

**PRELIMINARY REPORT
METHODIST MEETING HOUSE AND TUFTS HOUSE
SINGLE BUILDING HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY**



**Prepared by:
Wellesley Single Building Historic District
Study Committee**

December 2, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS 1

SUMMARY SHEET 2

 Conclusion of the Preliminary Study Report 2

INTRODUCTION 3

METHODOLOGY 3

SIGNIFICANCE 5

 Methodist Meeting House Historic District 5

 Tufts House Historic District 6

JUSTIFICATION OF THE BOUNDARIES 8

 Methodist Meeting House Historic District 8

 Tufts House Historic District 8

MAPS OF THE PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICTS 8

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BYLAW 16

SECTION XIVD. HISTORIC DISTRICTS 17

INVENTORY FORMS 22

PHOTOGRAPHS – METHODIST MEETING HOUSE 30

PHOTOGRAPHS – TUFTS HOUSE 32

BIBLIOGRAPHY 35

SUMMARY SHEET

The Single Building Historic District Study Committee:

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Committee Members as of October 27, 2010:

David Wright, Vice Chair
Linda Buffum
Joel Slocum
Barbara Bourque

Expected Date of Public Hearing: February 7, 2011
Expected Date of Town Meeting: March 28, 2011
Total Number of Properties Included in Study: 2

Conclusion of the Preliminary Study Report

The Wellesley Single Building Historic District Study Committee finds that both the Methodist Meeting House and the Tufts House are worthy of designation as historic districts. Each of the properties offers a unique perspective on Wellesley's history, which the study Committee and the property owners would like to preserve.

The Methodist Meeting House is a late 18th century structure that was the second church in the community, and one of the first Methodist Churches in the United States. The structure was ultimately moved a half a mile south of its original location and converted to a single family dwelling. The area of its new location was rural at that time, but the landscape was significantly altered by the later subdivision of land. The location of the house is present in the Town's 1897 Atlas, and the main house on the property located at 377 Weston Road has remained.

The Tufts House is a well-preserved early example of the Colonial Revival architectural style. The home housed a renowned architect in its homeowner Nathaniel P. Tufts. Tufts was a graduate of the School of Architecture at Boston University, and he was recruited by Royal Barry Wills immediately following his graduation. He was one of the earliest associates of the architectural firm Wills started in 1925. The Royal Barry Wills firm achieved local and national significance.

INTRODUCTION

Historic preservation in Massachusetts took a giant leap forward with the passage of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, the Historic Districts Act, in 1960. The Act enables cities and towns to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in their history or that of the Commonwealth. A Historic District can contain one or more buildings, and it can be of local, rather than state or national, importance.

A Historic District protects through controls on external changes to any building in the District. Each town selects which controls to impose from a list provided in 40C. An appointed Historic District Commission oversees these controls through a process of application by an owner, hearing before the Commission and decision rendered by the Commission.

Municipalities throughout the state have used Chapter 40C to create single and multiple building Districts to preserve parts of their historic legacies. Currently there are over 200 single building historic districts in Massachusetts in towns as varied as Lincoln, Somerville and West Springfield, and over 230 multiple building districts. In 1980, Wellesley created a multiple building Historic District in the Cottage Street area to preserve the houses occupied by workers in the town's nineteenth century manufacture of shoes. The area today is a congenial neighborhood that enjoys its protected status and the resiliency of property values that that status has afforded owners over the past thirty years.

Wellesley is now being offered the opportunity to create its first two single building historic districts. These recognize and preserve individual buildings that are an integral part of the Town's legacy. The proposal and its background are described in the following pages.

METHODOLOGY

Over the past decade, several Wellesley residents have come to the Wellesley Historical Commission to ask how a single building might be preserved for future generations to learn from and enjoy. Two have been especially diligent in exploring preservation options. Leslie and Lewis B. Holmes have been interested, since at least 2004, in preserving their 1798 Colonial "Methodist Meeting House/Cavanagh House" home. Doris Tufts Heinold, since about 2005, has sought to do the same for her 1930 Colonial Revival "Tufts House". The former structure played a significant role in the development of Methodism in Wellesley and in the country as a whole. The latter is an early example of a uniquely American style, and it was designed by an architect whose firm, Royal Barry Wills, was to become a major residential designer and builder not only in Wellesley, but nation-wide.

The Town's latest Comprehensive Plan (September, 2006) urged the Historical Commission to look into ways to preserve individual buildings in Wellesley. The Historical Commission decided to do this by using Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, which governs the creation of Local Historic Districts. Chapter 40C permits the establishment of a single building as a Historic District, and the Commission decided that both of the properties were eligible for preservation in this way, each as a Single Building Historic District. Town Counsel was consulted, and he confirmed this interpretation of 40C was accurate. Both home owners are thrilled that there is, in fact, an existing tool for Wellesley to use to preserve individual buildings in general, and theirs in particular..

Wellesley already has its own Historic District Bylaw, Section XIVD of the Zoning Bylaws, approved by Annual Town Meeting in 1980. In accord with Chapter 40C and the Wellesley Bylaw, the existing Historic District Commission is responsible for doing, or appointing a Study Committee to do, the necessary work to create any new Historic District in Town. Representatives from the Historical Commission met with the Historic District Commission on March 23, 2010 to discuss the purpose of, and procedure for, creating Single Building Historic Districts (SBHD's). Brief descriptions of the Methodist Meeting House and the Tufts House were presented. The Historic District Commission voted to ask them Historical Commission to form a Single Building Historic District Study Committee (SBHDSC), and to present the members' names to the Board of Selectmen for appointment. This was done in April, 2010. Members appointed at that time included Helen Robertson, Chair; Linda Buffum; Barbara Bourque; and Joel Slocum. Barbara Bourque was subsequently unable to serve, and David Wright joined the Committee in October 2010. The Study Committee has worked closely with the Town's Planning Department.

Representatives from the Historical Commission and, later, from the SBHDSC have met with the owners of the two properties over a period of several years. This was to learn about the history of their houses from them and to present them with the Committee's findings. The Committee is continuing to keep them informed about its progress. The Preliminary Report was presented to the Historical Commission on November 9, and the proposal to create the Methodist Meeting House Historic District and the Tufts House Historic District was endorsed by the Commission in a unanimous vote. The Study Committee presented the Preliminary Report on its findings to the Planning Board on November 29, 2010. The Preliminary Study Report will sent to the Massachusetts Historical Commission on December 1, 2010 for discussion and recommendations. According to MGL 40C, the Study Committee will be able to hold a Public Hearing sixty days after the MHC receives the Report and determines it is complete. In December, 2010, the Study Committee will place an Article on the Warrant for the 2011 Annual Town Meeting (ATM). Town Meeting will be asked to vote for the creation of the two proposed Single Building Historic

Districts: the “Methodist Meeting House Historic District,” and the “Tufts House Historic District.”

SIGNIFICANCE

Methodist Meeting House Historic District

The house at 377 Weston Road began its existence in 1798 as the “Hundreds Meeting house,” the second church built in what is now Wellesley, and one of the first Methodist churches in the United States. Its relocation and conversion to a residence in 1860 was not unusual for the period. An added porch and bath from the 1950s marks the period of Wellesley’s intensive development immediately following World War II. Today, the house is still rich in surviving details from every period of its history.

