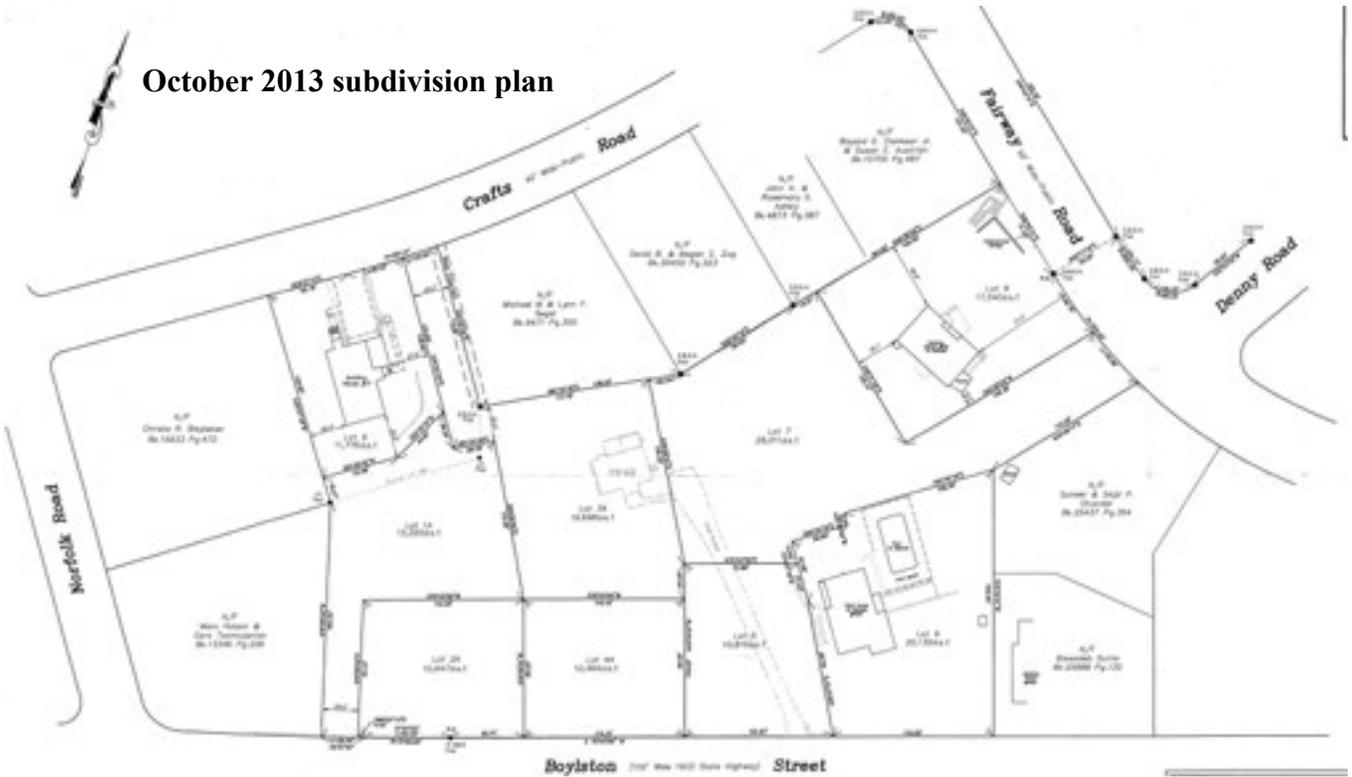
Preliminary Findings: The current subdivision plan would create five or six new house lots within an area defined by Fairway Road, Boylston Street, Norfolk Road and a section of Crafts Road. The house 1039 Boylston Street may again be proposed to be demolished (the commission denied an application in April 2013) and replaced with a new house. Three of the new lots face Boylston Street and the remaining lots are set behind these with no street frontage except for driveway access from Boylston Street, Fairway Road or Crafts Road. Therefore the orientations of the proposed houses would not relate in any way to each other, nor to the surrounding homes. The two proposed 'pork-chop' lots are not consistent with the historic streetscape and would create an unfortunate settlement pattern inappropriate to the Chestnut Hill district and neighborhood, including the All-gas Colony area to the east. The proposal would not adhere to the guideline that new construction ought to relate to the existing streetscape. Further, the settings and relatively low heights of the two mid-twentieth century modernist houses built by the Edinburgs should be taken into account in the siting, massing and height of any new construction, and should not be overshadowed by the size or height of buildings adjacent to or behind them. It appears from the subdivision plan, as presented, that the proposed new house sites would be incongruous with the historic development pattern of the area and with the architectural characteristics of the surrounding houses.

