

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1071

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Reed-Wood Place

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 20 Meetinghouse Road not for publication

city or town Littleton vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 01460

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Judith B. McDonough
Signature of certifying official/Title

8/8/2000
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

9-14-00

Reed-Wood Place
Name of Property

Middlesex, Massachusetts
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		_____ sites
		_____ structures
		_____ objects
		_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Agriculture/Subsistence, Animal Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Commerce/Trade, Law Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic, Federal

Mid-19th Century, Greek Revival

Late Victorian, Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Fieldstone

walls Wood

roof Stone

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet****Reed-Wood Place
Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MA**Section number 7 Page 1**Narrative Description**

Typical of nineteenth-century rural homesteads, the Reed-Wood Place at 20 Meetinghouse Road is a vernacular complex encompassing elements from the Federal to Carpenter Gothic periods. The accreted structure is configured to form an L-shaped plan of dwelling with attached utility ells leading to a small, early 19th century New England barn. It represents a town house version of the peculiar New England vernacular building type known as the "big house, little house, back house, barn". Characteristically, it is comprised of sections or smaller buildings added or moved onto place over time and variously modified or unified by the application of ornamentation. The Reed-Wood Place consists of a rectangular 2 1/2-story, 5 x 2 bay, frame dwelling (big house) and a 1 1/2-story, 5-bay, kitchen ell in two sections (little house). These components are connected to a 1 1/2-story, 4-bay shed (back house) incorporating at least two segments which lead to a 1 1/2-story, 1 x 1 bay, New England barn. As a Federal Period dwelling with Federal and/or Greek Revival additions also decorated with later Italianate and Carpenter Gothic ornamentation, the main block, interconnected ells and utility buildings reflect two centuries of development. Although located within a mixed-use, commercially zoned area that has undergone dramatic change, the Reed-Wood Place retains integrity as a prominent, local residence with attached subordinate structures surviving on its site opposite Littleton Common. Despite its modest scale and design, the property commands attention due to its siting, materials, configuration and preservation. Its survival represents the successful tradition and contemporary adaptation to usage by owners who have historically combined their trades or professions with occupancy.

The Littleton Common area is a mixed-use area at the crossroads of Great Road (State Highway Routes 2A and 119) and King Street (State Highway Route 110). The common itself, original site of the first meetinghouse (c. 1717, not extant) remains open space as a park with war memorials and water trough, but it was cut in two by Great Road in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Since the early twentieth century many buildings dating from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries, have been variously adapted to commercial uses. Others have been removed and replaced with modern commercial structures. Construction of I-495 in the 1960s with an exit just north of the Common bisected several farms and attracted a major office complex to King Street.

The Reed-Wood Place is conspicuous from the north and the east when approaching the major intersections that define the common. Meetinghouse Road (formerly Maple Street) is the original location of Great Road and the traditional eastern boundary of the Common. A new right-of-way dividing the Common was cut for Great Road in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Residential buildings converted to commercial uses are located to the south of 20 Meetinghouse Road. A new commercial building stands to the east, and part of its parking lot extends along the northern boundary of the Reed-Wood Place. The property consists of a pentagonal lot with

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interconnected dwellings and outbuildings set at an oblique angle to Meetinghouse Road. A sidewalk runs near the west property line which is marked with a picket fence with granite piers. The fence originates at the southwestern corner of the lot and ends near the southwest corner of the main block. Another section of the fence runs from the northwest corner of the barn for several feet along the paved driveway then turns to reach the northwest corner of the lot. The east (rear) boundary line of the lot is demarcated by a low, white stockade fence which shields the view of the parking lot to the rear (east). The north boundary line runs parallel to a sidewalk along a small parking lot to the north.

The 5 x 2 bay, rectangular-plan, center-entry, double rear-wall chimney main block rises 2 ½ stories from a fieldstone foundation to a side gable, slate-tiled roof. The transverse division of the basement (see Foundation and Basement plan) fully-enclosing almost half of the fieldstone foundation indicates it was developed in two sections. Exterior embellishments include round-topped, gable windows. On the façade, two angled projecting bays with paneled aprons are joined by a 1-story porch with open posts and decorative brackets. The main entry consists of paneled, doubled-leafed Italianate doors with elongated, rectangular lights surmounted by a straight, single-light transom. Fenestration consists of 2/2, double-hung, replacement sash with cap-molded trim. A side porch, similarly-ornamented to that on the facade, runs full-width along the north elevation of the main block where a narrow, wood paneled door with an etched-glass, elongated, rectangular light also provides access. The two-bay south elevation is symmetrical. Other detail on the main block includes a boxed, molded cornice with returns and round-topped, paneled pilasters with cap moldings.

A 5-bay, 1 ½ story, irregular-plan, rear ell projects to the west off the northern end of the main block. It is comprised of two sections. The area east of the entry on the north elevation sits on a fieldstone foundation with full basement, the remainder only rests on a stone foundation. Both are spanned by a pitched, slate-tile roof penetrated by a narrow, tall brick chimney on the ridge line. A small, flat-roofed entry porch, similar to that on the main block, is centered on its north elevation. Flat, half windows light the second level of the rear ell. The irregular south elevation of the rear ell includes a shed-roofed section without basement in the southwest corner and a shed-roofed open porch over a tertiary entry. The east elevation of the ell is denoted only by a gable window.

The clapboard-clad shed and barn rise from fieldstone foundations to pitched, slate-tiled, gable roofs. The shed spans the remains of abandoned lateral and perpendicularly-oriented foundations indicating substantial change and construction and location over time. An interior chimney rises through the east slope of the shed's roof near the ridge. Detail on the shed and barn is largely limited to end boards and a boxed, molded cornice, but openings of both the shed and barn are decorated with cap moldings. The shed's façade, near its junction with the rear ell, is enhanced by a double-leafed, Italianate entry similar to that on the main block, but without a

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transom. The southern end of the shed facade had been modified to accommodate a modern, single-bay, overhead, garage door. It was replaced by a new entry with cottage door sheltered by a simple, flat-roofed, open entry porch during the certified rehabilitation. A cottage door with 9-light upper panel was relocated from the south elevation of the barn to the (rear) east elevation of the shed where it is sheltered by a flat-roofed open porch similar to that at the new façade entry. This door was used as the model for the new entry door on the shed façade. The three-bay, south elevation of the shed includes a shed-roofed projection and a four-panel, wooden, side-entry door.