The Methodist revival movement grew rapidly in England after it was founded by John Wesley in about 1740, and also spread to the British colonies in America. The first Methodist meetings in West Needham (later Wellesley) were held in a Meeting House on what is now Church Street. By 1798 the movement had grown locally to the point where a dedicated house of worship was designed for it. The building was located on Blossom Street, now Weston Road, in the area known as “The Hundreds,” for the 100-acre land grants awarded there by the British Crown to settlers from Dedham. The road has always been a busy one because it connects Wellesley and Weston.

The Methodist Meeting House had a centrally located entry door on a non-gabled facade of the building facing Blossom Street (now Weston Road). The New England Meeting House style of design was an intentional change from the European Gothic Church plan, which had seating facing an altar at one end, a pulpit in the middle of a long side, and entry by a door at the end opposite the altar. Early New England Meeting Houses eliminated the altar, and seating focused instead on the central pulpit on the side across from the entry door. When one entered, the pulpit would have been directly ahead, the major focus of both the building and the service.

The custom of Methodist “camp meetings,” beginning in the 18th century, arose from the limited availability of preachers and churches to serve the needs of the faithful in the expanding nation. In 1842, the Methodist Meeting House in West Needham (as Wellesley was formerly called) was the site of the largest camp meeting ever held in the United States, at which an estimated 20,000 people gathered for several days of preaching, singing and worship.

Following that meeting, the house fell into disuse. It was sold at auction to a farmer, Michael Cavanagh, who moved it a half mile south to its present location on Weston Road and adapted it as his own residence. His former house had recently burned. In that era, old meeting houses, whose spacious interiors and post-and-beam construction made them attractive to acquire and move, were

relocated and adapted for other uses. The present porch, with its ornamental spindle railing, was probably added at or near that time.

Cavanagh left the house to his daughter, who lived there until her death in her 90s. She left the house to the carpenter who had done extensive work on it, who in turn gave it as a wedding present to his daughter. She and her husband, Gregory Hubler, lived there from 1950 to 1968, when they sold it to the current owners, Lewis and Leslie Holmes.

The oldest existing section of the house today is a side-gabled, two-story, three-ranked symmetrical square with interior chimneys at both ends. It has a simple cornice and corner boards on its four corners. There is a one-story front porch running the length of the house that is probably a nineteenth (or twentieth) century modification during its conversion to a house. The large-paned 2-over-2 windows are also a likely modification from a later period. Seventeenth and eighteenth century windows were made up of small glass panes, because existing technology limited manufacturing to such panes. The entry door is centrally located on the long side of the building facing Weston Road. It has side lights on both sides of the entry door, which classifies it as an Adams-style Colonial. The one-story addition on the rear, dating from 1993, is asymmetric and extends beyond the north side of the original building's square. It serves as an entry from the garage area and Elmwood Road.

Since its conversion to a residence in 1860, the house has been occupied by only three families. The SBHD Study Committee and the Holmes family urge that this building, with its many visible layers of history dating back to the 18th century, and its connections to the social, religious, and economic development of the town, be preserved for the benefit of historians and all residents of Wellesley. It can be preserved, under MGL 40C as "The Methodist Meeting House Historic District."

Tufts House Historic District

Designed by its first owner, architect Nathaniel P. Tufts in 1930, and presently occupied by his daughter Doris Tufts Heinold, the Tufts house at 38 Lowell Road is a well-preserved early example of the Colonial Revival architectural style in Wellesley. The Tufts House is also one of the early buildings in Town from the architectural office of Royal Barry Wills, in which Tufts was an associate. This firm played a significant role in the development of the residential character of Wellesley and spread in popularity nation-wide. The house was also a pioneer in the development of a significant Wellesley neighborhood, the Cliff Estates.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought a new interest in America's heritage and architecture. Industry was developing rapidly everywhere, and masses of immigrants were beginning to arrive. The Centennial

Exhibition of 1876 re-introduced America to its Colonial past, and the resulting Colonial Revival Movement, a nationalistic cultural movement, started on the east coast. In the field of architecture, designs began to be based directly on forms from the time of the American Revolutionary War, not on those currently in use in European countries. There are several principal subtypes of Colonial revival houses, many of which remained popular through the 1940's and 1950's.

During the early years of the Movement, many Colonial Revival homes were inaccurate in both their proportions and their detailing. They were often freely-reinterpreted designs based on original prototypes. This was not true, however, for one of the country's best known proponents of the Colonial Revival Movement, the architectural firm of Royal Barry Wills in Boston. Houses built between 1915 and 1935 most closely resemble their Colonial prototypes. The Tufts House was built during this period, in 1930.

The Tufts House is a two-storied, five-ranked rectangular box with a side-gabled roof and clapboard siding. The siding is graduated, decreasing in width of exposure as it nears the bottom. This Adams-style, side-gabled sub-type was built throughout the Colonial Revival era, but "predominates after 1910." (McAlester, p.322). The entry door has a triangular pediment and side lights. Unlike an original eighteenth Colonial, it was designed with an attached porch on the west side, and an attached brick garage on the east. Tufts reproduced the accurate proportions and details of a Colonial house in building his home, and his attention to detail became the hallmark of a Royal Barry Wills design.

Nathaniel P. Tufts was a graduate of the School of Architecture at Boston University, and he was recruited by Royal Barry Wills immediately following his graduation. He was the earliest associate of the architectural firm Wills started in 1925. He remained with Wills many years before leaving to found his own practice. In his years with Wills, Tufts studied and reproduced actual interior and exterior details and proportions from the Colonial Period in his designs. In doing so, he helped develop the Wills firm's signature Colonial Revival style. This meticulous attention to detail meant houses from the Wills office looked as if they had been built in the 1790s, rather than the 1930s.

Royal Barry Wills was a major residential designer and builder in Wellesley, and almost a dozen homes he designed still exist on Standish Road. Houses designed or influenced by the Wills office spread across the country, and Royal Barry Wills became a household name at the national level. Wills wrote books, and articles about him and his firm's designs appeared in newspapers, popular magazines (he wrote for the "Saturday Evening Post") and home-building magazines. He enjoyed immense public popularity, while Frank Lloyd Wright, his contemporary, garnered critical praise from professionals.

The 1920's ushered in the conscious development of Wellesley as a "well-mannered, well-maintained residential community" (Hinchliffe, p. 78). Town

leaders were determined to see that Wellesley “develop in the proper direction” (Hinchliffe, p. 82). Albion Clapp was responsible for developing the Cliff Estates, and he placed restrictions on the buyers of his properties. He sold only large lots, and specified there were to be no “cheap” houses or curved streets in the area. In 1926, Wellesley passed a Zoning Act to further regulate construction in the Town. The Tufts House was one of the early homes in the Cliff Estates. At the time it was built in 1930, Lowell Road ended at Edmunds Road, west of the Tufts House. Doris Tufts Heinold, daughter of Nathaniel Tufts, remembers growing up with woods and cliffs near her home.