The setting of the house proposed on lot 2 is not appropriate to the natural contour of the land, which slopes gently downward from the street (a state highway). This woodland setting is a character-defining element of the Chestnut Hill North district. It appears that the grade of the land would need to be altered significantly to achieve the setting shown in the drawings.

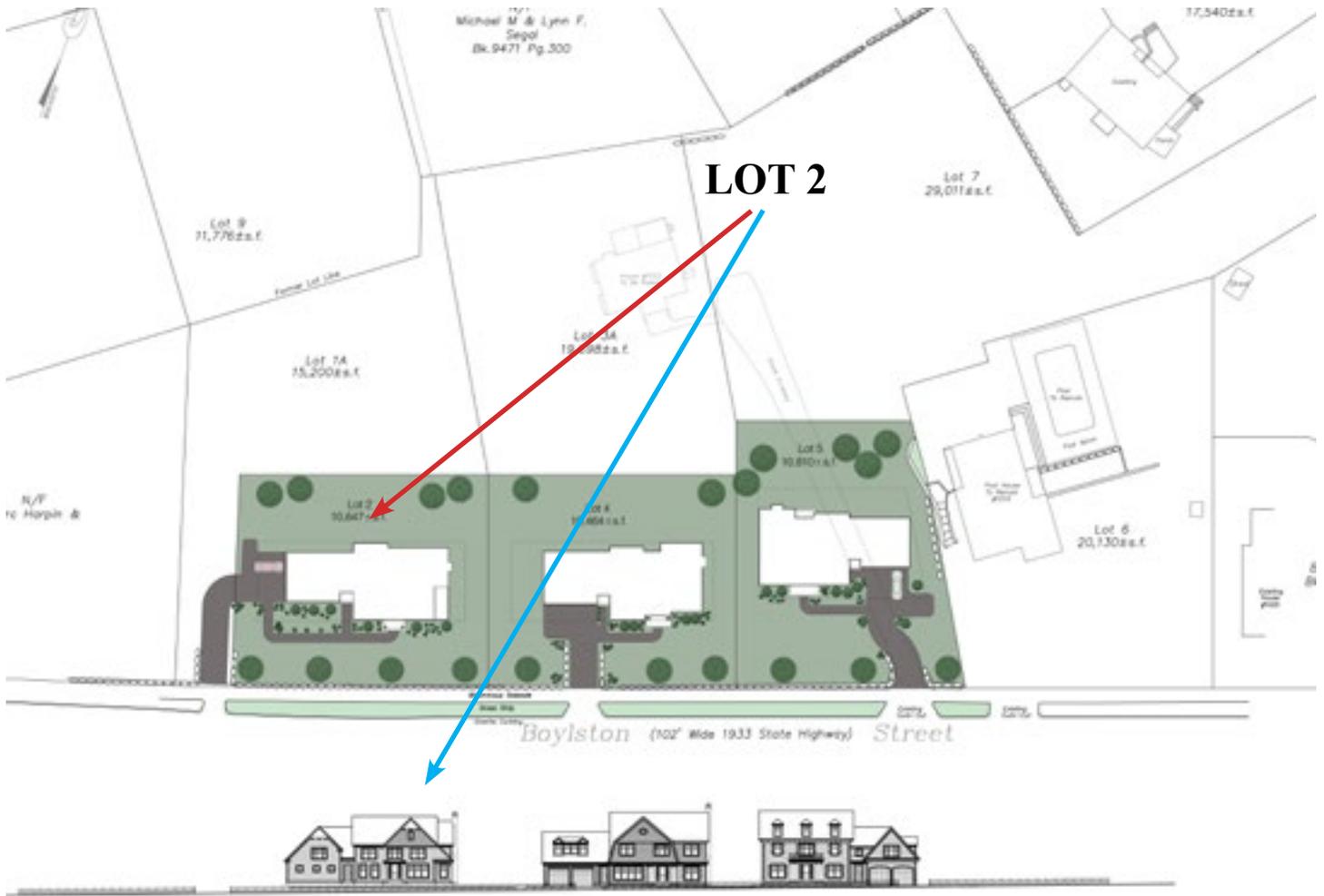
The massing and scale of the proposed house are incongruous with the character of the nearby houses on Boylston Street and Crafts and Fairway Road, which have less complex masses and rooflines, as well as generally lower heights. Like the proposed house design for the adjacent lot (no. 4), the drawings show a confusing mixture of stylistic elements that are not appropriate to the Chestnut Hill North district, where the styles reflect the historic eras in which the houses were built. In the immediate vicinity and adjacent to this lot, there are at least five houses built in mid-century modernistic style and later 20th century Deck and Acorn House style. These houses comprise a cluster of modernist-style homes that is unique to the Chestnut Hill North district. The massing, size and stylistic element of the proposed house would adversely impact this cluster of buildings.