The New England barn has a door which slides on an exterior track. It is comprised of angled boards slanted to peak at the center and to surround a 12-light, fixed-sash window. The doorway has been fitted with custom-built fenestration. Other fenestration principally consists of 6/6 sash (refurbished in the certified rehabilitation). Flat, 3/3-light, fixed windows are found on the first floor of the north elevation of the barn and on the second level of the rear (east) elevation of the shed. A flat, 2/2-light, hopper window illuminates the first floor of the rear (east) elevation of the barn. Access to the basement of the barn is achieved through double-leafed, vertical-board doors of unequal size in the northeast corner. The northern leaf of the basement entry houses a 9-light, fixed sash.

Also on the site is a free-standing, rectangular, single story, 2 x 2 bay, pitched-roof, frame shed with clapboard siding and shake roofing. It was relocated from the back part of the original holding by the current owners and is positioned near the east property line, south of the east end of the barn and ell.

The interior of the main block was renovated in the early 1990s, but retains its original floor plan, marble fireplace surrounds and central stairway. Interior finishes were modeled on the original. Attic space remains open and plastered. The rear ell, formerly a kitchen, pantry, wash room and unfinished wood storage/work area with privy have been modified into a modern kitchen and adjoining family room. The shed-roofed section without basement behind the main block was, and remains, a bathroom. The secondary stair remains. The non-original plan on the upper level was altered to improve circulation patterns, improve and expand the layout of a 1950s bathroom. Both levels of the shed and barn, previously unfinished except for an office area partitioned into the corner, have been rehabilitated to modern simple finished office space. Upper levels and basements are accessed by a new stairway at the new entry on the east (rear) elevation.

The Reed-Wood Place not only represents the evolution of a homestead over 200 years of usage through economic and stylistic change, but it also exemplifies how such a complex can be sensitively and appropriately adapted for continued use. Just as the property accommodated work space for owners who combined farming and trades for support, it has now been rehabilitated to accommodate a resident owner who practices law from the premises.

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Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MA**Section number 7 Page 4**Archaeological Description**

While no prehistoric sites are currently located on the property, it is possible that sites are present. Environmental characteristics of the property indicate some locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, distance to wetlands) that are favorable indicators for many types of prehistoric sites. The property is well drained with a level to moderate slope. However, the parcel is well beyond 1000 feet from the nearest wetlands, an important factor that reduces the overall prehistoric site potential for this area. Given the above information, known prehistoric settlement in the area, the small size of the parcel (.344 acres) and related historic development, a low potential exists for the recovery of prehistoric resources.

A moderate to high potential exists for the recovery of historic archaeological resources on the property at 20 Meetinghouse Road. Structural remains from outbuildings (barns, sheds, animal pens) may survive on the property dating to construction of the house in ca. 1780 and later. Construction features and artifact scatters may also exist relating to remodeling and changes to the buildings function. Occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) should be present for different periods of occupation and inhabitants of the house and functional uses of the property. The close proximity (across the street) of the house at 20 Meetinghouse Road to Littleton Common and the ca. 1717 meetinghouse across the street indicates that archaeological evidence of earlier farmsteads, no longer extant, could also be present on the property. This potential has yet to be demonstrated.

(end)

Reed-Wood Place
Name of Property

Middlesex, Massachusetts
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1780 - 1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

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Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MASection number 8 Page 1**Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Reed-Wood Place at 20 Meetinghouse Road is an accreted, vernacular building complex incorporating structural elements from the Federal period to the late 19th century. It is significant as a rare intact representative in Littleton Common of the 19th century evolution of homestead plans of construction peculiar to New England and colloquially described as "a big house, little house, back house, barn". This configuration of a main block with interconnected ells or utility buildings leading to a barn was typical of residences in Littleton Common area. Most have been substantially altered or demolished to accommodate 20th century commercial development. As a village property historically owned by tradesman, the Reed-Wood Place is also significant as representative of the historic character of the Common area as the more commercially-oriented to two closely associated yet distinct 19th century centers of settlement. Recently the recipient of a certified rehabilitation, the buildings have been adapted for contemporary use as a residence and law office. The Reed-Wood Place retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It qualifies under Criteria A and C on a local level for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Colonial Littleton organized on the dismantling of Nashoba, one of the several "Praying Indian" towns established by the General Court in 1654 on the petition of Rev. John Eliot. Frontier exposure and rugged conditions at first limited both native and European settlement. Only about 50 native individuals and a few Europeans situated outside the boundaries of the Praying Town are believed to have been residents in 1675, and the location was temporarily abandoned during King Philip's War (1675-78). Local Indians, having been imprisoned during the hostilities, failed to return to Nashoba at war's end. European resettlement from nearby towns of Concord, Chelmsford and Stow generated intense competition for the abandoned native property; while ardent competition between neighboring towns over access, land acquisition and control led to substantial squatting on desirable acreage during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. One result of this competition was the failure of the town to develop in a unified or focused manner.

Littleton was incorporated in 1714 as Nashoba, but the name was changed to Littleton one year later. The location of the first meetinghouse (c. 1717, not extant) at Littleton Common, opposite 20 Meetinghouse Road, prompted formation of a radial network of roads presumed to follow native trails and initiated development of the area. Great Road (State Highway, Routes 2A and 119) developed through the Federal period into a principal transpiration corridor from Groton through Littleton to Acton and Concord. It

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converged at Littleton Common with King Street (State Highway Route 110) the road to Westford. Six tenths of a mile to the southwest, Littleton Center developed during the 17th century at the intersection of Great Road and Foster Streets. With no regional turnpikes traversing the area, development focused on Littleton Common and Littleton Center. In 1740-42, a new meetinghouse (replaced on the same site in 1792-94 and in 1841) was erected in Littleton Center on Foster Street, introducing an institutional character to that village. Littleton Common assumed a more commercial identity, attracting taverns, stores, a hotel and blacksmith shops. Widely scattered farmsteads existed elsewhere.

