

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

K

See District Data Sheet

Newton, Mass. M.R.A.

Town NEWTON (Newton Centre)

Name of Area (if any) Crystal Lake &
Pleasant Street Historic District

Present Use ResidentialGeneral Date or Period 1860-1895General Condition Very GoodAcreage 8.3 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

19 ³18450. ⁴⁶88390
³18450. ⁴⁶88520
³18730. ⁴⁶88560
³18640. ⁴⁶88740
³18760. ⁴⁶88760
³18840. ⁴⁶88440

USGS QUADRANGLE
SCALE

NEWTON, MASS.
1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As a cohesive grouping of residences built for suburban commuters beginning in the 1860s when the Charles River Branch of the railroad was extended from Brookline to Needham, the Crystal Lake & Pleasant Historic District meets Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places.

Because of the high level of quality and workmanship of the residences in the area, and because the proposed district contains the city's finest grouping of Carpenter Gothic houses, the Crystal Lake & Pleasant Historic District 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 architectural variety and quality present in the proposed district are reflected in a number of mid-to late-nineteenth century houses in several styles. The proposed district also contains a cluster of Carpenter Gothic houses which are among the city's best examples of this house type. The progression of architectural styles in the district illustrates the development of the neighborhood from the 1860s until the turn-of-the-century.

The Crystal Lake & Pleasant Street Historic District includes properties along Lake at the northern edge of Crystal Lake, and along Pleasant Street north of its intersection with Beacon Street. Pleasant follows the contour of the western edge of the Newton Centre Playground.

The houses along Pleasant Street date from the 1860s, while those along Lake Avenue date from the 1880s and 1890s. The Pleasant Street houses are located along the crest of a lightly wooded hillside, while those along Lake Avenue are on a flat plain.

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

The Crystal Lake & Pleasant Street District occupies an area west of Centre Street and north of Crystal Lake (formerly known as Wiswall's Pond) in Newton Centre. Until the mid-nineteenth century most of the land was devoted to farming, with sections remaining forested. The slope along Pleasant was called Mount Pleasant during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In S.F. Smith's History of Newton, he describes Mount Pleasant as "....pine tree covered.." and it today retains that picturesque quality.

During the year 1850, the Charles River Branch of the railroad was extended from Brookline through Newton and on to Needham. Soon afterward, Beacon Street was extended westward from Centre Street. This initiated residential development of the area. Lake Avenue was laid out at this time.

The area between Pleasant Street and Crystal Lake was first developed by Roswell Turner, who had begun amassing property in the area during the 1840s. Turner was largely responsible for the extension of Beacon Street, and the construction of Lake Avenue. Almost immediately houses began to be constructed along Beacon Street, and the neighborhood soon evolved into a fashionable residential suburb.

During the 1860s, a number of Turner's properties (including his own residence at nearby 15 Bracebridge Road) were purchased by Charles

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Newton's 19th Century Architecture. Newton Centre, Oak Hill, Chestnut Hill and Commonwealth Avenue, 1985.

Historical Sketch of Crystal Lake. Newton Centre Improvement Assoc, 1911.

S.F. Smith. History of Newton, 1880.

Margaret Orr. Newton Centre, Jackson Homestead vertical file.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton Centre	Form No: K
Property Name: Crystal Lake & Pleasant Street	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

A variety of mid- to late-nineteenth century styles are represented in the district, including Italianate, Gothic Revival, Mansard, Queen Anne, Stick Style and Colonial Revival. Despite certain variations in scale and setback, and a few later twentieth century structures, overall uniformity is achieved by the consistent residential nature of the buildings and high quality of design and workmanship inherent in the houses.

The Carpenter Gothic houses located along Pleasant Street are the oldest houses in the district, and are Newton Centre's only example of the style. These houses also constitute an unusual concentration of houses in the Carpenter Gothic mode, which do not occur in large numbers in the city. Each of these houses exhibits an irregular silhouette and fanciful scroll-sawn ornament on the vergeboards, dormers and porch supports. The houses exemplify the asymmetrical, irregular lines of the nineteenth century Romantic revivals. The details and ornament are Gothic-inspired, but the form and plan follow the sidehall precedents established during the Greek Revival period. The Pleasant Street Carpenter Gothic cottages are typical of the picturesquely-sited suburban cottages popularized by the publications of A.J. Downing. The best-known of these style-books was The Architecture of Country Houses.

