

Brookline Preservation Commission

Local Historic District Report

Local Historic District: Chestnut Hill

Applicant: Fairway- Boylston LLC

Address: Boylston Street Lot #4 (between 1033 Boylston St. and 76 Norfolk Road)



Proposed work: Construct new house in wooded area (lot 4) 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 4 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.

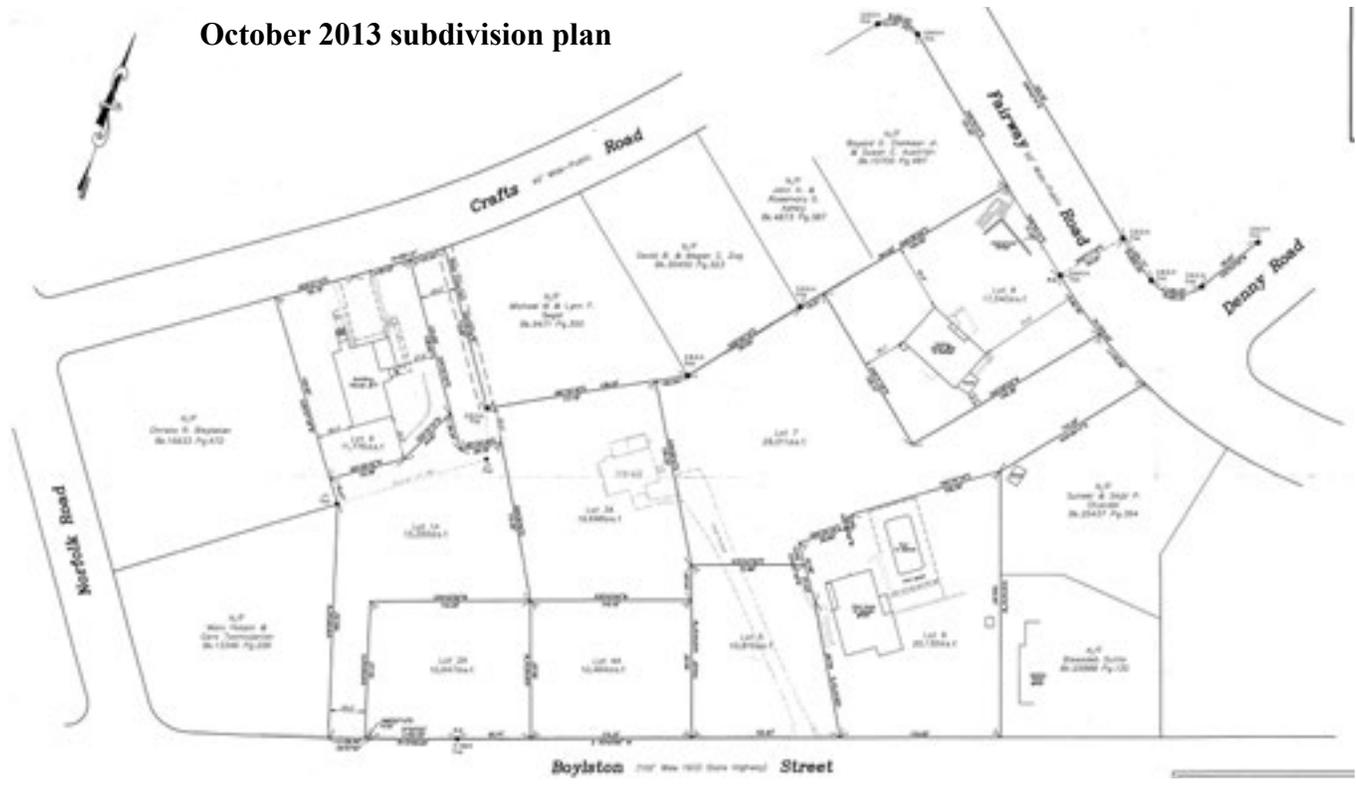
The massing and scale of the proposed house are incongruous with the character of the nearby houses on Boylston Street and Crafts and Fairway Road, which have less complex masses and rooflines, as well as generally lower heights. Nor does this design relate stylistically with the house design proposed for lot 5, adjacent to it. The facade of the house, with its gambrel cross gable and variegated siding material, presents a confusing amalgamation of styles. The fenestration moreover, is not consistent with the other stylistic elements shown in the drawing. The garage faces the street, which the guidelines state should be avoided.

The elevational drawings are flawed. The dormer windows shown on the front (south) and rear do not appear in the side elevations.

