



# Design Review

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Charlestown Preservation Society Design Review Committee  
P. O. Box 290201  
Charlestown, MA 02129

**February 8, 2021**

Christine Araujo, Chair  
City of Boston, Zoning Board of Appeal  
1010 Massachusetts Avenue  
Boston, MA 02118

**Re: 6 Mount Vernon Ave, Charlestown, MA 02129**  
**Appl.# A1087732, BOA999494**  
**February 11, 2020 ZBA hearing**

6 Mt. Vernon St. Avenue in Charlestown represents in Boston an important, singular detached Greek Revival style, five-bay, brick on granite foundation dwelling house set back in a generous front garden. This house is a singular example of a Greek Revival, detached center hall plan. Although there are some 2500 examples, only one fully detached house of this type has been identified. A second fully detached example is a bowfront with side entry in East Boston. (Source: Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System). *A singular historic dwelling in the City of Boston deserves treatment to preserve its character defining features* as stated in the Charlestown Neighborhood District article 62-25, the special roof structure restrictions, and Section 62-24 (d) & (r) as this relates to Section 62-19, the Breed's Hill Neighborhood Design Overlay District.



Figure 1- Images by DRC. Front and Side Views from Mt Vernon St

This particularly prominent corner location is viewable both from Chestnut Street, and Mt Vernon Street, two historically significant streets also regulated by the above-mentioned articles. The viewshed is uniquely critical to this stately dwelling house.

The current Owners of this property have undertaken, by all appearances, a systematic process of debasement of the character-defining features of this house. While this current design that includes arbitrarily placed skylights and a rear roof deck is incrementally better than the last iterations, it remains inappropriate for this singular stately dwelling house in a prominent location.

The above-noted proposal introduces 5 Velux skylights asymmetrically placed without consideration of the symmetrical / center hall façade. The roof deck spans the entire rear of the house and would be visible from Mount Vernon Street. These additions profoundly and irreversibly alter this historic structure. Our zoning bylaws and overlay districts exist for a reason and this proposal does not merit exception through appeal.

We strongly **OPPOSE** the requested variances and ask that the ZBA preserve the roof structure of this Landmark-Eligible dwelling house in this very prominent historic location by **OPPOSING with PREJUDICE** the proponent's variance and uphold Charlestown's Neighborhood District Overlay that has been in effect for more than 30 years prior to the property's recent purchase.

We thank you for your attention to these matters.

The Charlestown Preservation Society is dedicated to protecting the architectural character of our community.

Sincerely,



Amanda Zettel, President Charlestown Preservation Society  
and Acting Chair, Design Review Committee

Charlestown Preservation Society  
P.O. Box 290201  
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cc.: Lydia Edwards, Boston City Council  
Quinlan Locke, Office of Neighborhood Services