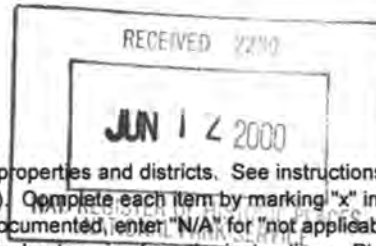


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 WESTSIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Baker and Snell Sts., Northampton Rd., and Hazel Ave. not for publication

city or town Amherst vicinity _____

state Massachusetts code MA county Hampshire code 015 zip code 01002

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 Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

6/2/2000
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

Patrick Andrus

Date of Action

7/25/00

Westside HD
Name of Property

Hampshire, MA
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	
44	5	Building
1		sites
		structures
		objects
45	5	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)

Residential

Agricultural

Industrial

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Residential

Agricultural

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Victorian Eclectic

Craftsman/Bungalow

Colonial Revival

Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

walls wood/weatherboard

brick asphalt aluminum vinyl

roof _____

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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7. DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The Westside Historic District is located west of downtown Amherst by a half-mile on Northampton Road. Its 40 acres include Hazel Avenue, Baker Street and Snell Street west of the former Boston and Maine Railroad (now a rail trail). Northampton Road from University Drive to Blue Hills Road forms the northern boundary. South of Northampton Road, 44 architectural resources, primarily Victorian Eclectic style residences from the late 19th century, are located in small clusters among cornfields and large yards, lending an open appearance to the neighborhood. Topography inclines regularly to the east with few trees or other visual interruptions. The opposite side of Northampton road is lined with a collection of 12 gable-front Colonial Revival and Victorian Eclectic style homes built at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Fields occupy the eastern border of the district and the area between Snell Street and Hazel Avenue. The eastern field is planted in corn. The historical significance of Westside derives largely from its occupation by African Americans for over a century and from its architectural resources which embody distinctive characteristics of 19th century design, construction and planning.

There were other ethnic enclaves in the town during the period and even other ethnic groups in Westside, including Irish and Polish. While neither of these groups nor the African Americans are known for any regional influences on architectural design, there is a building form that is typical of Westside. The Victorian Eclectic style, front gabled, two-story, two-bay or three-bay examples represent nearly half the district's architectural resources. These are found throughout the district on Northampton Road, Snell Street, Hazel Avenue and Baker Street. Slight variations in the form exist. Most have two windows in the gable peak but some have only one. Most are perpendicular to the street but a small number are parallel. Several are two and one-half stories in height. Almost all have front porches. The slope of the roof, plain moldings around the openings, lack of gable or eave articulation and side hall entry mark them as having common design or construction influences. Many of the houses retain original exterior materials which consist mainly of wood shingles and wood clapboards but may include historic asphalt wall cladding in some cases.

Architecture in the suburban district is mainly one and one-half story wood-framed houses, some of which have associated outbuildings. Three distinct groups of houses exist within the area, located on Baker Street, Hazel Avenue and on Northampton Road. Baker Street is a cul-de-sac with houses spaced close together at the south end. Hazel Avenue is a linear group of homes, all of which are located on the west side of the street. A corn field occupies the east side. The homes on Northampton Road are also arranged in a linear fashion. Buildings here are more dense on the north side of the busy state highway and tend to display elements of the Colonial Revival and Victorian Eclectic styles. The three groups are joined by the physical core of the district, which is agricultural fields.

Westside's oldest buildings were constructed after the Civil War on Baker Street on a scale and density typical of a suburban street. This area is in the southwestern part of the district. The wood framed houses are between

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one and one-half and two stories with less than thirty feet of frontage and slightly more at the sides. The two and three-bay, front-gabled form clad in wood clapboard is most common, although some houses have been updated with new siding and cross-gabled additions. Baker Street is the densest group of buildings in the Westside district.

Hazel Avenue, in the district's northeastern part, was developed in the late 1800s, shortly after construction on Baker Street slowed. Houses here are similar in scale to those on Baker Street but have a wider variety of forms. Pyramidal hipped foursquare and side-gabled examples are adjacent to two and one-half-story, front gabled houses, all on the west side of the street. The opposite side is occupied by a field still cultivated in corn.

Northampton Road north of Hazel Avenue, built more recently than Hazel and Baker, is developed with 13 two-story, front gabled houses, mostly Victorian Eclectic in style, constructed between ca. 1890 and 1920. Some designs have a front gambrel roof, evidence of the Dutch Colonial Revival influence. These houses are more ornate, more likely to retain original exterior cladding and to have undergone fewer changes to their plans than houses on other streets in the district. They are set 50 feet off the busy state highway with a similar distance between. The Connecticut Valley Street Railway opened on Northampton Road in ca. 1890, facilitating travel between Amherst and Northampton. The linear development along this segment of road was a common response of builders to the construction of street railways in the late 19th century.