The Pleasant Street cottages comprise a small, but special group of houses that makes an excellent visual record of the period when this neighborhood west of Newton Centre was regarded as an ideal suburban location for individuals desiring a convenient, yet rustic place of residence. The Gothic Revival style and the landscaped settings advocated by Downing and his contemporaries flourished briefly in Newton and other Boston suburbs such as Cambridge, Medford and Roxbury Highlands.

The house at 106 Pleasant Street (1860s) is a one and one-half story, L-plan cottage with a steeply pitched cross gable roof. The roof is ornamented with an elaborate scroll-sawn vergeboard. Windows and dormers are asymmetrical in size and placement. Other features include the gabled entrance porch with scroll-sawn trim, offset to the right, and the polygonal facade bay.

Similar in form and decorative vocabulary is the house at 921 Beacon Street (1860s), occupied in the 1880s by Charles Bennett, a Boston stockbroker. The focal point of the house's design is a square rear tower, built no doubt to take advantage of the beautiful view once afforded from its hilltop site.

One of the more modest cottages in the grouping is the house at 112 Pleasant (1864). The only example of the Mansard style in the district, this diminutive cottage is based on a rectangular plan, and has a mansard roof of bellcast profile punctuated by recessed dormers. The entrance is offset to the right beside a polygonal facade bay. J. Everts Cornelius, a Boston insurance agent, lived at this address in 1874.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton Centre	Form No: K
Property Name: Crystal Lake &	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

One of the oldest houses in the district and an excellent example of the Bracketed Italianate style, is the house at 21 Lake Avenue (c. 1858). Built soon after Beacon Street was extended westward from Centre Street, the house was owned by Charles S. Davis during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He initially rented the property, and resided here himself after 1891. The house is a two and one-half story, T-plan structure with a cross-gable roof, and deep bracketed eaves with short gable returns. It is possible that when built, the house was oriented toward the lake, rather than toward the street.

The house at 908 Beacon Street (c. 1880) is among the finest examples of the Stick Style in the city. A characteristic decorative system of wooden framing is applied to the house's exterior wall surfaces. The elaborate detailing is well-preserved. Other notable features of this house include the square tower with its steeply-pitched pyramidal roof, and the two-sided porch with quadrant struts.

The house at 97 Lake Avenue (c. 1893) occupies a prominent site overlooking Crystal Lake. It exemplifies the commodious late nineteenth century upper class suburban houses built in the area west of Newton Centre. Although boxy and rectangular in form, the house displays a number of Queen Anne features, including a steeply-pitched hip roof with flared eaves and a conical tower embellished with mastic work at the fascia. A subsidiary polygonal turret and hip-roofed porte-cochere are offset to the left. The original occupant of this house was Stephen V.A. Hunter, treasurer of the Goodyear & McKay Sewing Machine Company of Boston.

The Colonial Revival style house at 38 Lake Avenue (c. 1893) was built on the former estate of Edwin Fowle, a shipping merchant. The estate grounds were subdivided as development pressures increased in the area. The present house occupies a prominent site overlooking Crystal Lake, and was built for David H. Andrews, president of the Boston Bridge Works. The Andrews house is a two and one-half story, rectangular plan house with a truncated hip roof punctuated by pedimented and segmental gables. The entrance with leaded glass fanlight and half sidelights, is set within a full-width porch with paired Ionic columns. A domed gazebo is situated on the property near the water's edge.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton Centre	Form No: K
Property Name: Crystal Lake & Pleasant Street	

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Davis, a partner in the Boston Piano manufacturing concern of Hallett & Davis. Davis played a continuing role in Newton Centre real estate development until his death in 1907.

Improvements in passenger rail service by the 1880s accelerated the residential development of the Crystal Lake & Pleasant Street neighborhood. An embankment and walkway were built along the shores of Crystal Lake near Lake Avenue, the result of efforts by the Newton Centre Improvement Association during the tenure of its first president, John Lowell of Chestnut Hill, around 1879. Crystal Lake was the center of considerable recreational activity including skating, and swimming, as well as Fourth of July festivities. Lake Avenue and Crystal and Laurel Streets were laid out in a southerly direction from Beacon Street, providing access to this area. At this time the lake became known by its present name, Crystal Lake.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