Arrival of the Fitchburg Railroad from Boston in 1845 and a second rail route from Lowell to Ayer in 1848 did not drastically alter settlement patterns or undermine the primarily agrarian nature of the local economy. Rail transport did commercialize local agriculture allowing farmers to expeditiously ship fruits, vegetables and cider to Boston. Railroad transportation also generated two new small hamlets: Littleton Depot (Fitchburg Railroad), the junction of King Street and Harvard Road, and at Pimpryville, and the intersection of Bruce Street and Ayer Road.

Diversity and density of development increased intensely at Littleton Common. A carpentry shop, blacksmith, and general store were established before 1875. Both farmhouses and large village residences continued to be built. An industrial complex began north of the intersection of Great Road and King Street as Conant, Houghton and Co. Founded in 1880 as a fruit evaporator, vinegar and cider mill, it later became a manufacturer of elastic webbing. A meat and provisions market operated near the intersection of King and Great Road, opposite the Reed-Wood Place. In the early twentieth century, a fire station was constructed and Conant Houghton Co. developed a subdivision of worker housing along Adams Street.

The connected building plan represented at the Reed-Wood Place was developed and popularized as a progressive design suited to New England's system of mixed husbandry, home-industry and small-scale farming. The house form has been identified as the most popular form of rural and small town domestic architecture in the region throughout the 19th century.¹ The property displays the four components characteristic of the distinctive configuration: the most highly-ornamented "big house" facing the road; the "little house"

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¹ Thomas C. Hubka, Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: the Connected Farm Buildings of New England. (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1984), p. 9-10.

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or kitchen building; the "back house," a multipurpose work and storage area extending to; the barn. Organized at a right angle with facades of the house and barn facing the road, configuration of the Reed-Wood Place demonstrates one of the new guiding principles of the interconnected plan: alignment of the house toward the street. In abandoning the traditional, climate-driven orientation of dwellings toward the south irrespective of the byway, the plan expresses a new communal rather than self-contained social and economic perspective.

As is common with such interconnected arrangements, the building history of the Reed-Wood Place is extremely difficult to reconstruct. This interconnected form made regular use of two consistently popular building practices of 19th century New England, the conservation of houses and utility buildings by moving and reusing them and the incremental addition to existing structures. As a result, such complexes are often composed of distinctly different types of small, vernacular buildings, changed and possibly realigned, moved or removed over time. Without photographic or written records of appearance or documentation as to historical use or the intent, influences or processes of the builders, the property's evolution is open to wide interpretation. No elaborate family genealogies, newspaper accounts, commercial records, diaries, or other written material or photographs survive for the property. Title search traces the property back to only the late 18th century and provides no descriptive information as to the number of type of buildings extant at each transaction. It does reveal that only a limited amount of land, a maximum of about five acres, has been associated with the Reed-Wood Place since 1812.

The property's first identifiable owners are Mary Gardner Reed (d. November 16, 1789) and Isaac Reed (b. May 18, 1755 – d. November 5, 1789) who moved to Littleton from Lexington c. 1780. Isaac Reed was the fifth generation descendant of immigrants Maybel Kendall Reed (b. England, 1605; d. June 5, 1690) and William Reed (also Reade, b. England, 1587). Mary Gardner Reed was the daughter of Revolutionary War general Isaac Gardner of Brookline. The holding of Mary Gardner and Isaac Reed is described in 1812 as two parcels, a single acre homestead, and three acres of land. In that year it was sold for \$1000 by their son Isaac Gardner Reed, a lawyer from Waldoboro, Massachusetts (later Maine) to Thomas Reed, gentleman, of Littleton. Although no buildings are referenced in the deed, the oldest part of the house may date to the tenure of Isaac and Mary Reed. The next transaction occurred within a year, also for \$1000 and references "lands and buildings."

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Thomas Reed (b. Littleton, January 23, 1767), was at best a distant relative of Isaac Gardner Reed, and was the son of Thomas Reed and Lucy Powers Reed and the grandson of Peter and Abigail Reed who had also likely emigrated to Littleton from Lexington. Thomas Reed transferred the property at a price of \$1000 to Samuel Smith (1782-1848) of Littleton. A morocco dresser and farmer, Samuel Smith had come to town in 1807. Although Smith subsequently moved to Pepperell, he retained ownership of the property, conveying it in 1839 to Aaron Tuttle. It was characterized at that time as being approximately two acres of land and buildings. Tuttle failed to complete the purchase. A court settlement as a result of a suit brought by the son of Samuel Smith (also Samuel Smith) returned the property in 1852 to the Smith estate. It was inherited by Samuel Smith's (the father) daughters from a second marriage, Susan Smith of Littleton and Mary Elizabeth Smith Gibson of Townsend.

The sisters sold the property two years later for \$900 to Charles Potter of Littleton, a blacksmith, who conveyed it a month later to Hugh Cash, a dresser from Concord for the same price. This reduction in the sale price from 1812 may reflect deterioration during a period of vacancy. It is unclear that Hugh Cash ever lived on the property, as he was still recorded in Concord on the next deed. It does appear, however, that substantial improvements were made during his five-year tenure. Although still described as approximately two acres of land and the buildings thereon, the property was sold in 1859 for \$1400 to Boynton Needham of Littleton, an inn holder and carpenter. This is a late date for construction of a double rear wall chimney dwelling, the Greek Revival details on the house and the general conservatism of rural construction allow for the possibility. It is also conceivable that what had been a "half house" at the western end of the main block (see Foundation and Building Plan) was expanded at this time into the present 5-bay structure. If such is the case, since the floor plan of the main house does not accommodate kitchen space, the rear attachment must have also been added as a kitchen ell. It is also possible that the front and rear walls of the kitchen ell were raised and half windows installed to improve the attic space at this time.