Baker Street

Baker Street is the oldest section of the Westside District, containing six houses, most of which were constructed before 1880. The **Hawkins House at 33 Baker Street (ca. 1869 MHC #329)** is the oldest house on the street, built around 1869. The three by two-bay principal mass rises two stories to a low-pitched, side-gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles. A two story rear addition creates an L-shaped plan. Vinyl clapboards are on the exterior walls and the foundation is built of brick. Original windows have been replaced with vinyl sash. All ornament except the gable returns on the north gable end has been removed. This is the only side-gabled house on the street.

The Hasbrook House at 43 Baker Street (ca. 1870 MHC #330) is one of Westside's typical Victorian Eclectic houses. Its form is representative of at least 16 of the district's 38 architectural resources. The principal mass is a front-gabled block of two by two bays and one and one-half stories. Side-gabled additions were made during the last third of the 20th century. A hipped porch covers the side hall entry. This form, with slight variations, describes **52, 55 (ca. 1870 MHC #332)** and **58 Baker Street** and applies to some of the homes on Snell Street, Northampton Road and Hazel Avenue as well. Lack of ornament around the eaves and the slope of the roof are indicative of a common design influence among these houses. While the **Larned House at 34 Baker Street (ca. 1900)** is a well-maintained Victorian Eclectic style house, its integrity of location was lost when it was moved here from North Pleasant Street around 1965.

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Snell Street

Snell Street is the site of two architectural examples of the Victorian Eclectic style that is typical of Westside's resources. The houses at **208 and 223 Snell Street (ca. 1870)** share the three-by-two-bay plans and one and one-half-story, gable-front elevations found elsewhere in the district. The easterly of the two, 223, has been re-sided with vinyl clapboards but retains its 2/2 double-hung sash. A picket fence occupies the back yard of the well-maintained house. The house at 208 is located across the street and retains its wood clapboard exterior and 6/6 double-hung sash. Two well-maintained historic barns, clad in vertical flushboard and intended to house farm implements and possibly produce, are behind the house. The barns are not fenestrated but lack ornament except for a small ventilator on the roof of the larger barn.

Hazel Avenue

From the houses on Snell Street it is possible to view the backs of some houses on Hazel Avenue across a field and through a thin stand of trees. The field and sparse woods represent the physical core of the district. **Thirty-five, 39 and 43 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1890, 1870, 1890)** are examples of the front-gabled, Victorian Eclectic style house, typical of Westside, found on Snell Street, Northampton Road and on Baker Street. The example at **35 Hazel Avenue** is parallel to the street and has a single window in the gable peak instead of two but otherwise fits the pattern of typical Victorian Eclectic houses in the district. An enclosed porch has been added to the street elevation and vinyl siding has been applied to the exterior but the house is in good condition. **Thirty-nine Hazel Avenue** is a gable-front, two by two-bay plan, clad in asphalt shingles that might have been applied during the first half of the 20th century. The 2/2 double-hung sash remain but the trim around the openings found on similar buildings has either been removed or subsumed under the asphalt cladding. **Forty-three Hazel Avenue** is unique in the district for its very deep setback and surviving large barn in the back yard. The house has a side-gabled plan but otherwise adheres to the predominant Victorian Eclectic type found throughout the district. The original 2/2 sash remain in the window openings and the exterior is clad with wood clapboards. An enclosed porch has been added to the northern elevation of the well-maintained house.

Other houses on Hazel Avenue retain a moderate level of integrity of materials and design. The Bias-Thompson House at **15 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1893)** is a two and one-half story Victorian Eclectic style house with a more complex plan than others in the district. Two-story bays project from the gable-front block, forming a T-shaped plan. Enclosed porches have been added to the facade and to the rear of the house. Original siding has been replaced with vinyl clapboards and the windows with 1/1 vinyl sash. This house is larger than others in the Westside District. The Perry Roberts House at **21 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1880)** is the district's only pyramidal hipped example and is also larger than most others in Westside. The Colonial Revival style foursquare house is two stories high with a two-bay by two-bay plan, which is enlarged by a two-story addition to the facade. Two over two double-hung sash light the first and second stories, except in the bay which have 6/6 sash. This house has been altered with the addition of aluminum siding. A pyramidal hipped garage sided with asphalt cladding is in the back yard. The **Davis/Taylor House at 29 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1880)** is a front-gabled, two and one-

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half-story residence built on a three-bay by two-bay plan. While it has some of the characteristics of Westside's typical Victorian Eclectic style houses, it is significantly larger than they are. The house is clad in wood clapboards, has a two-story rear addition and a gabled side-hall entry porch. The house is in good condition.