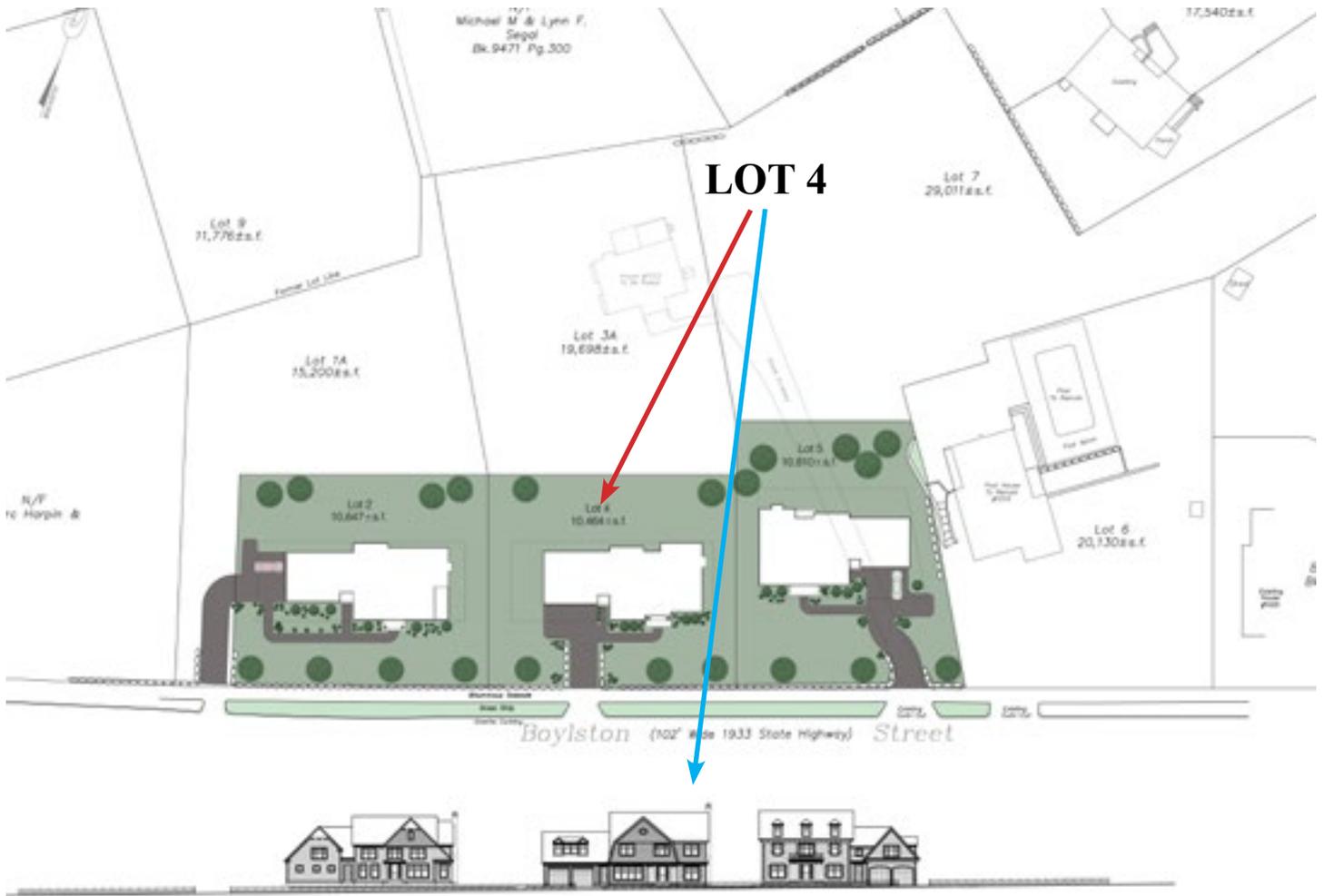


Approximate location of lot 4

October 2013 subdivision plan



Local Historic District Report: Boylston St - Lot 4





Rear Elevation

Scale 3/16" = 1'-0"



Left Elevation

Scale 3/16" = 1'-0"



Right Elevation

Scale 3/16" = 1'-0"

Local Historic District Report: Boylston St - Lot 4

Lot 4 RGFA	
Lot Size	10,464 ± s.f.
Allowable RGFA	3,139 sf
House RGFA	
	3,130 sf

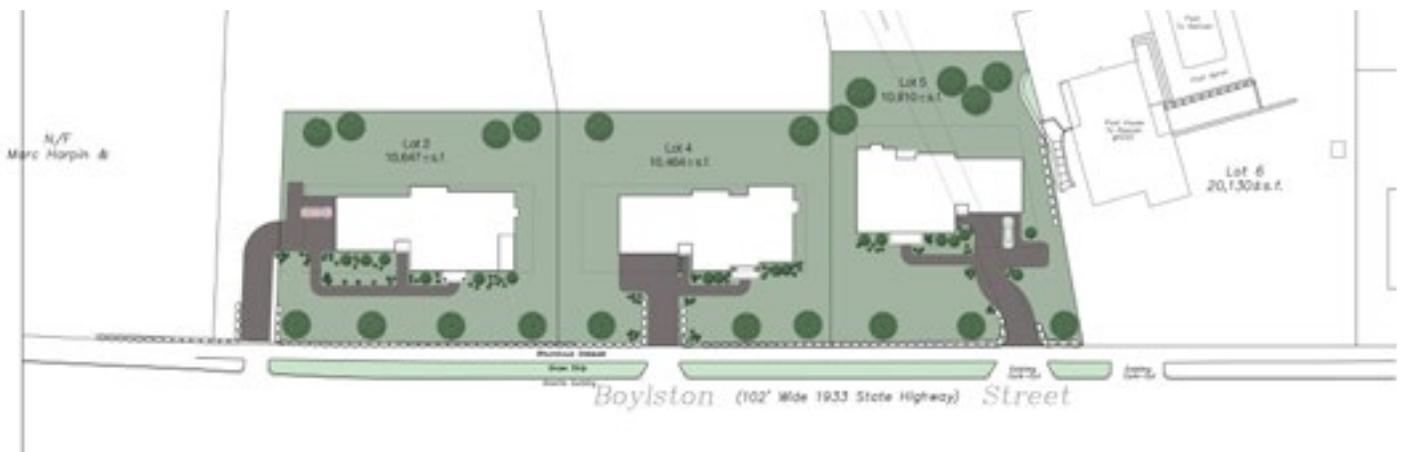
Proposed second and first floor plans



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



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





View of land from west (left) and south



Renderings of proposed house design