Boynton Needham apparently made no changes, and transferred the property (also for \$1400) in 1861 to Joseph Warren Fletcher, also a Littleton carpenter. Fletcher retained ownership for twelve years and likely utilized his skill to make substantial improvements that advanced the value to \$4450 in 1873, when he sold to John B. Robinson. The building's footprint in the county atlas for 1875 does not yet show a right-angled configuration to the property suggesting that the "back house" was not yet built. It is possible that Fletcher did add the section without basement, which completes the kitchen

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ell (little house). The area east of the west side of the ell doorways sits only on a rock foundation (see Foundation and Basement Plan). This portion east of the existing chimney in this addition remained an unfinished wood storage area with a privy projecting off the southwest corner through the 1980s. The part west of the chimney, subdivided into two areas, was utilized as a washroom and pantry. Fletcher likely added the room on the south side of the kitchen ell. It also sits only on a rock foundation without basement. His other renovations may have included the Italianate bays and doorway on the façade, the Carpenter Gothic front and side porches and the marble mantels in the living and dining rooms.

John B. Robinson, owner of the property between 1873 and 1899, also owned a house next door (burned 1905) which he purchased in 1887. He incorporated the adjacent property into the holding. It appears he also completed the L-shaped configuration of the Reed-Wood Place before 1889 by adding the "back house" perpendicular to the existing construction to reach the barn which was also likely constructed during his ownership. The back house addition barely meets the rear of the kitchen ell and is joined only by a shed-roofed projection from the right angled ell. The back house also spans separate, non-contiguous foundations and basements. Field stone and granite half walls remain in the cellar and brick sections in the rear foundation walls indicate substantial changes over time. It seems likely that the expansion of this back house also occurred in modular fashion and may in part consist of at least one building moved into place while another was possibly demolished or relocated. The wheelwright's shop, formerly owned by Luther Lapham on the adjoining lot purchased by Robinson, could be a likely candidate as an element in this structure. The shop remains in place on the 1875 county map, but is missing in 1889 when the full configuration of the Reed-Wood Place is represented.

Joseph Warren Fletcher repurchased the property in 1899. The deed fails to indicate the sale price or a description of the buildings. A photograph in the Boston Herald (September 4, 1905) also shows the completed configuration. The granite post fence, then comprised of wood rails rather than pickets, extended in front of both houses. Mature trees stand in an apparent formalized planting in the yard and along the roadside. Fletcher would transfer the property to his son Elmer for \$1 in 1918. Along with Osman Needham, son of the former owner Boyden Needham, Elmer Fletcher formed the building and carpentry firm Fletcher & Needham, which constructed some of the finest houses in Littleton. The younger Fletcher sold the property for an undisclosed sum within two years.

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Major changes occurred in Littleton after World War I. During the 1930s, King Street (Route 110) and Great Road (Route 119 and 2) were improved as state highways. Commercial buildings, constructed to serve the auto trade and growing population replaced farmsteads. Outbuildings were lost as farms were subdivided to allow new construction to occur. With associated productive land eliminated or subdivided, former farmsteads as well as in-town dwellings were susceptible to commercial renovations. New residential development in Littleton Common ended about 1930, but several existing homes were subdivided into multi-tenant dwellings.

The next owners, Rose Field Wood (b. Winchester, NH, September 7, 1897 – d. Littleton, 1987) and George E. Wood (b. Ayer, November 24, 1893 – d. May 20, 1975) were small business owners who participated in the transformation of the Common to accommodate the automobile. They moved to Littleton in 1920 and opened the first service station in town nearby on Great Road around the same time. They also owned Nashoba Oil Company. George Wood utilized the back house or shed adjoining the barn as a small machine shop operated by a motor-powered belt system. He likely partitioned and finished the interior of the shed south of the chimney which functioned as a workshop and office. He may also have added the folding door on the east (rear) elevation of the back house to accommodate machinery he had fabricated or repaired.

More intense population growth and highway construction after World War II continued to undermine the rural character of Littleton Common. A new Route 2, a divided, limited-access highway built in 1950 turned Littleton into an exurb of metropolitan Boston. Construction of Interstate 495 in the 1960s, with an exit just north of the Common bisected several large farms that remained and attracted a major office complex to King Street. Additional traffic, loss of open space and new construction undermined the 19th century character of the Common. Houses, early shops and agricultural buildings continued to be replaced by gas stations, retail, office or service buildings.

After the death of Rose Wood, the property remained in the Wood estate through the early 1990s and stood vacant for many years. It was threatened with demolition or removal to allow commercial strip development. Intense public opposition generated pressure to preserve the streetscape on Meetinghouse Road overlooking the Common. It led the inheritors to subdivide the property allowing retention of the interconnected complex overlooking the road. The current property incorporates parts of both holdings joined by John B. Robinson. A small, free-standing frame shingled outbuilding, most recently utilized as a chicken coop, was removed from the new rear (east) property line to

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remain with the Reed-Wood Place. The new owners undertook a certified rehabilitation of the barn and back house converting them to office space. The adaptive use of the Reed-Wood Place in keeping with its historic character have set an example recognized in a Preservation Award from the community. It demonstrates an appropriate adaptation which perpetuates historical function combining residential ownership with the practice of a trade or profession in the commercial center of the community.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on the social, cultural and economic changes that occurred at 20 Meetinghouse Road and around Littleton Common from the 18th through 20th centuries. Additional historical research combined with archaeological survey and testing can be used to document the exact construction date for the house at 20 Meetinghouse Road (ca. 1780). Similar research can also be used to document remodeling and any architectural changes that may have occurred since the original date of construction. Alterations may have occurred to the property as a result of stylistic and/or functional changes to the building. Structural evidence of outbuildings can also be important in documenting the layout and function of the property through time. Earlier outbuildings may have served a function as part of a farmstead, cottage industry and residence. Structural evidence from farmsteads, residences and outbuildings might also exist on the property from historic period land use that predates the original construction of the house in ca. 1780. The construction of the ca. 1717 meetinghouse across the street from the house at 20 Meetinghouse Road may indicate potential for an earlier residence or outbuildings associated with the meetinghouse in this area. This information and an exact date of construction for the house can be important in reconstructing the early history of the town. Detailed analysis of the contents from occupational related features can also provide important information on the social, cultural and economic characteristics of the inhabitants of the house over 200 years and how these characteristics changed and evolved through time.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Reed-Wood Place
Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MA

Section number 9 Page 1

Major Bibliographical References

Published Materials

Conklin, Edwin P. Middlesex County and its People. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1927.