Northampton Road

Northampton Road between University Drive and Blue Hills Road (Street numbers 193-271) is the location of the most intact cluster of buildings within the district. The group is primarily Victorian Eclectic and Colonial Revival but includes Dutch Colonial Revival, Cape Cod, Italianate and Craftsman style homes. Most are well maintained and retain the highest level of integrity of material, location, setting and design of buildings in the district. The typical Westside Victorian Eclectic style homes on **Northampton Road (Street numbers 193, 199, 203, 215, 221, 227, 240, built ca. 1894-1912)** are wood-framed, front-gabled, two-story or two and one-half-story buildings of two or three bays. Many have hipped porches on the front and two-story ells attached to the rear. Roofs are asphalt shingles, foundations are built of brick and siding material is primarily wood clapboard with ornamental wood shingles in some gable peaks. Distinctive characteristics of these houses are the porches, gable-front orientation and unornamented eaves. Some vinyl, asphalt and aluminum siding is present. This building form, with slight variations, is also present on Baker and Snell Streets and Hazel Avenue in 9 other examples. (**43, 52, 55, 58 Baker Street; 35, 39, 43 Hazel; 208, 223 Snell**)

The Dutch Colonial Revival style homes at **235 (ca. 1917 MHC #323) and 241 Northampton Road** are well-maintained front-gambrel examples with wood clapboard siding and wood shingles in the peak of the gambrel end. Both have hipped porches with shingled knee walls and Classically designed colonnettes and piers. These houses retain a high level of integrity of design and materials.

The house at **260 Northampton Road (ca. 1870 MHC #324)** is an Italianate style design with deep eaves, symmetrical three-bay facade and very low-pitched hipped roof pierced by a center chimney. The center entry is covered by a shed roofed porch on the east-facing principal elevation. Windows are capped by prominent hood moldings that enhance the Italianate sensibility. The walls of the house are clad in wood clapboards, the foundation is built of brick and the double-hung sash have 2/2 panes, all of which appears to be original material.

The English Revival style is represented at **247 and 263 Northampton Road (ca. 1920, 1955)** The latter is non-contributing building due to its ca. 1955 construction date. The house at 247 is a large, wood-framed, front-gabled, three bay design of two and one-half stories. A one story bay window and a side-hall entry porch project from the facade. Sash with pedimented hoods on the facade appear in groups of two, three and four. The stagger-butt wood shingle cladding contributes further to the well-maintained house's medieval appearance.

Houses at **212 and 255 Northampton Road (ca. 1920)** are Craftsman style Bungalows with gable-front center entries. The one and one-half-story forms are modestly scaled and sparsely ornamented. A Cape Cod house is

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at 250 Northampton Road, clad in asbestos and set back from the road behind the Bias-Thompson House at 15 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1893). These houses retain the least amount of integrity of buildings on Northampton Road.

Summary

Non-architectural resources contributing to the district's historical appearance consist of the farm fields still being cultivated on Northampton Road. These are between five and ten acres in size and are currently planted in corn. Houses on Hazel Avenue have an uninterrupted view to the east of the field along Northampton Road and can view parts of the Snell Street field from their back yards. Houses on Snell Street look out their own back yards to the field and the homes on Hazel Avenue. These are the only farm fields visible in this part of Amherst, which tends to be suburban in character. Residential side streets across Northampton Road and east of the district, as well as commercial development to the west, predominate and dilute the agricultural sensibility. The views generated by the open space are critical elements of the historical appearance of the Westside Historic District.

The character of the architectural resources in Westside is that of modest residential building intended for farm workers, laborers and small businessmen. Evidence of the farming aspect of the district's history remains in the fields that continue to surround the homes. The Victorian Eclectic style houses that share elements of plan, detail, form and roofline lend a great deal of cohesion to Westside. The similarities among these 16 buildings generate a sense of identity that compliments its enduring historical association with the African American community.

Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are recorded in the Westside Historic District, it is possible that sites are present. Three prehistoric sites are recorded in the general area (within one mile). Environmental characteristics of the property indicate some locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, distance to wetlands) that are favorable indicators for several types of prehistoric sites. Soils in the area are generally excessively drained, formed in glacial outwash deposits such as outwash plains, kames and terraces. These deposits are found in a level to moderately sloping terrain that inclines to the east. The district is, however, located over 1000 feet from the nearest wetlands, an important variable that adversely effects the prehistoric site potential for this area. An intermittent tributary stream of the Mill River is located approximately 1500 feet west and northwest of the district. The Fort River is located approximately one-half mile southwest of the district. Given the above information, the size of the district (approximately 40 acres), agricultural land in the district and regional patterns of Native American settlement, a moderate potential exists for the recovery of prehistoric resources in the district.