Approximate location of lot 2



Local Historic District Report: Boylston St - Lot 2





Rear Elevation

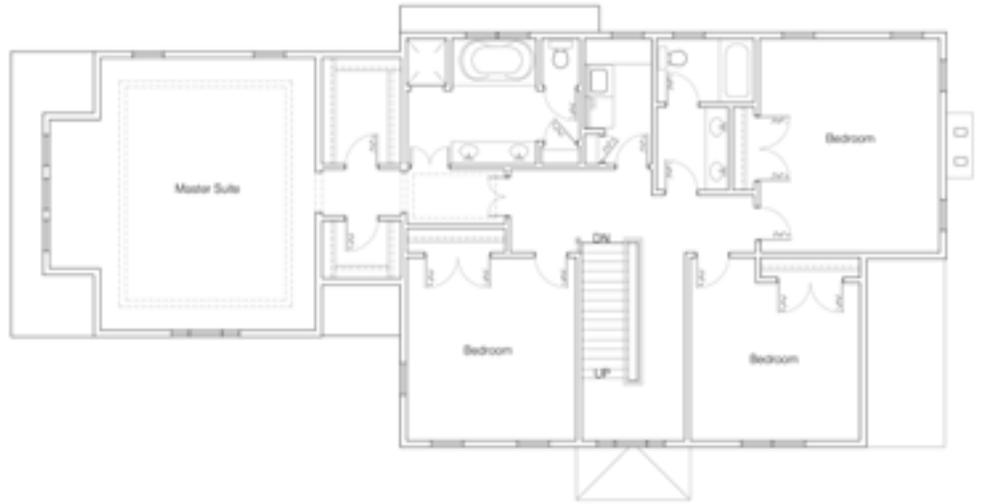


Left Elevation



Right Elevation

Lot 2 RGFA	
Lot Size	10,647±s.f.
Allowable RGFA	3,194 sf
House RGFA	3,189 sf



Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" Second Floor Plan



Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" First Floor Plan



Setting from west



Adjacent house at 1039 Boylston St , built in 1980



Nearby house at 1033 Boylston St, built in 1961



Renderings of proposed hoise