Drake, Samuel Adams. History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Vol. II Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1880.

Hurd, D. Hamilton, ed. History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Vol. II Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1890.

Littleton Directories. (with Ayer) 1907, 1912, 1914, 1916, 1918, 1922 and 1925.

Stone, Orra L. History of Massachusetts Industries. Vol. I Boston: S. J. Clarke, 1930.

Town of Littleton. Records of Littleton, Massachusetts, Births and Deaths to 1850. Littleton, Mass.: Town of Littleton, 1900.

Town of Littleton. 250th Anniversary Official Program. Littleton: 1964.

Unpublished Materials

Littleton Historical Commission. Inventory Files.

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report, March 1980.

Maps

Beers, J. B. Atlas of Middlesex County, Mass., 1875. New York: J. B. Beers and Co., 1875.

Hoar & Foster. Plan of Littleton, 1830.

Map of Littleton, 1927.

Sanborn Map Company. Littleton, Massachusetts, April, 1917. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1917.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Reed-Wood Place
Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MA

Section number 9 Page 2

Sanborn Map Company. Littleton, Massachusetts, April, 1931. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1931.

Sanborn Map Company. Littleton, Massachusetts, April, 1937. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1937.

Smith, Paul. Homeowners in Littleton, Massachusetts, August, 1932. Littleton Historical Society.

Walker, George H. & Co. Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, 1884. Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1889.

Walling, Henry Francis. A Map of the Town of Littleton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Boston: 1856.

(end)

Reed-Wood Place
Name of Property

Middlesex, Massachusetts
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____ less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19	297000	4713200	3.		
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.			4.		
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

__ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title _____ Dianne L. Siergiej, Consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC _____

organization _____ Massachusetts Historical Commission _____ date _____ August 2000 _____

street & number _____ 220 Morrissey Boulevard _____ telephone _____ 617/727-8470 _____

city or town _____ Boston _____ state _____ MA _____ zip code _____ 02125 _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____ Paul J. Tiernan _____

street & number _____ 20 Meetinghouse Road _____ P.O.Box 1424 _____ telephone _____ 978-486-3158 _____

city or town _____ Littleton _____ state _____ MA _____ zip code _____ 01460 _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Reed-Wood Place
Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MA**

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of 20 Meetinghouse Road, Littleton are as shown as the bold line on the accompanying map entitled Property Map U-7, Littleton, Massachusetts, January 1, 1997 and are those of Map U07, Block 10.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the farmhouse and attached utility buildings that have been historically part of the holding and maintain historic and architectural integrity. This 15,001 square foot lot was subdivided from a larger parcel totaling 91,793 square feet, 76,793 square feet of which has been developed for commercial use.

(end)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Reed--Wood Place

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 8/17/00 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/01/00
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 00001071

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 9.14.00 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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



20 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD

LITTLETON, MASSACHUSETTS

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

PHOTOGRAPHER: J. L. SIERRA

DATE: JULY 6, 1998

NEGATIVE LOCATION: COMMONWEALTH COLLABORATIVE 66 WEST ST LEDMINSTER, MA 01453

VIEW: FACADE; WEST ELEVATION, MAIN BLOCK; WEST ELEVATION REAR ELL; FACADE SHED AND BARN

PHOTO NO. 1

94 0611 N 5 N 22 40 31



20 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD
LITTLETON, MASSACHUSETTS

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

PHOTOGRAPHER: S. L. SIERRIEJ

DATE: JULY 6, 1998

NEGATIVE LOCATION: COMMONWEALTH COLLABORATIVE 66 WEST ST., LEDMINSTER, MA 01453

VIEW: FACADE MAIN BLOCK AND BARN

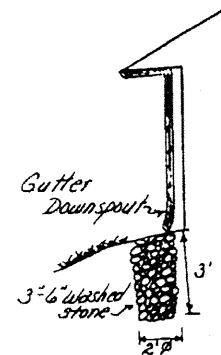
PHOTO NO 2

94 0611 NNNN 232 33



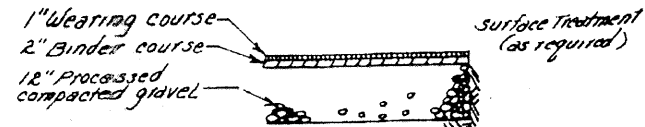






Gutter Recharge Detail
(Not to scale)

Note:
Roof runoff shall be recharged at drip line or at gutter outfall.



Pavement Cross-section
(Not to scale)

