

Q

NC-304 to NC-310

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Newton, Mass. M.R.A.

Town Newton (Newton Centre)Name of Area (if any) Gray CliffHistoric DistrictPresent Use residentialGeneral Date or Period 1890sGeneral Condition ExcellentAcreage 6.8 acresRecorded by Harriet WhiteOrganization Newton Historical Comm.Date March, 1986

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black
& white). Indicate on back
of each photo street addresses
for buildings shown. Staple to
left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the
area indicating properties within it.
Number each property for which individual
inventory forms have been completed.
Label streets including route numbers, if
any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate
sheet if space here is not sufficient).

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

UTM REFERENCE

19³19700. 4688690319700. 4688910319960. 4688970319960. 4688690

USGS QUADRANGLE

NEWTON, MASS.

SCALE

1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Gray Cliff Historic District is a cohesive cluster of late nineteenth century residences, including some of the city's most notable examples of the Shingle Style, and therefore meets Criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

The Gray Cliff Historic District contains examples of several late nineteenth century architectural styles, and one of the city's few clusters of Shingle style residences. The house at 35 Gray Cliff Road (c. 1895) combines elements of several styles. The deep gambrel cross-gable roof projects beyond the walls and the overhang is supported by over-scaled shingled consoles. The entrance with sidelights is set within an octagonal porch with Doric columns.

The house at 39 Gray Cliff Road (1897) is a Shingle style house of modest proportions. Built into an embankment, the rear of the structure overlooks a rocky ravine. The steep gable roof is broken by a gambrel gable. The facade is enlivened by the overhang of the attic story and the small oriel window in the second story. In 1907 the owner of the house was Henry Tyler, a professor at M.I.T.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

The land comprising the Gray Cliff Historic District was once part of the estate of Robert R. Bishop. Bishop was a judge and President of the Massachusetts Senate during the late nineteenth century. His vast estate reached from Hobart Road to the east, Beacon Street to the south, Grant Avenue to the west, and Commonwealth Avenue to the north. Among the picturesque natural features of the topography are a cave called the Indian's Oven, slate ledges, and boulders believed to contain asbestos.

Robert Bishop was also a city water commissioner, who was instrumental in bringing about the construction of Newton's modern water system, with the reservoir at Waban Hill.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the construction of Commonwealth Avenue increased land values and resulted in pressure to subdivide many large estates. Although some of the estate grounds along Commonwealth Avenue were intensively developed, large architect-designed suburban residences on ample lots prevailed. The developers of the Gray Cliff area took advantage of the striking topography of steep rocky ledges and craggy outcroppings, and were inspired by the picturesque tradition in laying out the winding road and delineating the house lots.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Newton's 19th Century Architecture: Newton Centre, Oak Hill, Chestnut Hill...

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Newton Centre

Form No:

Area Q

Property Name: Gray Cliff Historical District

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

The house at 53 Gray Cliff Road (1880s) is considered to be one of the city's finest examples of the Shingle Style. The contoured window enframements affirm the flexibility of shingle construction, and broad areas of roof emerge in accordion-like stages. Most of the exterior surfaces are clad in shingles, including the consoles supporting the overhang of the second- and attic-stories, and the cornices.

The house at 65 Gray Cliff Road (1890) is a large residence employing a design element frequently seen in local houses of the late nineteenth century: the use of fieldstone on the first story with wood shingles used on the upper stories. A slate hip roof with hipped dormers caps the blocky form of the house. A pair of oval bays flank a broad entrance, lending overall symmetry to the design. This was the residence of Joseph Work, a Boston treasurer, during the 1890s; after 1907 it was the residence of William Coolidge, a Boston lawyer.

The house at 70 Gray Cliff Road (c. 1885-1890) is another Shingle Style residence with Colonial Revival overtones. Its boxy, rectangular form is capped by a steeply-pitched gable roof punctuated by gabled dormers. The windows of the end gables have contoured enframements. Exterior wall surfaces are clad in both shingles and clapboards. The enclosed entrance porch has applied wooden swags at the frieze, and supports a deck balustrade. By 1907 Frederick Foster, a Boston businessman, resided here.

The house at 64 Gray Cliff Road is a finely detailed Colonial Revival residence built in 1892. The hip roof of slate rests on a modillion cornice with a dentil course. A Palladian window is aligned with the entrance, which is set within an enclosed, semi-circular porch supporting a deck balustrade.