Occupied and maintained for all of its nearly 80 years by two generations of the Tufts family, the Tufts House today is an architectural gem in itself, and a building of considerable significance in the residential development of Wellesley. The SBHD Study Committee and Doris Tufts Heinold urge that this building, with its connections to the development of the town, be preserved for the benefit of current and future residents of Wellesley. It can be preserved, under MGL 40C as “The Tufts House Historic District.”

JUSTIFICATION OF THE BOUNDARIES

Methodist Meeting House Historic District

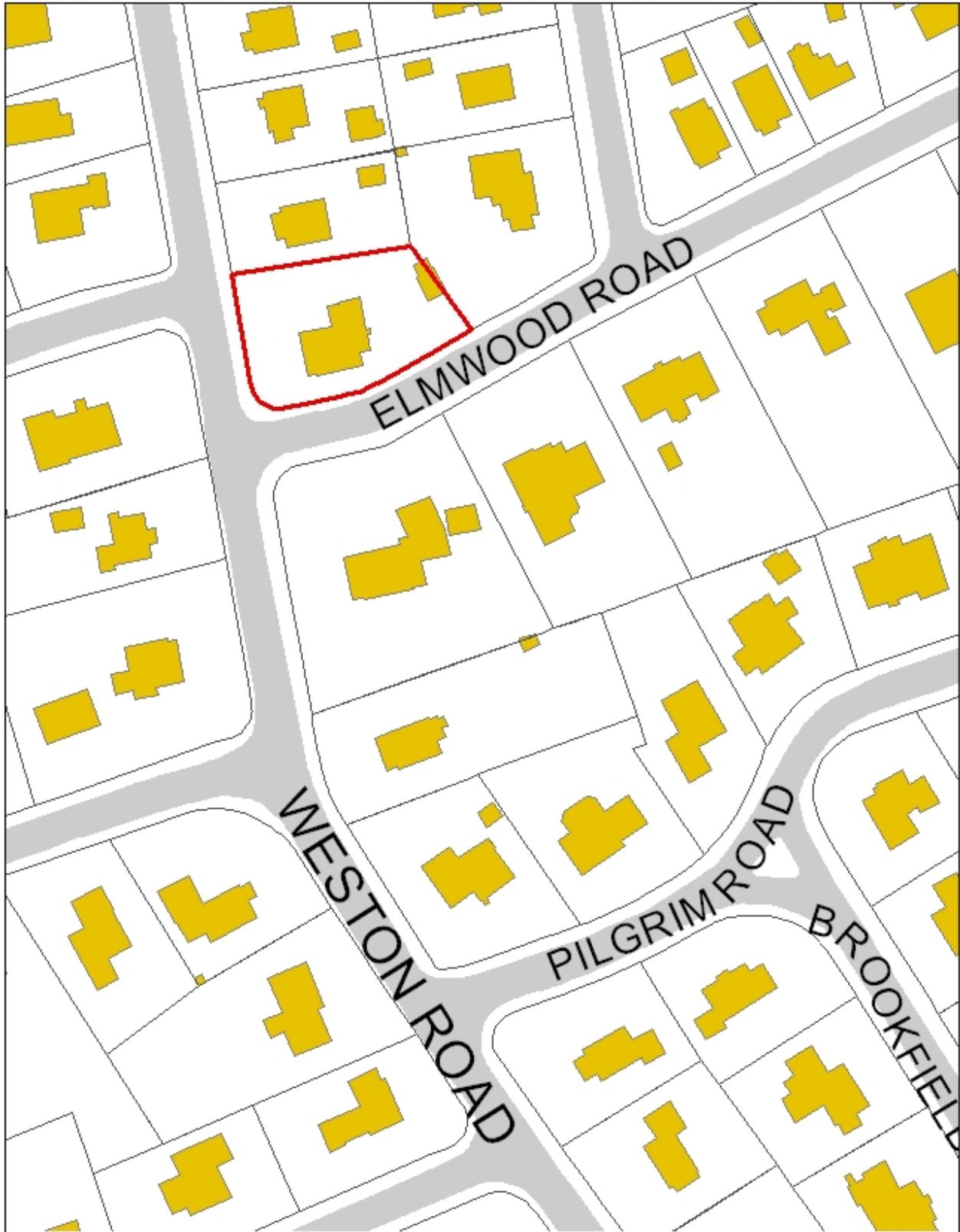
The Methodist Meeting House played a singular historical role in the spread of Methodism in our town and in Massachusetts. When the building was relocated to its present location and reconfigured as a house, it was surrounded by farmland. A residential neighborhood grew up around it with houses designed in different periods and styles that have no coherent historic significance. For these reasons, the Historical Commission, the Historic District Commission and the Study Committee decided to study and preserve this house alone as a Single Building Historic District under MGL 40C.

Tufts House Historic District

The Tufts House is an early and outstanding example of Colonial Revival architecture in Wellesley. It was designed by a founding member of the Royal Barry Wills firm. It also played a significant role in the development of the Cliff Estates neighborhood and the residential character of Wellesley. The Historical Commission, the Historic District Commission and the Study Committee decided, based on the house’s individual merit and importance, it should be studied and preserved as a Single Building Historic District under MGL 40C.

MAPS OF THE PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Methodist Meeting House Historic District