(continued)

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There is a moderate to high potential for the recovery of historic archaeological resources in the district. The earliest extant structure in the district is the Hawkins House at 33 Baker Street, built in 1869. Prior to that date, the district land was used for agriculture and was reportedly not associated with the Black community. Major roadways in the district such as Northampton Road were not built until 1832. The Gray and Adams map of 1833 depicts Northampton Road as built, however, no structures are depicted on it. Little settlement or landuse is identified along Northampton Road until the mid 19th century when some farming is reported and subdivision for residential development begins. The 1856 Walling map indicates some farms along the road. The information presented above indicates agricultural related sites as the major potential archaeological resources in the district, possibly from the 18th century through the mid 19th century. These resources might include stone walls, post molds from fence lines, agricultural and transportation related equipment and possibly structural evidence from outbuildings. Structural evidence might also exist from early African American farmsteads or residences, possibly dating from the 18th century. African Americans have resided in Amherst since the 18th century both as slaves and as free persons. The Westside District has also always been significant as a major area of settlement for African Americans in Amherst. This information in addition to the fact that when African Americans were resident in an area they were not always depicted on county atlases suggests the potential is present for African American related farmsteads and residences prior to the 1869 date given for the earliest extant house in the district. The potential for African American related sites may increase in the early 19th century as African Americans began living separately from white families. The 1820 census lists 23 of 26 African Americans living in households separate from whites. During the 18th century African Americans reportedly were more likely to live with white families. Structural remains may exist from residences and outbuildings (barns, sheds) associated with early, undocumented African American settlement of the district as well as later 19th and 20th century homes that are also unknown. Structural remains of outbuildings associated with extant structures and buildings that no longer survive may be one of the more common resource types in the district. Archaeological evidence of occupational related features (trash pits/areas, privies, wells) may also survive in the district associated with demolished and extant structures.

(end)

Westside HD

Name of Property

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 and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **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 significance within the past 50 years.

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 (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ 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 # _____

Hampshire, Mass.

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Ethnic Heritage: European

Period of Significance

1869-1950

Significant Dates

N/a

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/a

Architect/Builder

Allen & Allen, builders

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Amherst (Hampshire Co.), Mass.**Section number 8 Page 1**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE****Summary**

The Amherst Westside National Register district is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in the areas of agriculture; architecture; community planning and development; ethnic heritage: Black; and ethnic heritage: European. The district retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and meets Criteria A and C on the local level.

The Amherst Westside district encompasses a neighborhood of approximately forty properties representing several phases of development. While the earliest residence dates to ca. 1869, and a handful date to the 1870s, the majority of properties in the district (some two dozen) are residences constructed at the turn of the century, between 1890 and 1917. A later phase of development occurred in the late 1920s and 1930s, with the construction--probably on speculation--of an additional nine houses following the subdivision of a large single property. For the most part, these are unassuming, vernacular frame houses, 1 ½ to two stories in height, gable-front in form and displaying little ornament. Many of these properties hold historical associations with members of Amherst's African American community, while other ethnic groups represented within the district historically include Irish and Eastern European immigrants. While several of the properties served as modest farmsteads, most were the homes of laborers, domestic workers, tradesmen and professionals. Many of the Westside neighborhood's residents were employed on the Amherst College campus or worked for Amherst College professors; others earned a living in local businesses. The district continues to serve as home to a diverse mix of ethnicities, including a significant African American population, with well over 125 years' association with the neighborhood. Together, these properties demonstrate a stable, multicultural dimension in Amherst's heritage not seen in previously listed districts.

African Americans in Amherst

African Americans have been present in Amherst since the 18th century. This is made clear by church records, probate records, census information and the work of James Avery Smith, among other historians and researchers. Mr. Smith notes that during the 18th century, African Americans named Pomp and George had been admitted as full members of the First Parish Church. Phillis Finnemore was admitted in 1804. It appears from other sources that a school teacher named John Scott owned a slave, as did the town's first minister, David Parsons, whose slave family consisted in 1748 of people named Pompey, Rose and a child named Goffy. The tavernkeeper Elisha Ingram owned a slave; in 1765, six African Americans were owned by White residents. Josiah Chauncey, in 1770, owned a veteran of the French and Indian War and Revolutionary War named Caesar Prutt, as well as three other African Americans. Mr. Prutt remained in town until at least 1807.