The house at 54 Gray Cliff Road (c. 1894) was the home of John Mainland, a Boston builder. The house exhibits the typical inventiveness with which Colonial Revival designers employed Classical decorative motifs. The two and one-half story residence is based on a rectangular plan with a shallow, gabled entrance pavilion. The entrance has leaded glass sidelights and is set within an Ionic-columned porch.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton Centre	Form No: Q
Property Name: Gray Cliff	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Historical Significance:

A second factor which acted as a catalyst in the development of the Gray Cliff area was the proliferation of street railways, and introduction of regular passenger service with the advent of the Circuit Railroad in 1886. The area soon became regarded as a fashionable place of residence for wealthy Boston businessmen and professionals.

Although it has not been proven conclusively, certain information suggests that the Gray Cliff area was laid out by Herbert Killoway, a draughtsman in the office of Frederick Law Olmsted.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

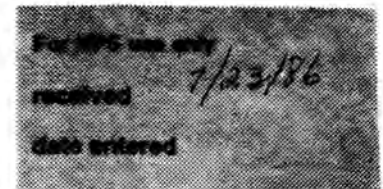
GRAY CLIFF HISTORIC DISTRICT

Address	S-B-L	Historic Name	Date	Style	C/NC	Inven.#	Area
35 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-23-6		1880s	Shingle	C	NC-305	15,087
39 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-23-7		1897	Shingle	C	NC-304	18,041
43 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-22-18	Robt.Casson House	1880s	Shingle	C	----	121,802
53 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-22-19		1888	Shingle	C	NC-306	27,150
54 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-24-11		c.1893	Colonial Rev.	C	NC-307	26,722
64 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-24-10		1892	Colonial Rev.	C	NC-308	18,866
65 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-22-20		1890	Shingle	C	NC-309	41,295
70 Gray Cliff Rd.	61-24-9		c.1885	Shingle	C	NC-310	28,525

8 properties with an area of 297,488 square feet (acres)
 8 buildings, 0 non-contributing

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Boyden Hall

~~Substantive Review~~ **Determined Eligible**
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION Keeper
~~Substantive Review~~ Attest

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Beth L. Savage 9/4/86

2. Marcy, Willard, House

~~Substantive Review~~ **Determined Eligible**
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION Keeper
~~Substantive Review~~ Attest

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Beth L. Savage 9/4/86

3. Masonic Building

~~Substantive Review~~ **Determined Eligible**
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION Keeper
~~Substantive Review~~ Attest

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Beth L. Savage 9/4/86

4. Ward, John, House

~~Substantive Review~~ **Determined Eligible**
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION Keeper
~~Substantive Review~~ Attest

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Beth L. Savage 9/4/86

5. Crystal Lake and Pleasant
Street Historic District

Entered in the ~~Substantive Review~~ **National Register** for Keeper
Attest

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

6. Farlow and Kendrick Parks
Historic District
(Boundary Increase)

Entered in the ~~Substantive Review~~ **National Register** for Keeper
Attest

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

7. Gray Cliff Historic
District

Entered in the ~~Substantive Review~~ **National Register** for Keeper
Attest

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

8. Hyde Avenue Historic
District

Entered in the ~~Substantive Review~~ **National Register** for Keeper
Attest

Melrose Byers 12/23/86

9. Lasell Neighborhood
Historic District

Entered in the ~~Substantive Review~~ **National Register** for Keeper
Attest

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

10. Newton Highlands Historic
District

Entered in the ~~Substantive Review~~ **National Register** for Keeper
Attest

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

86001741

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Gray Cliff Historic District (Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

JUL 23 1986

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-4-86
 ☐ RETURN
 ☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Entered in the
National Register

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☒ technical corrections cited below
 ☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____

date _____

13. Other

- ☒ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Gray Cliff Hill

SEP 16 1953

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 43 Gray Cliff Rd, MR-A-2 (5) -
Newton Centre



Gray Cliff H.D.

Newton, Mass: MRA

- View looking north on Gray
Cliff Rd, N. Centre MR-A-2 (1) -



Gray Cliff H.D.

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 70 Gray Cliff Rd, MR-A-2 (10) -
Newton Centre



Gray Cliff 4B

1953

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 53 Gray Cliff Rd, MR-A-2 (7) -
Newton Centre



Gray Cliff H.D.

1
13

Newton, Mass. MRA

65 Gray Cliff Rd, MR-A-2(11)
- Newton Centre -



Gray Cliff H.D.

Newton, Mass. MRA

43 Gray Cliff Rd, MR-A-2 (13)
- Newton Centre -



Gray Cliff H.D.

1954

Newtown, Mass. MRA

65 Gray Cliff Rd, N. Centre
MR-A-2 (15)



Newton, Mass. M.R.A.
Gray Cliff Historic District
Newton Centre