Legend

-  377 Weston Road
-  Parcels
-  Buildings
-  Roads

100 50 0 100 Feet



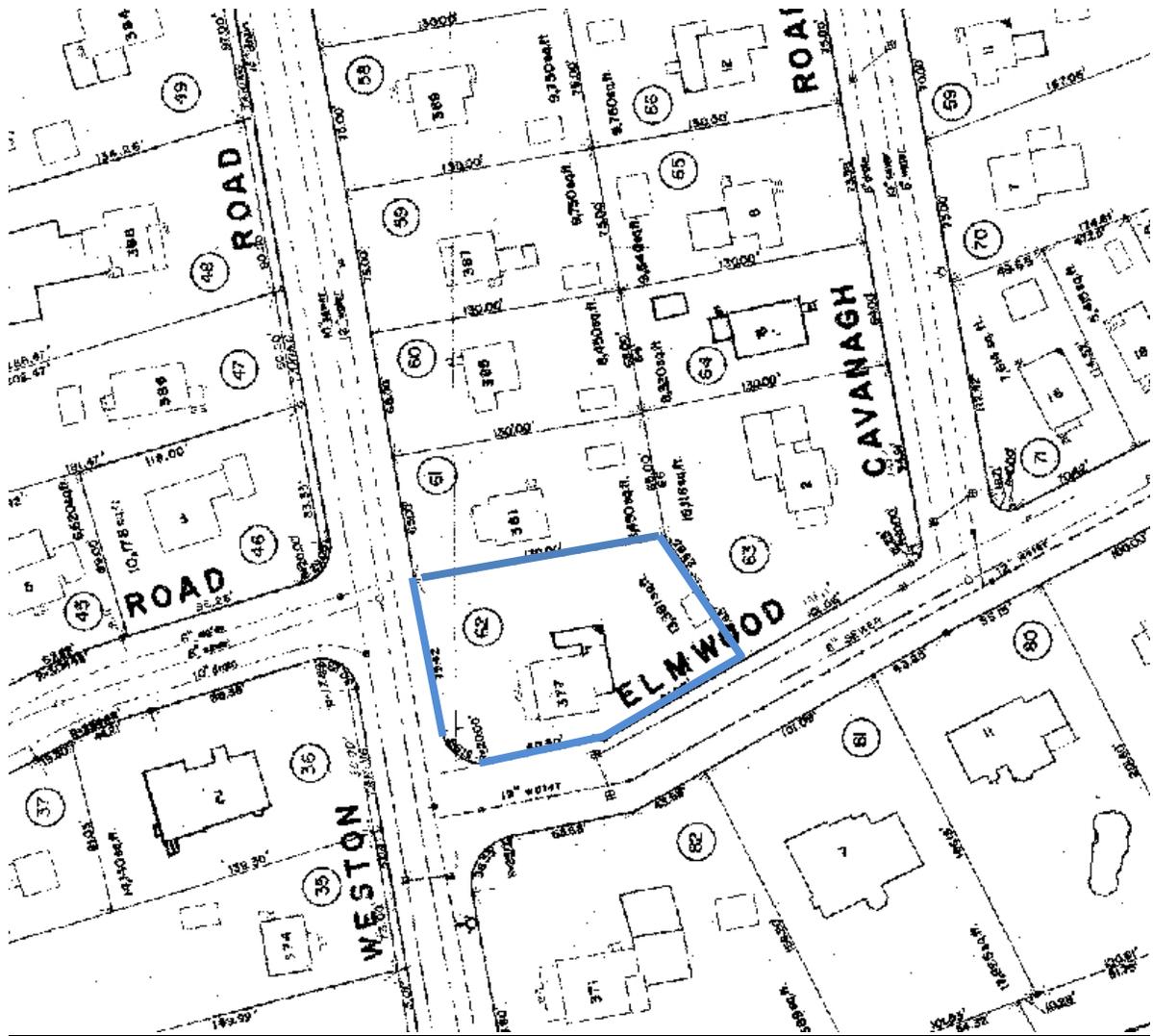
1 inch = 100 feet



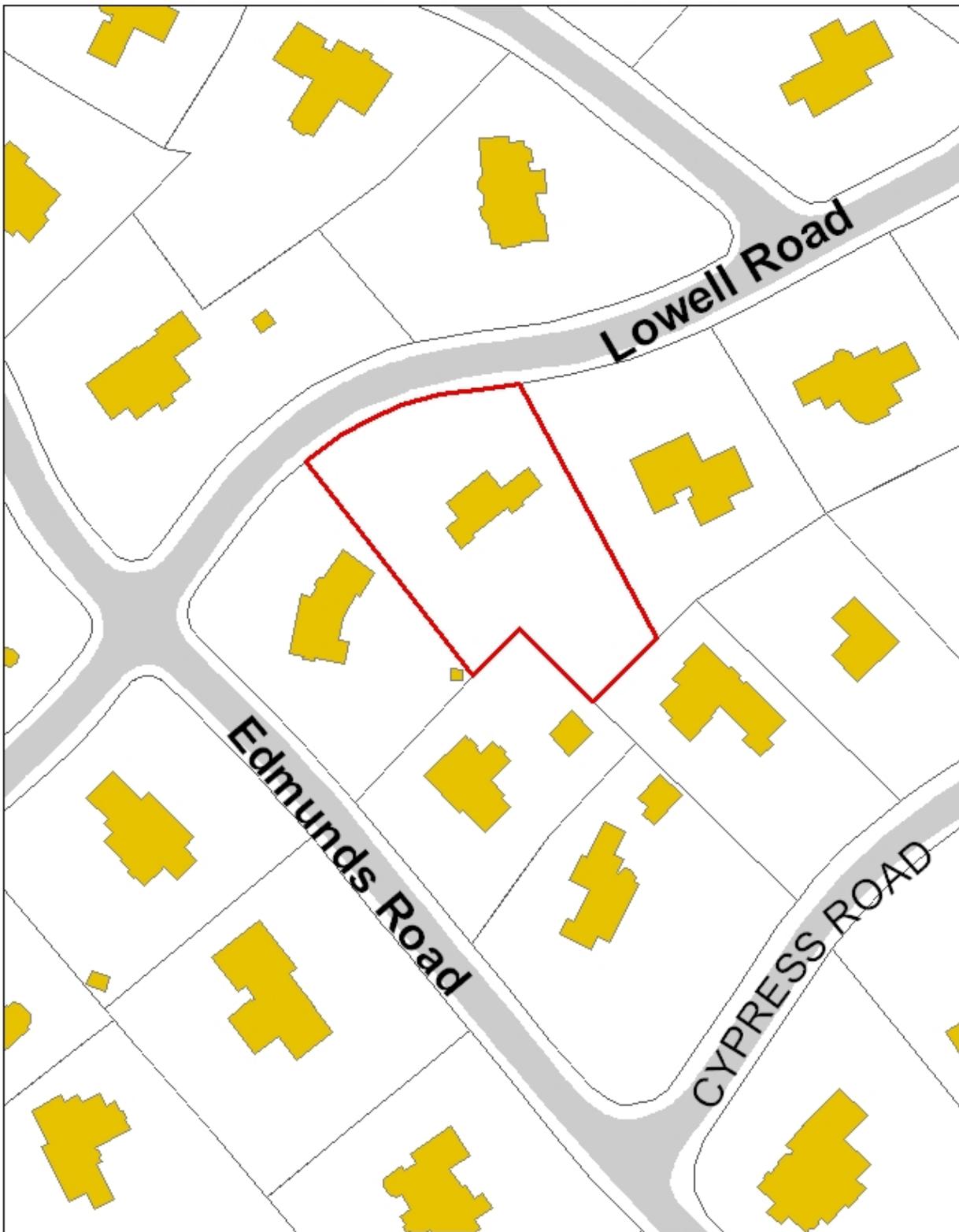
1935 Town Atlas showing 377 Weston Road



2006 Town Atlas showing 377 Weston Road

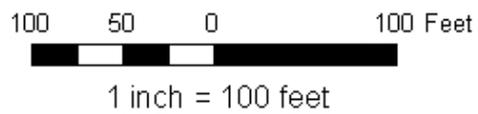


Tufts House Historic District



Legend

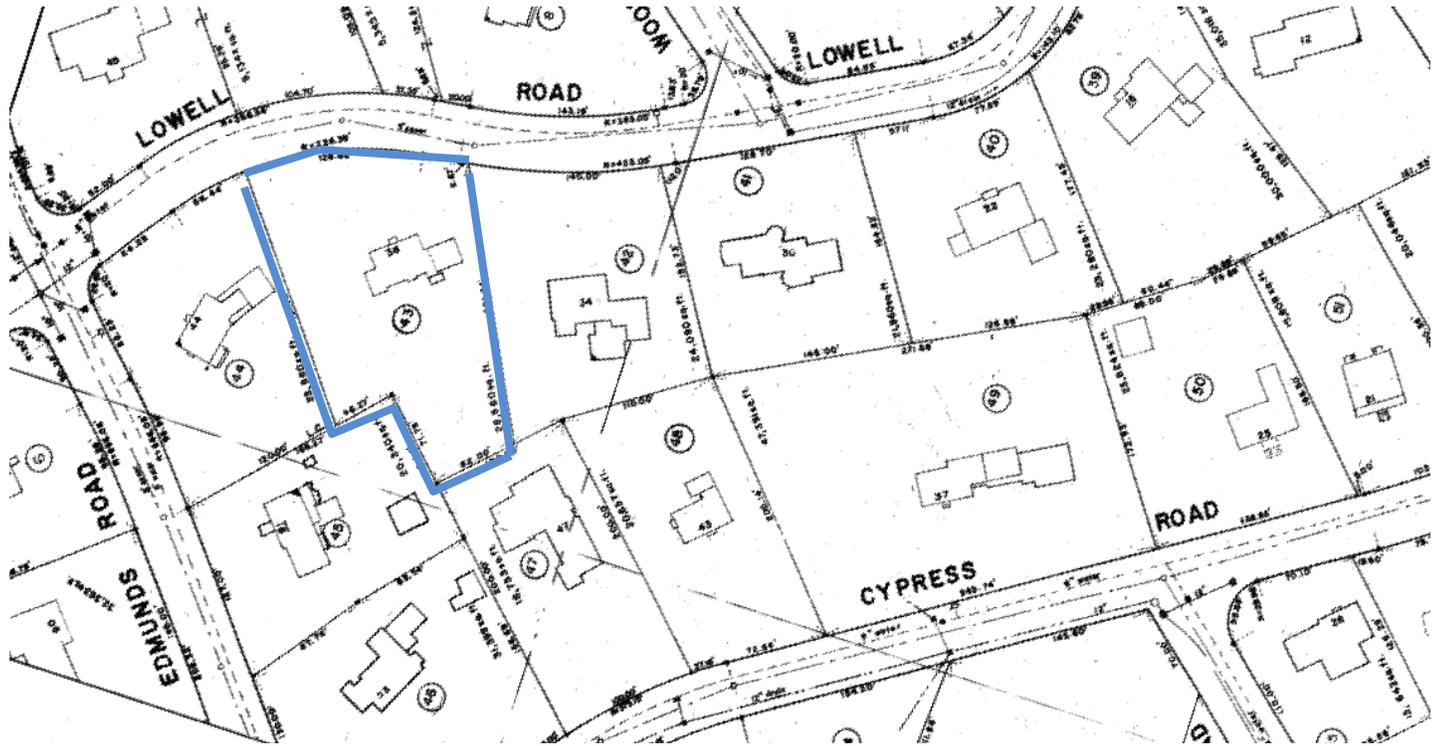
-  38 Lowell Road
-  Parcels
-  Buildings
-  Roads



1935 Town Atlas showing 38 Lowell Road



2006 Town Atlas showing 38 Lowell Road



OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BYLAW

The Study Committee recommends that the Methodist Meeting House Historic District and the Tufts House Historic District be governed by Wellesley's existing Historic District Bylaw and administered by the existing Historic District Commission. This decision was reached after consultation with Wellesley's Town Counsel.

SECTION XIVD. HISTORIC DISTRICTS.

Part A. Purpose.

The purpose of the Historic District is to promote the education, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the Town of Wellesley and the Commonwealth, or their architecture, and through the maintenance and improvement of settings of such buildings and places and the encouragement of design compatible therewith.

This Bylaw is not intended to conflict with any other Section of this Zoning Bylaw or other Bylaws of the Town of Wellesley. The requirements established herein do not relieve any person from also satisfying any and all applicable Zoning Bylaws or other applicable rules, regulations and laws.

Part B. Authority.

Historic Districts in the Town of Wellesley shall be created and maintained in every respect under and according to the provisions of General Laws of the Commonwealth, Chapter 40C and all amendments thereto, and this Section shall be in every respect controlled by and subject to the provisions of said Chapter 40C of the General Laws and all amendments thereto.

Part C. Definitions.

For the purposes of this Section, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

Altered - includes the words "rebuilt", "reconstructed", "restored", "removed" and "demolished" and the phrase "changed in exterior color".

Building - means a combination of materials forming a shelter for persons, animals or property.

Commission - means the commission acting as the Historic District Commission.

Constructed - includes the words "built", "erected", "installed", "enlarged", and "moved".

Exterior Architectural Feature - means such portion of the exterior of a building or structure as is open to view from a public street, public way, public park or public body of water, including but not limited to the architectural style and general arrangement and setting thereof, the kind, color and texture of exterior building materials, the color of paint or other materials applied to exterior surfaces and the type and style of windows, doors, lights, signs and other appurtenant exterior fixtures.

Structure - means a combination of materials other than a building, including a sign, fence, wall, terrace, walk, or driveway.

Part D. Applicability.