Two Black residents in the 1760s, Thomas and Tabitha, were free persons but were warned out of town, meaning they were informed that they were not eligible for charitable support. 1790 federal census indicates two non-White free persons resided in the town and no slaves, owing to the fact that slavery was abolished in

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the commonwealth around 1782. Other names of free African Americans include Welthy Wheeler who lived in the town 1790-1851 and Phillis Finnemore, who lived here from at least 1790-1840. Four African Americans appear in the 1800 federal census, although there may have been as many as 7 African Americans in the town functioning primarily as domestic servants. 1810 census information reveals 8 Black residents living with White families. Names of African Americans are not given in these early censuses.

The list of African Americans reflected in the 1820 census grew dramatically and contains names that continue to resound in African American circles in Amherst, including Newport, Bias and Finnemore. Also reflected in the 1820 census is that 23 of the 26 African Americans lived in separate households rather than with White families as was typical in the 18th century. Seven Black families comprising 33 individuals lived independently of White families according to census information compiled in 1840. Six of the seven families lived in the same area of the town and were listed sequentially in the schedule of individuals. Thus began the core settlement of Black residents in the town, although it is difficult to prove where the group lived before the mid 19th century. Names of Black residents do not appear on maps that note the residences of Whites and addresses are not given in census records. Other enclaves of African Americans existed in the town during the 19th century: at a boardinghouse on East Main Street, for example, known by unsympathetic White residents as "The Beehive" for its continuous activity; and around Railroad and Depot Streets, which was an industrial section of town. However, these areas did not reach the scale and density of Black residents that the Westside district achieved.

By the 1860's, it becomes clear that at least one enclave of African Americans had developed in Amherst in the Westside District (Hazel Avenue, Baker, Snell Streets) located south of State Route 9/Northampton Road. Resident directories from 1869 and 1873 and census information from 1870 corroborate that Black families lived off Northampton Road. Names of African Americans that appear in both the census and the directories on Northampton Road are Burghardt, Newport, Finnemore and Smith. Many more than these four families lived in the area and may have been passed over by both the census taker and the directory compiler. Francis Ira Burghardt, a 33 year old African American, lived with Juba Burghardt, 51, and 13 year old Harriet, a student. Ira worked as a laborer, as did the majority of Black residents at the time. Dwight and Henry Newport were young students living with John and Martha Thompson. Another Newport named William worked and lived at a nearby stable. Charles Finnemore worked as a laborer and farmer and is noted as living on Northampton Road. Hiram Smith was a 33 year old laborer who lived with Diana and young John, probably his wife and son, on Northampton Road. It is no coincidence that Amherst's African American religious congregation would later be located just east of the homes of this group of residents on Woodside Avenue. (NR Nomination, Goodwin AME Zion Church, [2000] built in 1910)

The Westside neighborhood has been occupied by tradesmen, Amherst College employees, laborers and farmers. Well documented Westside District families whose names appear in census records, resident directories and local histories include Newport, Finnemore, Thompson, Hasbrook, Bias and Prutt. Information about these people has been gathered by a local genealogist, news reporters, a reference librarian, Goodwin AME Zion Church parishioners, and regional and town planners.

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Westside Residents Before 1869

The first European occupants of the area near the Westside District were White colonists who farmed the adjacent land on what is now Pleasant Street. Deacon Eleazer Smith, Ebenezer Petty and Reuben Cowles resided in the area according to a 1772 map of early settlers. Northampton Road was built through the area by the county around 1832 but the residents nearest Westside were on Pleasant Street near the Amherst College. They included professors Snell, Fisk and Hitchcock, among others. The current Westside District was an extension of their back yard to the west. The area around Westside was still sparsely settled by the time of the 1856 Walling Map of Hampshire County. This remained the case until 1869, when Baker Street and the homes on it were constructed.

1869-1900

Construction of houses in the Westside District began with several nearly identical designs on Baker Street in 1869-1874 and possibly a house from this period at 35 Hazel Avenue. The one and one-half-story buildings have a two-bay by three-bay plan and a similarity of form and detail, particularly in the roof form and around the eaves, making it clear that some common design influence was exerted during construction. No African American house-builder has been discovered in the historical record, but it may be that the design similarities are due to the efforts of such a person. Hazel Avenue occupies land owned in 1845 by Timothy and Mary Smith. An African American family named Smith is listed in the 1870 census, although it is not known if they are related. The Smiths sold the land to an African American family named Burghardt in 1863. They farmed it during the 19th century and later subdivided it for sale to individual home owners in the 1880s and 1890s.

Residents of Westside were working class people, many of whom had traveled to Amherst from the South. The first Black families in the district lived on Baker Street. These include a family named Hawkins at **33 Baker Street (ca. 1869 MHC #329)**. A Black man named William Hawkins appears in the 1870 Census. He is described as a 23-year-old gardener from Pennsylvania. Mary Hawkins is listed as keeping house and there is mention of a one-year-old child named Emily. Another daughter named Alice worked as a servant in her teen years and a son named Frederick was a dry-goods store clerk.