CRYSTAL LAKE & PLEASANT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Address	S-B-L	Historic Name	Date	Style	C/NC	Inven.	Area
908 Beacon St.	62-1-19		c.1880	Stick	C	----	14,204
921 Beacon St.	64-26-15		c.1870	Gothic Rev.	C	NC-38	12,650
19 Crystal St.	62-6-9		c.1874	Italianate	C	NC-195	11,885
20 Crystal St.	62-7-7		c.1875	Italianate	C	NC-196	7,700
27 Crystal St.	62-6-10		c.1886	Queen Anne	C	NC-197	10,886
37 Crystal St.	62-4-36		c.1871	Italianate	C	NC-198	10,592
3 Lake Ave.	64-26-14	former stable	c.1870		C	----	5863
21 Lake Ave.	62-8-8		1877	Italianate	C	NC-381	16,258
30 Lake Ave.	62-1-18	Methodist Episcopal parsonage	1880	Tudor Rev.	C	----	10,067
38 Lake Ave.	62-1-17	David Andrews House	1893	Col. Rev.	C	NC-382	45,560
51 Lake Ave.	62-8-9		1914		NC	----	12,754
53 Lake Ave.	62-8-10		1883	Queen Anne	C	NC-383	9,081
57 Lake Ave.	62-8-11		1883	Queen Anne	C	NC-384	10,175
63 Lake Ave.	62-8-12		1963		NC	----	10,584
69 Lake Ave.	62-8-13	carriage house	1878	Queen Anne	C	NC-385	10,787
77 Lake Ave.	62-8-1		1939		NC	----	36,357
97 Lake Ave.	62-7-6	Stephen Hunter House	1893	Queen Anne	C	NC-387	30,560
106 Pleasant St.	64-26-13		1860s	Goth.Rev.	C	NC-593	14,335
112 Pleasant St.	64-26-12		c.1864	Mansard	C	NC-594	11,900
120 Pleasant St.	64-26-11		c.1864	Goth. Rev.	C	NC-595	11,794
126 Pleasant St.	64-26-10		1860s	Italianate	C	----	10,000
132 Pleasant St.	64-26-9		c.1870	Italianate	C	----	7,500
140 Pleasant St.	64-26-8		1860s	Goth. Rev.	C	NC-598	42,540

23 properties with an area of 364,032 square feet (acres)
 (23 buildings, 3 non-contributing)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received 7/23/86
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

1. Boyden Hall

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Determined Eligible

Keeper

Date/Signature

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Beth L. Savage 3/28/86

2. Marcy, Willard, House

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Substantive Review

Attest

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86

3. Masonic Building

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Substantive Review

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86

4. Ward, John, House

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

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
National Register

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Melrose Byers 9/4/86

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

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Melrose Byers 9/4/86

7. Gray Cliff Historic
District

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Melrose Byers 9/4/86

8. Hyde Avenue Historic
District

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Melrose Byers 12/23/86

9. Lasell Neighborhood
Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Melrose Byers 9/4/86

10. Newton Highlands Historic
District

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Eligible Patrick Andrus 9/4/86
Melrose Byers 9/4/86

8600 1735

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Crystal Lake and Pleasant Street Historic
District (Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

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

Working No. JUL 23 1986
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-4-86
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

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
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ original site
		☐ moved date _____

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

Please provide scale for sketch map. OK
districts, provide square, block & lot #s
for all properties.

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St. H.D.

Newton MRA Ma

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 908 Beacon St, Newton Centre -
3-83-K-22



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St HD

Newton, Mass. MRA

140 Pleasant st, Newton Centre
- MR-A-5 (36a) -



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St. H.A.

Newton, Mass. ^{KA}MR

- 38 Lake Ave, Newton Centre -
MR-A-3 (7)



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St. H.P.

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 53 & 57 Lake Ave. Newton Ctre. -
MR-A-3 (8)



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St. H.P.

Newton Mass. MRA

- 106 Pleasant St, Newton Centre -
MR-A-5 (31)



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St. H.D

Newton, Mass. MRA

- 112 Pleasant St, Newton Centre -
MR-A-5 (34)



Crystal Lake + Pleasant St. H.D.
Newton Ma, MRA



- 908 Beacon St, Newton Centre -
MR-A-3 (3)



Crystal Lake & Pleasant St. H.D

Newton, Mass. MRA

120 Pleasant St, Newton Centre
- MR-A-5 (35) -