1. The boundaries of the Historic District are shown on a map of the Historic District which is filed with the Town Clerk of the Town of Wellesley and recorded in the Registry of Deeds. The Historic District is indicated on the Zoning Map of the Town of Wellesley.
2. Historic Districts shall be considered as overlapping other zoning districts.

Part E. Certification.

1. Except as this Section may otherwise provide under Part G Exceptions no building or structure within an Historic District shall be constructed or altered in any way that effects exterior architectural features unless the Commission shall first have issued a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of non-applicability, or a certificate of hardship, with respect to such construction or alteration.
2. Any person who desires to obtain a certificate from the Commission shall file with the Commission an application for a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of non-applicability or a certificate of hardship, as the case may be, in such form as the Commission may reasonably determine, together with such plans, elevations, specifications, material and other information, including in the case of demolition or removal a statement of the proposed condition and appearance of the property thereafter, as may be reasonably deemed necessary by the Commission to enable it to make a determination on the application.
3. No building permit for construction of a building or structure or for alteration of an exterior architectural feature within an Historic District and no demolition permit for demolition or removal of a building or structure within an Historic District shall be issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals or by the Building Inspector until the certificate required by this Section has been issued by the Commission.
4. If the Commission determines that the construction or alteration for which an application for a certificate of appropriateness has been filed will be appropriate for or compatible with the preservation or protection of the Historic District, the Commission shall cause a certificate of appropriateness to be issued to the applicant. In the case of a disapproval of an application for a certificate of appropriateness, the Commission shall place upon its record the reasons for such determination and shall forthwith cause a notice of its determination, accompanied by a copy of the reasons therefor as set forth in the records of the Commission, to be issued to the applicant, and the Commission may make recommendations to the applicant with respect to appropriateness of design, arrangement, texture, material and similar features. Prior to the issuance of any disapproval, the Commission may notify the applicant of its proposed action accompanied by

recommendations of changes in the applicant's proposal which, if made, would make the application acceptable to the Commission. If within fourteen days of the receipt of such notice the applicant files a written modification of his application in conformity with the recommended changes of the Commission, the Commission shall cause a certificate of appropriateness to be issued to the applicant.