Another early building in Westside is the house at **43 Baker Street (ca. 1897 MHC #330)** which was first occupied by the Hasbrook Family. Josiah Hasbrook, a Civil War veteran, his wife Jane Anne Hazzard and three sons Stephen, Lloyd Garrison and Carroll moved here in 1897. Mr. Hasbrook was born to former slaves in Fishkill, New York in 1840 and moved to the Adirondacks in 1846 where a wealthy abolitionist had bought land to found a community, called North Elba, for former slaves. In this remote town of free African Americans, Mr. Hasbrook's family began an enduring relationship with the family of anti-slavery fighter John Brown. Hasbrook attended the funeral services for Brown after his hanging in Charles Town, Virginia and remained a friend of the family over the next 55 years. Mr. Hasbrook made his living carrying the mail in Amherst.

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Fifty-two Baker Street (ca. 1870) was constructed for a resident named Franklin according to research by local historians. A White resident named Maria Franklin is present in the 1870 census and employed a Black housekeeper named Nichols (possibly 19 year old Julia but the name is blurred on the census record). The sequence in which the names Nichols and Franklin appear in the schedule of individuals indicates they lived somewhere in the vicinity of Baker Street.

The **Charles Thompson House at 55 Baker Street (MHC #332)** was built around 1874 for the long-time Amherst College head custodian and small farmer. He lived here with his wife Eliza and daughter Mary. "Professor Charlie" was born in Portland, Maine in 1823 and moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts at the age of 15 to live with the family of William Stearns, later President of Amherst College. During his lifelong association with the Stearns family, Mr. Thompson worked in Cambridge as a fireman, sailed from New Bedford on the whaling ship Warren, worked as a coachman and followed Dr. Stearns to Amherst around 1856. Married in 1858 to a laundress named Eliza, the couple adopted a daughter named Mary and attended religious services at the college church every Sunday. By 1902, Mr. Thompson had lost his wife to a slowly degenerating disease. Caring for Eliza caused him ultimately to lose his home and small farm. He would remain destitute but for the efforts of the daughter of President Stearns, who wrote a short biography that was sent to Amherst College alumni with a request for donations to Mr. Thompson. Results of the fundraiser are not known.

The original owner or builder of the house at **58 Baker Street** has not been determined, although its appearance indicates it was built around 1870. Two houses on Snell Street resemble those on Baker Street in form, detail, and scale and share the period of construction. The house at **208 Snell Street** was built around 1870 for either the Hasbrook or Bias family. Another typical design from the period is found at **223 Snell Street**, owned in the 1880s and 1890s by residents named Nash, Sullivan, and Moriarty, possibly Irish immigrants. The 1870 resident directory lists John Moriarty as a laborer residing on Depot Street, part of a small Irish neighborhood, and L. S. Nash, a farmer living on Hitchcock. It is possible that either one moved into this house on Snell Street after 1870.

The **Bias-Thompson House at 15 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1893)** is built on land formerly owned by the Black laborer and farmer Francis Ira Burghardt. He and his wife Azubah (Juba) sold the property in 1893 to the African Americans Charles H. Bias and Amelia Thompson according to deed research. The **Roberts House at 21 Hazel Avenue** was built by an African American Amherst College janitor named Perry Roberts and his wife Ellen in 1891. Their descendants continue to occupy the house.

The **Davis-Taylor House at 29 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1891)** was home to two generations of a Black family from 1891 to at least 1968. George H. Davis built the house in 1891 according to previous research and occupied it with his family until around 1930. Mr. Davis is listed as a laborer in the 1870 resident directory.

The **Lord House at 35 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1890)** was owned before 1918 according to deed research by someone named Smith in partnership with a member of the Hasbrook family. The 1870 census indicates there

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was a Black couple in the neighborhood named Dianne and Hiram Smith who had a son named John and may have owned the house.

The **Charles Bias House at 39 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1870)** is the former residence of Charles and Sarah Finnemore from ca. 1869-1916. Mr. Finnemore worked as a laborer and his wife Sarah kept house according to 1870 census information. He is listed as a farmer on Northampton Road in the 1873 resident directory. Mr. Finnemore was a Civil War veteran, serving in Company C of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment, and remained active in the GAR after the war. He fought in three battles and was wounded in the Battle of Olustee, Florida in 1864. The Finnemores lost a child to smallpox at the African American tenement house on North Pleasant Street in 1864.