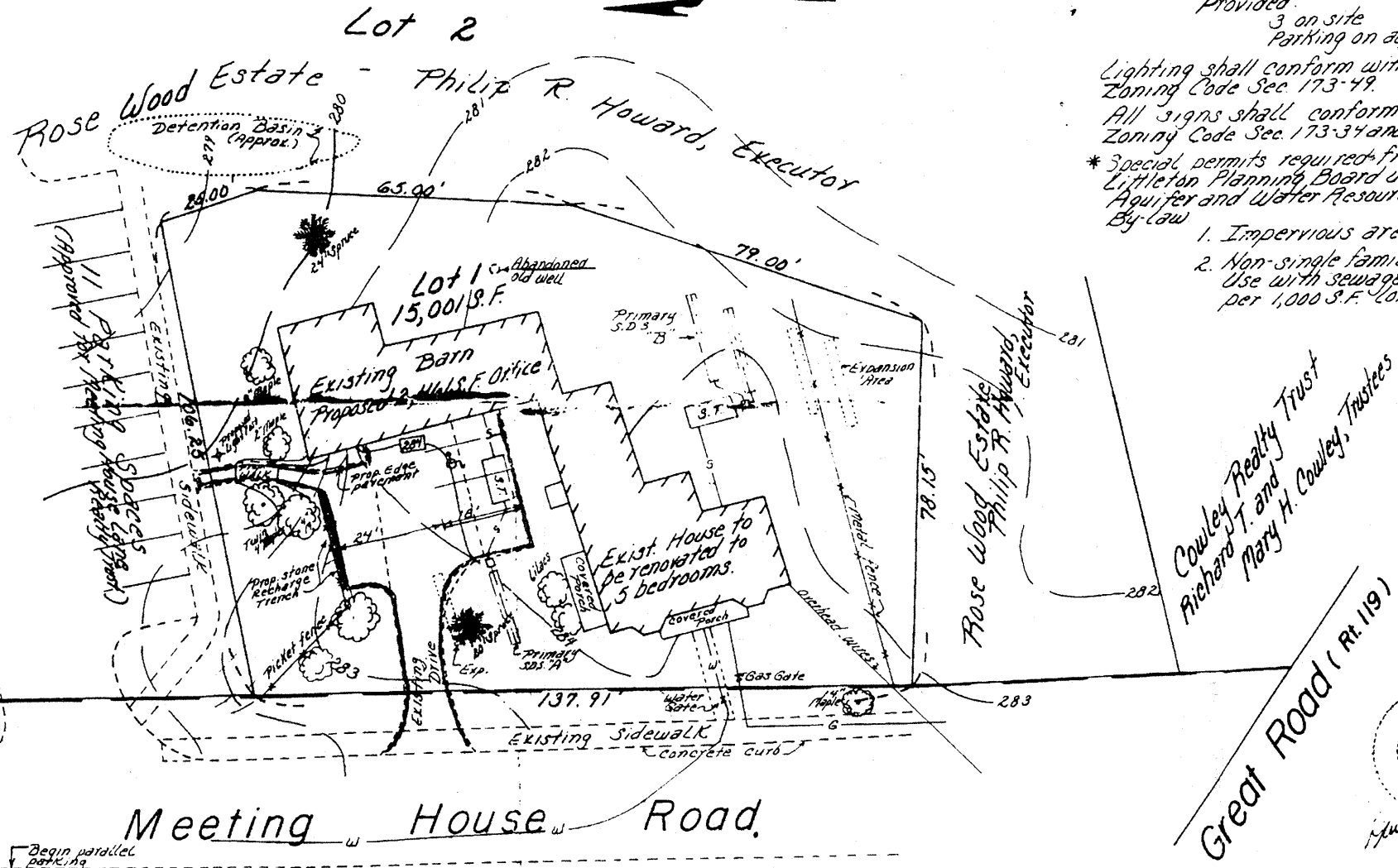
Zoning Requirements:

District: Business
Water Resource District
Lot Size: 15,001 S.F.
Building Coverage
Existing/Proposed 19.8%
Max. allowed 50% w/Sp Permit
Impervious Area:
Existing: 26.2%
Proposed: 30.7%*
Max. without Special Permit: 20%
Max. by Zone: 80%

Parking
Residential required: 2
Office: 1/150 S.F. = 16
or
1/1.25 employees = 4
Provided:
3 on site
Parking on adjacent lot.

Lighting shall conform with Littleton Zoning Code Sec. 173-49.
All signs shall conform with Littleton Zoning Code Sec. 173-34 and 173-35.

* Special permits required from the Littleton Planning Board under the Aquifer and Water Resource District By-law
1. Impervious area > 20%
2. Non-single family Residential Use with sewage flows > 6 gpd per 1,000 S.F. lot area.



James T. Butterworth
and Michael P. Donovan
King Street (Rt. 110)
Business Residential
TAB D.H. Top of Granite Post, elev. = 282.26

Cowley Realty Trust
Richard T. and Mary H. Cowley, Trustees
Great Road (Rt. 119)