5. In case of a determination by the Commission that an application for a certificate of appropriateness or for a certificate of non-applicability does not involve any exterior architectural feature, or involves an exterior architectural feature which is not then subject to review by the Commission in accordance with the provisions of Part G., the Commission shall cause a certificate of non-applicability to be issued to the applicant.
6. If the construction or alteration for which an application for a certificate of appropriateness has been filed shall be determined to be inappropriate, or in the event of an application for a certificate of hardship, the Commission shall determine whether owing to conditions especially affecting the building or structure involved, but not affecting the Historic District generally, failure to approve an application will involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant and whether such application may be approved without substantial detriment to the public welfare and without substantial derogation from the intent and purpose of this Bylaw. If the Commission determines in either such instance that owing to such conditions failure to approve an application will involve substantial hardship to the applicant and approval thereof may be made without such substantial detriment or derogation, or if the Commission fails to make a determination on an application within the time specified in Section 11 of Chapter 40C of the General Laws, the Commission shall cause a certificate of hardship to be issued to the applicant.
7. Each certificate issued by the Commission shall be dated and signed by its chairman, vice-chairman, secretary or such other person designated by the Commission to sign such certificates on its behalf.
8. The Commission shall file with the Town Clerk and with the Building Inspector, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Planning Board a copy of all certificates and determination of disapproval issued by it.
9. The Commission shall determine promptly, and in all events within fourteen days after the filing of an application for a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of non-applicability or a certificate of hardship, as the case may be, whether the application involves any exterior architectural features which are subject to approval by the Commission. If the Commission determines that such application involves any such features which are subject to approval by the Commission, the Commission shall hold a public hearing on such application unless such hearing is dispensed with as hereinafter provided. The Commission shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing on any

application and shall give public notice of the time, place and purposes thereof at least fourteen days before said hearing in such manner as it may determine, and by mailing, postage prepaid, a copy of said notice to the applicant, to the owners of all adjoining property and other property deemed by the Commission to be materially affected thereby as they appear on the most recent real estate tax list, to the Building Inspector, to the Planning Board of the Town, and to any person filing written request for notice of hearings, such request to be renewed yearly in December, and to such other persons as the Commission shall deem entitled to notice.*

*See also SECTION XXVIA.

10. As soon as convenient after such public hearing but in any event within sixty days after the filing of the application, or within such further time as the applicant may allow in writing, the Commission shall make a determination of the application. If the Commission shall fail to make a determination within such period of time the Commission shall thereupon issue a certificate of hardship.
11. A public hearing on an application need not be held if such hearing is waived in writing by all persons entitled to notice thereof. In addition, a public hearing on an application may be waived by the Commission if the Commission determines that the exterior architectural feature involved is so insubstantial in its effect on the Historic District that it may be reviewed by the Commission without public hearing on the application, provided, however, that if the Commission dispenses with a public hearing on an application a notice of the application shall be given to the owners of all adjoining property and other property deemed by the Commission to be materially affected thereby as above provided, and ten days shall elapse after the mailing of such notice before the Commission may act upon such application.

Part F. Guidelines.

1. In passing upon matters before it the Commission shall consider, among other things, the historic and architectural value and significance of the site, building or structure, the general design arrangement, texture, and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features of buildings and structures in the surrounding area. In the case of new construction or additions to existing buildings or structures, the Commission shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the building or structure, both in relation to the land area upon which the building or structure is situated and to buildings and structures in the vicinity, and the Commission may in appropriate cases impose dimensional and set-back requirements in addition to those required by other applicable Bylaws. The Commission shall not consider interior arrangements or architectural features not subject to public view.
2. The Commission shall not make any recommendation or requirement except for the purpose of preventing developments incongruous to the

historic aspects or the architectural characteristics of the surroundings and of the Historic District.

3. The Commission may after public hearing set forth in such manner as it may determine the various designs of certain appurtenances, such as light fixtures, which will meet the requirements of an Historic District and a roster of certain colors of paint and roofing materials which will meet the requirements of an Historic District, but no such determination shall limit the right of an applicant to present other designs or colors to the Commission for its approval.

Part G.Exceptions.

1. The authority of the Commission shall not extend to the review of the following categories of buildings or structures or exterior architectural features in the Historic District, and the buildings or structures or exterior architectural features so excluded may be constructed or altered within the Historic District without review by the Commission:
 - a) Temporary structures or signs, subject however, to the other applicable sections of this Zoning Bylaw.
 - b) Terraces, walks, sidewalks and similar structures, or and one or more of them, provided that any such structure is substantially at grade level.
 - c) One antenna per building, storm doors and windows, screens, window air conditioners, lighting fixtures and similar appurtenances.
 - d) The color of paint, provided that the paint color does not cause substantial derogation from the intent and purpose of the Bylaw and is in keeping with accepted aesthetic standards.
 - e) The color or materials used on roofs.
 - f) Signs of not more than one square foot in area in connection with use of a residence for a customary home occupation, or for professional purposes, provided only one such sign is displayed in connection with each residence and if illuminated is illuminated only indirectly.
 - g) The reconstruction, substantially similar in exterior design, of a building, structure or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster, provided that the exterior design is substantially similar to the original and that such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.
2. The Commission may determine from time to time after public hearing that certain categories of exterior architectural features, colors, structures

or signs, including without limitation, any of those enumerated under paragraph 1., may be constructed or altered without review by the Commission without causing substantial derogation from the intent and purpose of this Bylaw.

3. Upon request the Commission shall issue a certificate of non-applicability with respect to construction or alteration in any category then not subject to review by the Commission in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 1. and 2.

Part H. Ordinary Maintenance, Repairs or Replacement.

Nothing in this Section shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance, repair or replacement of any exterior architectural feature within an Historic District which does not involve a change in design, material, color or the outward appearance thereof, nor to prevent the landscaping with plants, trees or shrubs, nor construed to prevent the meeting of requirements certified by a duly authorized public officer to be necessary for public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition, nor construed to prevent any construction or alteration under a permit duly issued prior to the adoption of this Section.

Part I. Further Review and Rights of Appeal.

Any applicant aggrieved by a determination of the Historic District Commission may within twenty days after the filing of the notice of such determination with the Town Clerk, file a written request with the Commission for a review by a person or person of competence and experience in such matters, designated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

The finding of the person or persons making such review shall be filed with the Town Clerk within forty-five days after the request, and shall be binding on the applicant and the Commission, unless a further appeal is sought in the Superior Court as provided in Section 12A of Chapter 40C of the General Laws.