The **Cooley House at 43 Hazel Avenue (ca. 1890)** is the former home of Margaret Gallivan. It is probable that Margaret was the widow of Timothy Gallivan, a laborer who lived in the area at the time of the 1873 resident directory. Mr. Gallivan may have been an Irish immigrant, a number of whom lived in the area in the late 19th century.

260 Northampton Road (MHC #324) was built in the 1870s by a family named either McCarthy or McCarty. John and Louisa McCarthy owned the home until the 1920s, at which time they sold the home to Mary Bowler. She owned the home until the 1950s, before selling it to Maurice and Suzanne Garvey, grandparents of the present residents.

1900-1949

The period 1900-1949 saw some diffusion of the African American occupation of the district. European immigrants arrived and occupied houses formerly owned by Black families. For example, the house at **227 Northampton Road (ca. 1900 MHC #322)** was owned by a couple of Lithuanian descent named George and Caroline Chernes. The **Richard Whalen House at 212 Northampton Road (ca. 1920)** was occupied by a family of Irish descent. The Connecticut Valley Street Railway encouraged construction along its tracks on Northampton Road which became the location of the most intense development in the district during the period. Ease of travel between Amherst and the neighboring employment center of Northampton appealed to all Amherst residents and helped to sell homes along its right of way.

Northampton Road was built by the county in 1832 to connect Amherst with its neighboring town to the southwest. The 1833 Gray and Adams map of Amherst indicates the road had been completed but no buildings are depicted on it. Little settlement occurred along it until the middle of the 19th century when some farming began and some subdivision for residential development. The 1856 Walling map indicates that Moses Dickinson had a farm on the north side of the road opposite the Westside District. L. Miles lived east of the district at that time. By the time of the 1873 Beers county atlas, Dr. P. E. Irish and O. D. Hunt owned large residences on the road adjacent to the Westside District. While African Americans were resident in the area,

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they were not always depicted on county atlases. The Connecticut Valley Street Railway opened on Northampton Road in ca. 1890, facilitating travel between Amherst and Northampton. The linear development along this part of the road was a common response of builders to the construction of street railways in the late 19th century.

The **Dwight Newport House at 193 Northampton Road (ca. 1910 MHC #319)** was constructed around the turn of the century. By 1927, the African Americans Dwight "Doc" Newport and his wife Julia owned the house where they raised a son, Edward and a daughter, Martha. Mr. Newport was born in the town in 1859 and lived with another African American family, John and Martha Thompson in 1870. He moved to Minnesota as a young man to work in a grain elevator and soon returned to Amherst to train as a professional boxer. During this time he earned money by teaching self-defense. This career did not blossom but his athleticism allowed him to obtain a position as trainer for Amherst College football, baseball and boxing programs in 1889, a job he kept until 1931. Upon his retirement, he was awarded a purse of \$700 by appreciative alumni and lauded by newspapers and school groups for his long term of service, impressive memory for names of alumni and supportive attitude. He worked on the athletic field with numerous All-Americans in football and baseball, including some who played professionally. Mr. Newport was a member of Hope Congregational Church and died in 1937. Newport family members continue to live in the house.

The **Edward Newport House at 199 Northampton Road (ca. 1910)** was built around 1910. Edward F. Newport, son of Dwight Newport and also an Amherst College athletic trainer, lived in the house until his death in 1968. Like his father, Edward was recognized by the college for his long term of service from 1902-1963. He worked beside his father from 1902 until Dwight retired in 1931. After studying pharmaceuticals at the University of Maine and then graduating with the Amherst College class of 1909, Edward married Florence Dymond of Bangor, Maine and lived in the house with their four children. Mr. Newport was a member of Hope Congregational Church. The house was owned after Edward's death by his brother Ralph.

The **Jenkins House at 203 Northampton Road (ca. 1910)** was built around 1910 by George and Albion Allen, brother contractors living on South Pleasant Street. They sold it in 1911 to Eugene Lyford who sold in 1921 to Lovelie and Maurice Greene, Pastor of the primarily African American Hope Congregational Church on Gaylord Street. The house is most closely associated with Margaret and William Jenkins. "Ma" and "Pa", as they were known, moved from North Carolina to Springfield, Massachusetts and then to Amherst where they bought this house in the mid 1920s. Mr. Jenkins worked for the Amherst College alumnus Calvin Coolidge during the time when he was governor of Massachusetts and president. Mr. Jenkins later worked as a chef for the Northampton Hotel while occupying the house into the late 1960s.

The **Whalen House at 212 Northampton Road (ca. 1920)** was occupied by an Irish family named Whalen. Hannah and Richard Whalen, a realtor, raised a family of five children who all lived here as young adults. The children's jobs included reporting for the Hampshire Daily Gazette, cleaning at Amherst College, keeping account books and assisting a local dentist. The reporter Ann Whalen was the owner by mid-century.