Littleton Planning Board	
DATE SITE PLAN APPROVAL	
DATE ENDORSEMENT	

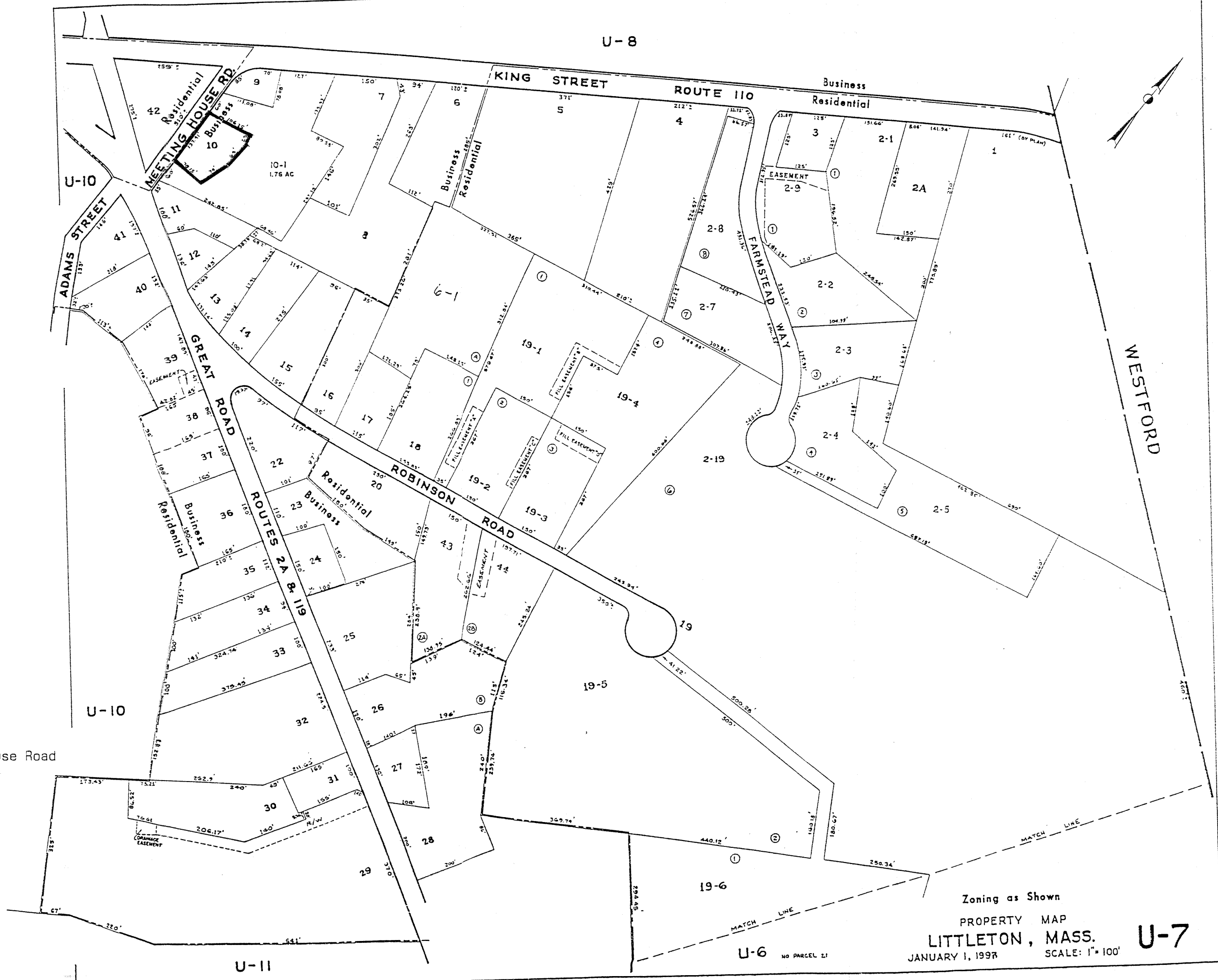
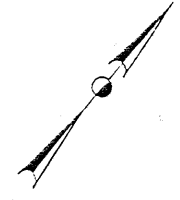
Town of Littleton Park Department

Owner/Applicant:
Paul J. and Kathleen Tiernan
719 Great Road
Littleton, Mass. 01460

SITE PLAN OF
Lot 1 — 20 Meeting House Rd.
Littleton, Mass.
PREPARED FOR
Paul J. and Kathleen Tiernan
SCALE 1" = 20' JUNE, 1995
David E. Ross Associates, Inc.
CIVIL ENGINEERS
LAND SURVEYORS
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS
P.O. BOX 361-17W MAIN ST. AYER, MA 01432
(TEL. NO. 508-772-6232) PLAN NO. M-2261
JOB NO. 5844