INVENTORY FORMS

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

Four empty rectangular boxes for Assessor's Number, USGS Quad, Area(s), and Form Number.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: Wellesley, MA 02482

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Wellesley Fells

Photograph



Address: 377 Weston Road – corner of Weston and Elmwood Roads

Historic Name: Methodist Meeting House

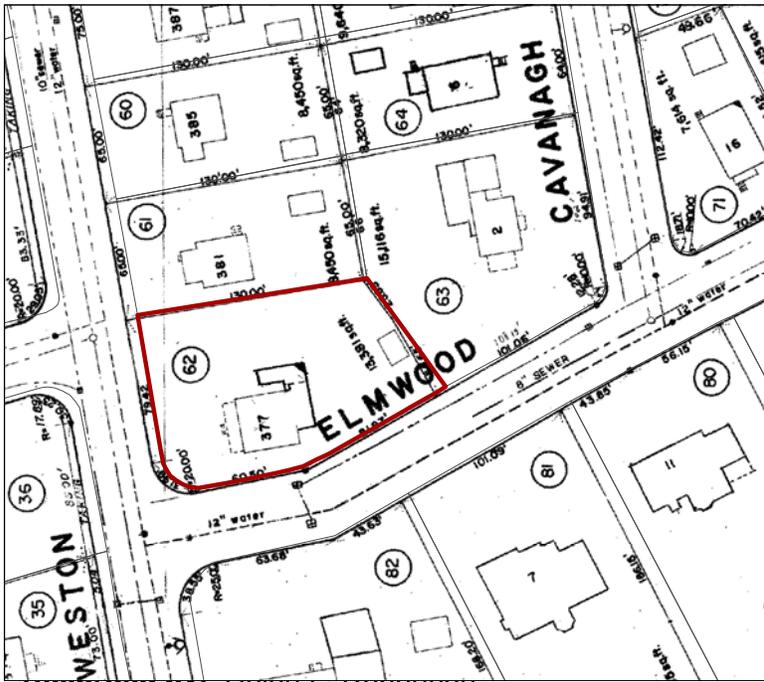
Uses: Present: **Single Family Home**

Original: Methodist Meeting House, Cavanagh House

Date of Construction: 1798

Source: Current owner's research at the Wellesley Historical Society; Hinchliffe, Five Pounds Currency, Three Pounds of Corn: Wellesley's Centennial Story; Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory number WEL. 11; McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses; Morrison, Early American Architecture

Locus Map



Style/Form: Colonial Meeting House modified into Adams-style house.

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, concrete

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garage at rear of house. Shed in rear yard.

Major Alterations (*with dates*): One story rear addition, containing a porch and a bath built in 1956 and replaced in 1993 to better match the style of the house.

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes X **Date:** c. 1860

Acreage: 13,381 sq. ft.

Organization: Wellesley Historical Commission

Date: October 3, 2010

Setting: Set on heavily-travelled Weston Road, which connects the town centers of Wellesley and Weston. Formerly called Blossom Street, this is a very old route between the two towns.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The house at 377 Weston Road began life as a Methodist Meeting House in 1798. It served in that capacity until the mid-nineteenth century, when it was moved to its present site and modified to become a home. The oldest existing section of the building today is a side-gabled, two-story, three-ranked symmetrical square (sixty feet per side) with interior chimneys at both ends. It has a simple cornice and corner boards on its four corners. There is a one-story front porch running the length of the house that is probably a nineteenth (or twentieth) century modification during its conversion to a house. The large-paned 2-over-2 windows are also a likely modification from this later period. Seventeenth and eighteenth century windows were made up of small glass panes, because existing technology limited manufacturing to such panes. The entry door is centrally located on the long side of the building facing Weston Road, a road which was already a major route at the time the Meeting House was built. It has side lights on both sides of the entry door, which classifies it as an Adams-style Colonial. The one-story addition on the rear is a replacement of an earlier 1956 one and was designed to be more in keeping with the house's architecture than the earlier one. It is asymmetric and extends beyond the north side of the original building's square. It serves as an entry from the garage area and Elmwood Road, where parking is available for guests.

Early Meeting Houses in New England were rectangular in plan with a centrally located entry door on a long side of the building. This was an intentional change from the European Gothic Church plan, which had seating facing an altar at one end, a pulpit in the middle of a long side, and entry by a door at the end opposite the altar (Morrison p.79). The altar was eliminated in early New England Meeting Houses, and the seating focused instead on the central pulpit on the long side across from the entry door. When one entered, the pulpit would have been directly ahead, the major focus of both the building and the service.

Meeting House buildings were not always torn down when they ceased to be used for their original purpose. They were often moved to a new site, and they might be modified to become houses or schools (Morrison p. 82). Such a move was frequent with post and beam framing. The plan of a Meeting House, with its large, uninterrupted central open space, provided flexibility in converting it to another use.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The Cavanagh House was originally built as a Methodist Meeting House on Weston Road opposite Bogle Street, about half a mile north of its present location. Methodism had recently been introduced in New England, and it was rapidly gaining popularity at the time of the building's construction in 1798.

The Methodist Church in America was the result of the Methodist revival movement in England. This movement, whose core belief was salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, was the outgrowth of a personal religious experience by an Anglican Priest, John Wesley, in 1738. He preached about his experience and quickly attracted a wide following. He organized those who came to share a similar belief into "societies," for teaching, spiritual growth and religious discipline. The societies were equivalent to church congregations and needed to be housed in church buildings. The movement was brought to America by immigrants from England moving to the Colonies after 1740, and by preachers who came to teach them. In 1791, the first Methodist minister came to Wellesley (then West Needham) and preached at its first Meeting House on what is now Church Street. In 1798, a new Methodist Meeting House was built on Weston Road, known as the "Hundreds Meetinghouse." (The term "hundreds" refers to the 1699 apportionment of 100 acre wood-lots to the Dedham settlers bordering the Town's northernmost boundary). It was the second church in town, and is thought to be one of the first Methodist Churches in the country. (Hinchliffe, p.19)

The West Needham (Wellesley) Methodist Meeting House was, like many other congregations, served by circuit-riding preachers. In 1842, however, it was the site of the largest Camp Meeting ever held previously in America. Twenty thousand attendees camped around it to participate in virtually non-stop preaching and worship for a period of several days. The "Camp Meeting" as a Christian gathering was a uniquely American form of worship, and the Methodists quickly adopted it when they arrived in the Colonies. This form was a response to both the small number of churches and the smaller number of preachers to fill their pulpits. Individual Meeting Houses hosted days-long prayer meetings, which offered the attendees music and several preachers. Since participants came long distances, they "camped out" at or near the Meeting House during the extended prayer service.

Following the 1842 Camp Meeting, the Wellesley Methodist Meeting House fell into disuse and disrepair. In 1860, Michael Cavanagh, a farmer, whose property extended from Route 9 to Parker Road, bought the Meeting House for \$300 at auction. His house had been destroyed in a fire, so he moved the Meeting House about half a mile south on Weston Road to its present location, and converted it into a house. Cavanagh left the house to his daughter when he died, and she lived in it many years until her death in her 90's. She left the house to the carpenter who had done extensive work on the house. He already had a house, so he gave it to his daughter as a wedding present, without ever having lived in it himself. She and her husband, Gregory Hubler, lived in the house from 1950 – 1968, when they sold it to Lewis and Leslie Holmes.

There have been only three families occupying the house over the years. It has been lovingly restored. One can still see the original floors, the beams holding up the balconies in the meeting House, and the places on the floor where the pews were attached. Original framing is visible in the attic. The Holmes family is eager to have the 212-year-old Meeting House preserved.

