

Hart Street Historic District Designation Support

Lynne Castronuovo <lynne.castronuovo@gmail.com>

Thu 8/12/2021 10:00 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Ms. McCarthy,

I recently became aware of the proposed demolition of one of the historic homes on Hart Street and the 3,000 square foot, contemporary home that is being proposed as its replacement. This new structure would entirely change and irreparably damage the character of this historically significant street. In addition to marring the unique character of the street, this demolition will serve as a catalyst for other properties to follow suit, taking with them some of the only remaining affordable single-family housing in Brookline. Further, part of Brookline's history – immigrant and municipal worker housing – would disappear along with these historically significant homes.

I am writing to express my support for designating Hart Street as a Local Historic District to preserve this very special street. There are several other historic districts throughout town such as Cottage Farm, Crowninshield, Chestnut Hill North and Pill Hill, which contain some grand, architectural gems. The small, modest houses of Hart Street are just as significant. What does it say about Brookline and our priorities if we do not afford the same consideration to Hart Street?

Respectfully,

Lynne Castronuovo

James Street resident

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Hart St LHD designation

Brad Dykstra <brad.j.dykstra@gmail.com>

Sun 8/8/2021 9:58 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Cc: Mollie <bradandmollie@gmail.com>

Dear Brookline Preservation Commission,

I am writing in support of the formation of a Local Historic District for Hart Street in Brookline. My wife, daughter and I have lived in the neighborhood for over 9 years now, and we appreciate the few blocks cluster around the former town barn as being a unique slice of Brookline history, given its 'worker bee', immigrant housing roots. The cluster of 100+ year old triple deckers that we live in the midst of is pretty unique given the density of the buildings. But Hart Street is something really special, given that the houses there are more like 200 years old, and are single family. They are certainly modest homes, but they are quaint and unique in their own right. I think it would be a shame to lose the charm of this tiny street and its important connection to the town barn a few steps away, and the blue collar immigrants who worked there.

Thank you for your consideration to preserve the history of Hart Street and our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Brad, Mollie, and Bethany Dykstra.

33 Kendall Street, Unit 1.

Brookline MA 02445.

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Hart St - historic district

Emily R Gallagher <em.r.gallagher@gmail.com>

Thu 8/19/2021 3:00 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Hello,

I'm writing in support of designating Hart Street in Brookline as a local historic district. I think it is only fair that there should also be historic districts in town to recognize where the working class of Brookline have lived. I am in strong support of this. I grew up abutting these houses, on Franklin Street. I now live close by, just blocks away. By designating Hart St as a local historic district, hopefully this will prevent people from moving into town, buying the Hart St houses for the land and demolishing them to build mega houses that do not fit with the character of the street or the point neighborhood. Thank you for considering this decision to designate Hart Street as a local historic district.

Sincerely,

Emily Gallagher

160 Chestnut St.

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Hart st

Ron Gallagher <rongallagherma@gmail.com>

Thu 8/19/2021 6:51 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Hi I'd like give my thoughts about Hart st. This street is like a little historical museum of what life was like for Irish immigrants 200 years ago. It's a one of a kind place in Brookline and should be preserved in any way possible for future residents. Once it's gone, it's gone forever. If renovations are necessary they should honor that history

Thank you

Sincerely

Ron Gallagher

65 Franklin st

Sent from my iPhone

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Hart St LHD

Jeffrey Johnson <jeffpjohnson@gmail.com>

Thu 8/12/2021 8:24 AM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Cc: Abby Johnson <abbysjohnson@gmail.com>

Hi Tina,

We were recently made aware of an effort to designate Hart St as a Local Historic District. We live on Prince St, but have some friends there and have thus spent many, many evenings enjoying that bit of our neighborhood. We'd just like to voice our support for preserving it as we love the old little cottages and find them to be a unique gem in Brookline. We love that they're nearly 200 years old, and that they were originally for immigrants here. Even today they're some of the only semi-affordable single-family homes. Anyway, we will ultimately support the general community's decision on this, but until such a decision is made, we wanted to say that we support this proposal.

Thanks,

Jeff & Abby Johnson

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Local Historic District for Hart Street

Chris Kallaher <chriskallaher@gmail.com>

Mon 8/16/2021 10:55 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

I'm writing to express my strong support for the designation of Hart Street as a Brookline Local Historic District. My wife, Claire Kaplan, and I have lived in the neighborhood (162 Cypress Street) for coming up on 14 years now and in that time we have truly come to appreciate the little neighborhood just down Cypress Street from our house that comprises Rice, Roberts, Hart, and Franklin Streets. The architectural distinction of this neighborhood and the demographic diversity that the accessibility of that architecture allows are critical to the community we have grown to know and love. As real estate prices continue to grow in Brookline, it gets harder and harder to maintain a community that includes members other than just the wealthy who are able to buy their way in regardless of how high the price tag gets.

Within this neighborhood, Hart Street has particular significance because it has maintained its architectural integrity to the greatest extent of the four streets in the neighborhood - so far. It is truly a gem. When I walk our dog in the morning or evening, it is a special treat to go down Franklin, by Robinson, up Cypress and then up Hart back to Franklin. The care that has gone into maintaining the small but efficient homes on the street is obvious, as is the connection that the original workman's cottage style maintains to a time when Brookline still had working class areas. It does give one the feeling of going back in time. I do worry that with such a small street, with only a dozen or so homes, the loss of even one home will start a cascading effect that will result inevitably in the loss of every home. This is not a situation as we saw with 23 Cushing Road, as inappropriate and ill-fitting as I find that structure to be. The larger lots and pre-existing reductions in architectural integrity on that street resulted in only a minor change to the overall feel of that neighborhood. The replacement of any of the cottages on Hart Street a similarly inapposite structure would not have such a restrained effect.