Ref: L-2968-A, NB. 66W-34, NB. 66X-23

U-8



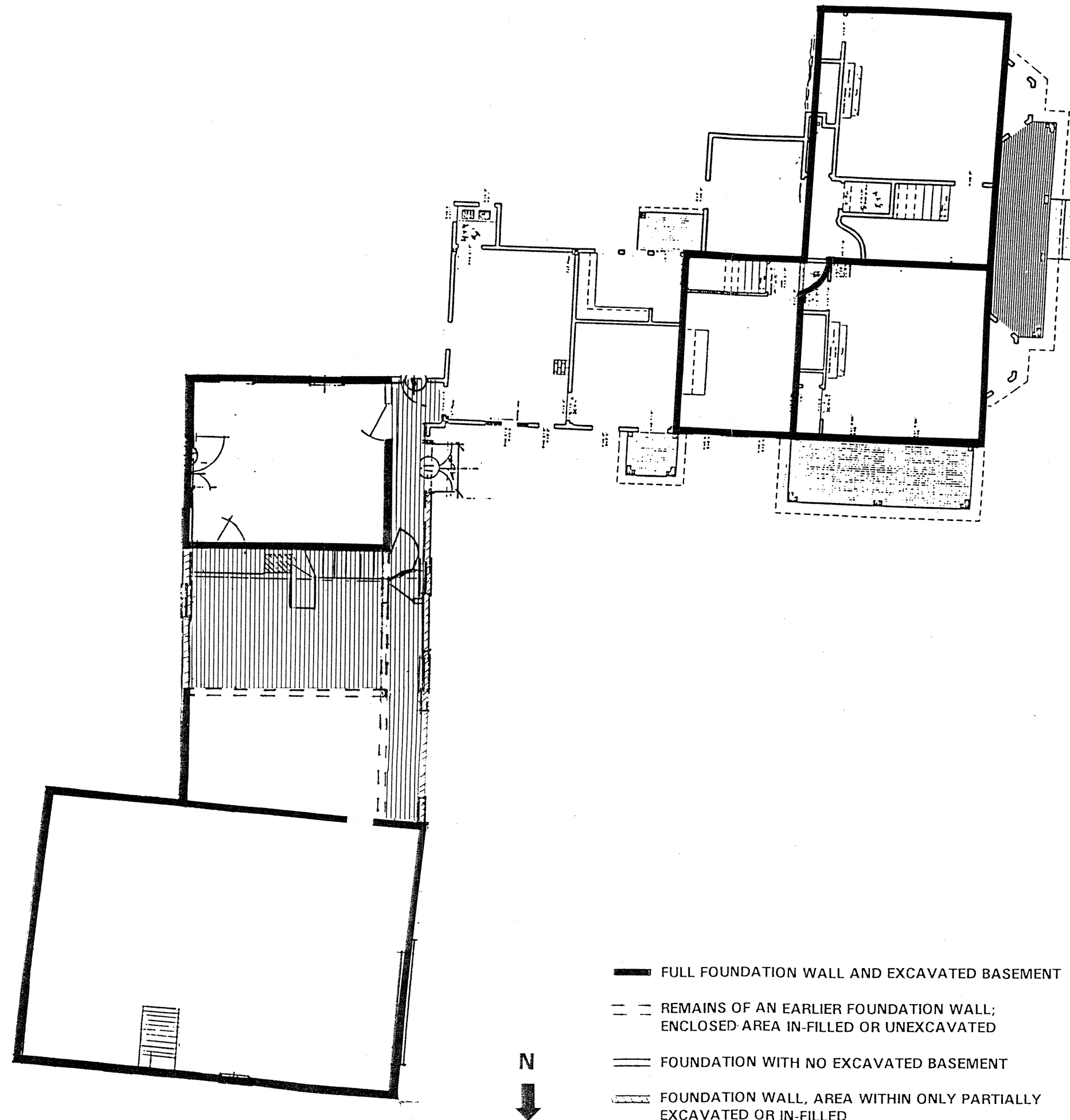
Boundary
20 Meetinghouse Road

Zoning as Shown
PROPERTY MAP
LITTLETON, MASS.
JANUARY 1, 1997
SCALE: 1" = 100'
U-7

FOUNDATION AND BASEMENT PLAN
BENEATH TWENTIETH CENTURY
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

REED-WOOD PLACE

20 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD
LITTLETON, MASSACHUSETTS



- FULL FOUNDATION WALL AND EXCAVATED BASEMENT
- - - REMAINS OF AN EARLIER FOUNDATION WALL;
ENCLOSED AREA IN-FILLED OR UNEXCAVATED
- FOUNDATION WITH NO EXCAVATED BASEMENT
- FOUNDATION WALL, AREA WITHIN ONLY PARTIALLY
EXCAVATED OR IN-FILLED



Billerica MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale metric topographic map

LITTLETON (MIDDLESEX CO.) MA

7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1:25 000 1987

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1951. Field checked 1952. Map edited 1957

Supersedes Westford 1966 and Billerica 1965 1:24,000-scale maps

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19 Universal Transverse Mercator

10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone 1957 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 6 meters south and 41 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS

NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER

OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.3 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS			
Meters	Feet	1983	1984	1	2	3	4
1	3.2808	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"	1	2	3	4
2	6.5617	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"	5	6	7	8
3	9.8425	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
4	13.1234	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
5	16.4043	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
6	19.6852	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
7	22.9661	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
8	26.2470	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
9	29.5279	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				
10	32.8088	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"				

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

UTM grid convergence (GCM) at center of map

Diagram is approximate

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road, trail	
Route marker: Interstate: U. S.; State	
Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage	
Bridge: drawbridge	
Footbridge; overpass; underpass	
Build-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	
House; barn; church; school; large structure	
Boundary:	
National, with monument	
State	
County, parish	
Civil township, precinct, district	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation, small park	
Land grant with monument; land section corner	
U. S. public-lands survey: range, township, section	
Range, township, section line: location approximate	
Fence or field line	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; dam with lock	
Cemetery; grave	
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or shaft	
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Distorted surface: strip mine, lava; sand	
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate	
Parental lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	
Swamp; marsh	
Submerged marsh; land subject to controlled inundation	
Woodland; scattered trees	
Scrub; mangrove	
Orchard; vineyard	

20 MEETINGHOUSE LANE
Zone 19
N 4713200
E 297000

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

August 9, 2000

Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Reed-Wood Place, 20 Meetinghouse Road, Littleton (Middlesex Co.), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Two letters of support have been received.

We request an expedited review of this nomination.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg
Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Paul & Kathleen Tiernan
Pamela Campbell, Chair, Littleton Historical Commission
Dianne Siergie, Preservation Consultant
Daniel Sullivan, Chair, Board of Selectmen
Mark Montaneri, Chair, Planning Board
State Representative Geoffrey Hall



RECEIVED

BT
NRple

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MAY 05 2000

House of Representatives MASS. HIST. COMM

State House, Boston 02133-1054

GEOFFREY HALL
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
2ND MIDDLESEX DISTRICT
AYER - PRECINCT 2
HARVARD, LITTLETON, WESTFORD

May 2, 2000

Chairman
Committee on State Administration
ROOM 34, STATE HOUSE
TEL. (617) 722-2320

JOANNE BARNETT
STAFF DIRECTOR

Betsy Friedberg
Director, National Register
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Ms. Friedberg:

This letter is to add my enthusiastic support for the application of Paul J. Tiernan of 20 Meetinghouse Road, Littleton, MA 01460 to have the irreplaceable, two-centuries old building at 20 Meetinghouse Road listed on the National Register.

The prescribed care with which the owners have restored this once-abandoned antique property to active use is testimony to one family's determination to preserve its unique historic and architectural significance in the Town of Littleton. Authorities of various pertinent authenticating agencies have acknowledged the validity of the restoration efforts.

The formal inclusion of 20 Meetinghouse Road on the National Register is a proper final step in recognizing one more item in this state's treasury of historic sites. Such a designation, by publicly certifying the property as noteworthy, not only benefits the tourism industry of the state, but also enhances the pride of the community in its heritage. In giving your approval to the petition you will have confirmed another historic asset in Massachusetts for national public appreciation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

GEOFFREY D. HALL
Chairman
Committee on State Administration

NRJG BF

Littleton Historical Commission
Littleton, Massachusetts

Protecting the Future by Preserving the Past

RECEIVED

MAY 15 2000

MASS. HIST. COMM

May 10, 2000

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125

Subject: National Register Nomination
20 Meetinghouse Road, Littleton, MA

Dear Ms. Friedberg,

The Littleton Historical Commission without reservation supports the nomination of 20 Meetinghouse Road, Littleton, Massachusetts, to the National Register. I will not labor you by repeating the house's rich history, that will be found in the supporting documentation, but allow me to speak to the spirit of the nomination. The Tiernan property is one of the few remaining original buildings on our town Common. It has been lovingly restored and is frequently cited as an example of how preservation can work in today's world. Mr. and Mrs. Tiernan have saved a real treasure for the town.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My daytime telephone is 978-897-1909, x116.

Sincerely



Pamela D. Campbell
Chairperson
Littleton Historical Commission

cc: Paul J. Tiernan

pdc/hs