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FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: Wellesley, MA 02481

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Cliff Estates, Wellesley Hills

Address: 38 Lowell Road

Historic Name: Tufts House, "Tufts Luck"

Uses: Present: Home

Original: Home

Date of Construction: 1930 - 1931

Source: Doris Tufts Heinold, owner and daughter of the architect; Hinchliffe, Five Pounds Currency, Three Pounds of Corn: Wellesley's Centennial Story; McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses

Style/Form: 2-story Colonial Revival, Adams-style, with attic, basement, attached garage and porch.

Architect/Builder: Nathaniel P. Tufts, Architect; Maurice Dunlevy, Builder

Exterior Material: Wood clapboard house; brick garage

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Wood

Roof: Slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garden shed built in 1974

Major Alterations (*with dates*): 1973 – 1974: 3-foot addition to rear for breakfast room; 3-foot addition and enclosed back steps for laundry; new overhead garage doors 3 inches forward to replace original swinging ones

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no X yes **Date:**

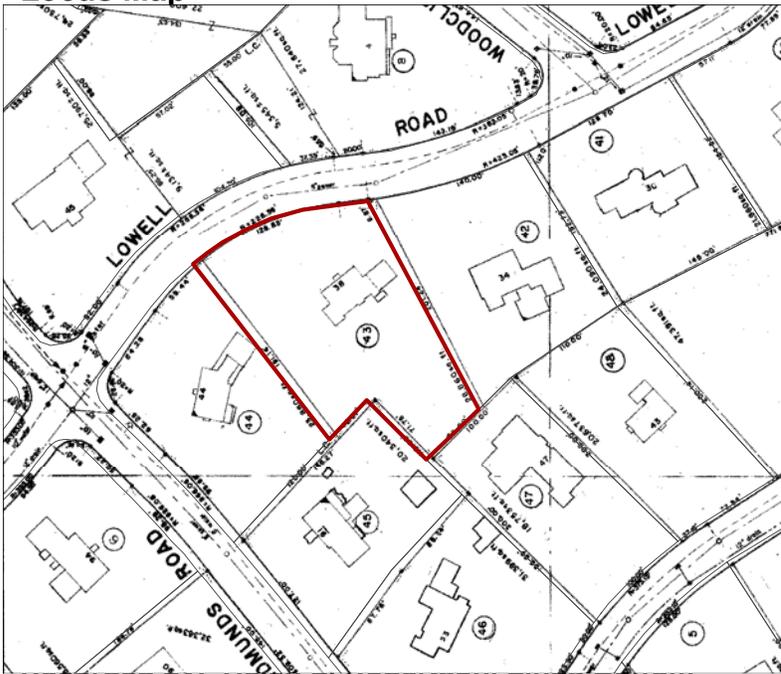
Acreage: Approximately 2/3 acre

Setting: Residential area with mature trees and nearby homes on lots of comparable size. At the time the house was built, building on Lowell Road ended at Edmunds Road. It was one of the early homes in what was to become the Cliff Estates neighborhood in Wellesley Hills.

Photograph



Locus Map



Organization: Wellesley Historical Commission

Date: October 3, 2010

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

In the early years of the twentieth century, home designers and builders turned away from emulating continental architecture and looked instead to the architectural history of the United States for their inspiration. The Colonial Period provided numerous examples of houses to serve as prototypes for the design and detailing of what is now known as the Colonial Revival-style Colonial House. The Tufts House is one of the earliest buildings in Town from the office of Royal Barry Wills, a firm that became well known and ultimately played a significant role in the development of the residential character of Wellesley and became popular nationwide.

The Tufts House was designed by Nathaniel P. Tufts, who was the first associate of Royal Barry Wills. It is a two-storied, five-ranked rectangular box with a side-gabled roof and clapboard siding. The siding is graduated, decreasing in width of exposure as it nears the bottom. This Adams-style, side-gabled subtype was built throughout the Colonial Revival era, but “predominates after 1910.” (McAlester, p. 322). The entry door has a triangular pediment and side lights. Unlike an original eighteenth Colonial, it was designed with an attached porch on the west side, and an attached brick garage on the east. Tufts reproduced the accurate proportions and details of a Colonial house in building his own home, and his attention to detail became the hallmark of a Royal Barry Wills design.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought a new interest in America’s heritage and architecture. Industry was developing rapidly everywhere, and masses of immigrants were beginning to arrive. The Centennial Exhibition of 1876 re-introduced America to its Colonial past, and the resulting Colonial Revival Movement, a nationalistic cultural movement, started on the east coast. In the field of architecture, designs began to be based directly on forms from the time of the American Revolutionary War, not on those currently in use in European countries. During the early years of the Movement, many Colonial Revival homes were inaccurate in both their proportions and their detailing. They were often freely-reinterpreted designs based on original prototypes. This was not true, however, for one of the country’s best known proponents of the Colonial Revival Movement, the architectural firm of Royal Barry Wills in Boston. There are at least nine principal subtypes of Colonial revival houses (McAlester, pp. 321-322), many of which remained popular through the 1940’s and 1950’s. Houses built between 1915 and 1935 most closely resemble their Colonial prototypes (McAlester, p.326). The Tufts House was built during this period, in 1930.

Nathaniel P. Tufts, a graduate of the School of Architecture at Boston University, was recruited by Royal Barry Wills immediately following his graduation. He was the earliest associate of the architectural firm Wills started in 1925. He remained with Wills many years before leaving to found his own practice. In his years with Wills, Tufts studied and reproduced actual interior and exterior details and proportions from the Colonial Period in his designs. In doing so, he helped develop the Wills firm's signature Colonial Revival-style. This meticulous attention to detail meant houses from the Wills office looked as if they had been built in the 1790s, rather than the 1930s. Royal Barry Wills was a major residential builder in Wellesley, and almost a dozen homes he designed still exist, many on Standish Road. Houses designed or influenced by the Wills office spread across the country, and Royal Barry Wills became a household name at the national level. Wills wrote books, and articles about him and his firm's designs appeared in newspapers, popular magazines (he wrote for the "Saturday Evening Post") and home-building magazines. He enjoyed immense public popularity, while Frank Lloyd Wright, his contemporary, garnered critical praise from professionals.

The 1920's ushered in the conscious development of Wellesley as a "well-mannered, well-maintained residential community" (Hinchliffe, p. 78). Town leaders were determined to see that Wellesley "develop in the proper direction" (Hinchliffe, p. 82). Albion Clapp was responsible for developing the Cliff Estates, and he placed restrictions on the buyers of his property. He sold only large lots, and specified there were to be no "cheap" houses or curved streets in the area. In 1926, Wellesley passed a Zoning Act to further regulate construction in the Town (Hinchliffe, p. 82). The Tufts House was one of the early homes in the Cliff Estates. At the time it was built in 1930, Lowell Road ended at Edmunds Road, west of the Tufts House. Doris Tufts Heinold, daughter of Nathaniel Tufts, remembers growing up with woods and cliffs near her home.

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PHOTOGRAPHS – METHODIST MEETING HOUSE

Front Facade



Rear Elevation





PHOTOGRAPHS – TUFTS HOUSE

Front Facade



Rear Elevation



Right Side Elevation



Left Side Elevation



Door Detail



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