I don't begrudge anyone the desire to find the home of their dreams or, in the absence of other options, building it from scratch. We fell in love with our house from the first time we saw it, and being able to live there has changed our lives and our children's lives immeasurably. But we took our house as we found it, understanding that if we wanted something radically different we would simply need to look elsewhere. Destroying the house to visually impose our own idiosyncrasies on the neighborhood never occurred to us. The situation on Hart Street is vastly more tenuous, given the small number of structures and the unique style they embody. The only way to protect and, ultimately, save Hart Street is to give it LHD status.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris Kallaher
162 Cypress Street
617-462-6297

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Sincerely,
Chris

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Hart Street

Emily Mann <mannemily2@gmail.com>

Mon 8/9/2021 11:03 AM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

We are residents of the Greater Point and wanted to reach out to you about our support for the proposal to make Hart Street a LHD. Hart Street is a unique and wonderful little corner of Brookline and holds a special place in our community. We have been living in Brookline since 2009 and have been raising our children in the Greater Point. Its housing stock is diverse and provides a mix of apartments, triple deckers, and single family homes. Hart Street is a part of our housing and community diversity and showcases Brookline's history, with worker cottages that date back almost 200 years. This street is a part of every walking tour we have given, when friends and family come to town. It is a powerful juxtaposition to the large estate style homes of Pill Hill and is an important balance within our community. I believe that this is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the diversity of housing stock in Brookline.

I hope you will support the proposal to make Hart Street a LHD.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best wishes,

Emily Mann and Ron Sandler

323 Walnut Street

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PRESERVE Hart Street - Local Historic District

Rebecca Moor <zarendy@hotmail.com>

Wed 8/11/2021 11:39 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

I am writing to join my voice to the many Brookline residents who passionately support the preservation of Hart Street. We oppose any development on this historic street that would destroy its unique charm, and urge you to consider turning Hart Street into a Local Historic District.

My family and I live in Brookline Village, and moved here - like many others - in large part because of the historic nature of many of the area's streets, including Hart Street and our neighbor White Place. Streets like Hart Street are irreplaceable, and form a vital link to Brookline's fast-disappearing history - particularly its working-class history. With every new development, that history gets chipped away. This history is part of what makes Brookline so cherished by residents, and, once lost, it can never be replaced.

It is vital to preserve Hart Street as it is. There are many other streets in Brookline and the surrounding area that do not have Hart Street's charms, and where a modern, oversized development would be far more appropriate. Please don't let one new homeowner destroy what has been built up over many decades by families who cherished this special, one-of-a-kind street.

Preserve Hart Street and turn it into a Local Historic District. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Moor
24 Davis Avenue

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Hart Street Local Historic District

Rifas-Shiman, Sheryl <sheryl_rifas@harvardpilgrim.org>

Sun 8/15/2021 3:43 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Cc: Larry Shiman <larry.shiman@gmail.com>

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

We are longtime Brookline residents, having owned our home for twenty years. We are writing to give our strong support to the creation of a Local Historic District in the Hart Street area.

We have close friends living on Hart Street, and are quite taken with the beauty of the small cottages. The homes are quaint yet exude a sense of history and beauty. A collection of homes such as exists on Hart Street is quite unique in Brookline and the surrounding area. In short, we believe Hart Street should continue to exist as a local treasure.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Rifas-Shiman and Larry Shiman
11 Craig Place, Brookline

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Hart Street as a Local Historic District

Bucar, Liz <e.bucar@northeastern.edu>

Sun 8/8/2021 4:26 PM

To: Tina McCarthy <tmccarthy@brooklinema.gov>

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

Since 2012 I have lived at 67 Franklin Street, which is one street over from Hart Street. I am writing to in express my support to designate Hart Street as a Local Historic District.

When we moved to Brookline almost a decade ago, we limited our housing search to the Great Point Neighborhood. We loved the multi-generational and socio-economic diversity of the community, which is only possible with housing stock that includes modest houses like those on Hart Street.

I walk Hart Street everyday with my dog and it is among my favorites in town, not because it boasts large showy Victorians like Pill Hill, but because of the sweetness and intimacy of the housing. It is a joyful street, with tiny flower gardens and colorful flags. It also speaks to a demographic important to our town: the immigrants and town workers who have been just as important to our town's history and culture as doctors and other professionals.

This area of Brookline is very special. It is a place where neighbors drop off meals to front line workers and remove snow of the sidewalks of older residents. I am feeling partially grateful for our community after the last year of covid-lockdowns, when kids found each other in our local parks and adults lingered over conversations on sidewalks in front of our homes. My neighbors are social workers, Brookline teachers, and retired town employees. They include single mothers, widowers, and young families. This is only possible because we have a variety of semi-affordable housing options such as those on Hart Street.

If these houses are not protected, there is nothing else in Brookline similar in scale and history. I hope the town will designate Hart Street as a Local Historic District.

Best,
Liz Bucar
67 Franklin Street
Brookline, MA

Liz Bucar
Professor of Religion and Dean's Leadership Fellow
Northeastern University
<https://bucar.hcommons.org>

PI, Sacred Writes
<https://www.sacred-writes.org>

Check out my latest book: Pious Fashion
<https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674976160>

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