

MAY 15 1988

596

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area

Area letter

204

B

SOUTHBRIDGE MASS
MRA

Town Southbridge

Name of area (if any) Windsor Court District

American Optical Company Neighborhood

Condition: Fair

General date or period 1904-1925

Acreage: under an acre

Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form

Photo number _____

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) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)

UTM References

- Ⓐ 18/745 640/4662 320
- Ⓑ 18/745 620/4662 220
- Ⓒ 18/745 560/4662 240
- Ⓓ 18/745 560/4662 330

USGS Quadrangle

Southbridge, Mass - Conn.

Scale 1:25,000

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci

ed. S. Ceccacci

Organization Southbridge Historical Com-
mission

Date May 1986

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

Like another group of houses built nearby on Twinehurst (form #A-103) at about the same time by the American Optical Company, these three-family residences were built to look like two family houses. The somewhat ungainly narrow three story proportions of the typical three-decker house have been avoided here by disguising the third floor in the high-pitched facade gable of what appears to be a two-and-a-half story house. Long dormers have been added to both sides of the roof to provide a full story on the third floor.

Less imposing than the Twinehurst houses, these houses are of a similar size and silhouette. In their original states the houses were all identical. Sheathed in wood shingle they had a porch on each of the three floors at the center of the facade. They were flanked by a door and a window on the ground floor and windows on the second floor. 8-10 Windsor Court still retains its original facade conformation. In other houses in the group some or all of the porches have been permanently closed in. Nevertheless, the group still retains much of its original feeling.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

Although the eastern section of North Street was quickly developed in the 1870's and 1880's with housing for American Optical Company workers, the end near Central Street remained undeveloped until after the turn of the century as the land was held by Central Mills. It seems likely that American Optical Company bought the land on which these houses were built sometime shortly after Central Mills built its storehouse building to the east, probably after 1908.

During the early 20th century, the American Optical Company built three housing clusters for its workers. One was a group of single family houses for company foremen on Maple Street (form #B-210). The other two were groups of three-family houses. The more imposing of the two was on Twinehurst (form #A-103). The other group was at North Street and Windsor Court. These developments were apparently inspired by progressive planning theories for industrial villages which were popular during the early years of this century. It was believed that by providing ample, good quality housing for employees, they would be happier, more efficient and thereby produce quality work.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

maps
American Optical Company Housing Card File, J. Edwards Library

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Southbridge

Form No:

B-204

Property Name: *Windsor Court District*

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

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT

The Windsor Court District is significant as an example of housing constructed for the workers of the American Optical Company. During the growth of the town's eastern section late in the nineteenth century the Wells family and their company built a variety of housing. The three-family houses built here are variations on the triple-decker, which resulted in the most dense of the housing clusters constructed by the company. It meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of setting, location, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The boundaries indicated on the attached assessors map are those of current ownership and historically associated with the properties.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Southbridge MRA
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

81. Windsor Court Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

Date/Signature

for Keeper Melanie Lyons 6/22/87

Attest _____

Keeper _____

Attest _____

Keeper _____

Attest _____

Keeper _____

Attest _____

Keeper _____

Attest _____

Keeper _____

Attest _____

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Keeper _____

Attest _____

Keeper _____

Attest _____

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Windsor Court Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE Southbridge MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 5/15/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/31/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/16/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/29/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000596

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 6/22/89 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___ count ___ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___ historic ___ current

DESCRIPTION

___ architectural classification
___ materials
___ descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___ acreage ___ verbal boundary description
___ UTMs ___ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___ sketch maps ___ USGS maps ___ photographs ___ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



Windsor Court 11.82

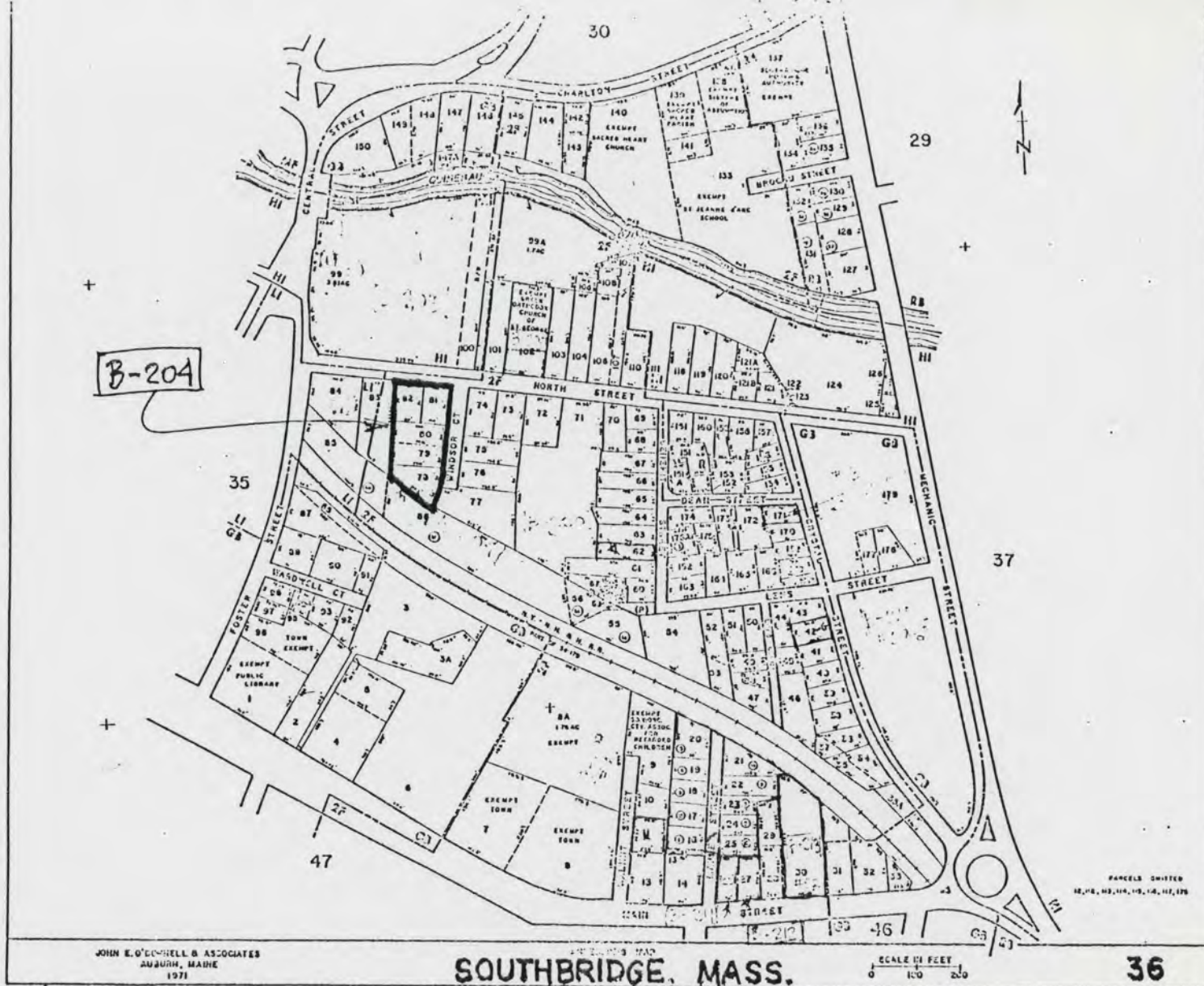
Form # B-204 1986 photo

Southbridge MRA, MA

Windsor Ct. AO Neighborhood

Roll # 5

SOUTHBIDGE MASS
MRA



Windsor Court Area

[B-210]

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294