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Like its neighbors, the **Pierce-Stokes House at 215 Northampton Road (ca. 1912 MHC #320)** was built around 1912 by the builders and contractors George and Albion Allen. The first owner was Charles Pierce, a janitor at the Beta Theta Pi fraternity house at Amherst College. His son, Charles Jr., was a clerk at the post office and was living at home at the time. Ouida and Felix Stokes, a chauffeur, were the owners of this property in 1920. Descendants of their two children remain in residence today.

The **Buell-Peterson House at 221 Northampton Road (ca. 1912 MHC #321)** was also built around 1912 by the builders and contractors George and Albion Allen who lived on South Pleasant Street. The first owner was Charles Buell, a secretary at the Amherst Garage Company. Anne and Oscar Peterson, a carpenter, were the owners of this property in 1919. Mr. Peterson died around 1927 and Mrs. Peterson continued to live here until the late 1960s.

The **Robert Till House at 235 Northampton Road (ca. 1917 MHC #323)** was built around 1917, probably by the builders and contractors George and Albion Allen who lived on South Pleasant Street. The first owners were Martha and Robert E. Till, an African American chef. Mrs. Till was the daughter of Dwight "Doc" Newport who lived at 193 Northampton Road. The Tills occupied the house from its construction until approximately 1968. In 1943, Dwight Newport's grandson, Ralph was listed in directories as a resident. Martha and her son Frederick E. Till, also a chef, are listed as late 20th century owners.

Azubah Burghardt gave the land for construction of the **Lew-Ward House at 240 Northampton Road**, which was built in 1894. Mrs. Burghardt had lived in the Westside District since the 1860s and was 75 years old when her daughter, Mrs. Harriet (Hattie) Lew, and her husband, the veterinarian Dr. Wilbur Lew, built the house. Mrs. Lew, whose mother lived in the house for a time, transferred the house to Eleanor and Ralph Hayden Ward, a professional cellist. Mr. and Mrs. Ward lived here from around 1937 until at least 1968 as indicated by prior research in resident directories. They appear to have taken in a boarder named Walt Washington in the 1930s and 40s. The Wards' daughter Charlotte lives in Connecticut but continues to own the house.

The **Brooks House at 241 Northampton Road (ca. 1920)** was occupied by Charles Brooks in 1936. James F. Desmond lived here from 1937-1957; James Bettser and Arnold F. Brouillet were here in 1968. At **247 Northampton Road**, Amos Avery, from Cold Spring Harbor, New York, was listed in directories in 1942; the cobbler Stanley Matuszko in 1937-1968. The house at **250 Northampton Road** was the home of Adam Rabinski, a Lithuanian laborer from 1937-57. It was vacant for a time after 1968. At **255 Northampton Road**, the cobbler Stanley Matuszko lived from 1943-1952 and Bernard Wesolowski from 1957-1968. **271 Northampton Road** was the home of Eugene G. Rzczekewski in 1943, and salesman and music teacher Paul Waldron from 1952-1997.

Older houses on Baker Street, Snell Street and Hazel Avenue continued to be occupied by members of the African American community along with some working class Europeans. In many cases, the houses remained in the same family for generations. The Hawkins family, in residence at **33 Baker Street (MHC # 329)** since

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ca. 1870, remained in the house through 1949. The house at **34 Baker Street** was moved here in 1965 from 861 N. Pleasant Street, the site of the Emanuel Church. Josiah Hasbrook lived at **43 Baker Street (MHC # 330)** until 1915 and the house remained in the Hasbrook family into the 1980s. The owner of **52 Baker Street** from 1930 to 1957 was William Boluch, a B&M Railroad employee of Ukrainian descent. Owners of the "Professor" Charlie Thompson House at **55 Baker Street (MHC # 332)** after his departure in 1902 were the farmers Robert and Mary Hawthorne with Annie and Andrew Phillips, a B&M Railroad worker in 1930-1943. Ukrainian plumbers named Andrew and William Pleppo lived here from 1943-1957. Hills & Company hat factory worker John Tasker lived at **58 Baker Street** by 1930 according to resident directories. By 1937, the occupant was Michael M. Kabinos who remained until 1968. Mr. Kabinos was a laborer according to resident directories. Homeowners on Baker Street did little during the first half of the 20th century to alter the appearance of their houses. One exception is the occasional addition of single-story ells; houses at **52 and 58 Baker Street** display this type of alteration.

By 1924, the owner of **208 Snell Street** was Andro Oleksiw, a Ukrainian laborer who remained in residence until 1943. The next owner was Fred Allen, a janitor who lived here until 1997. In 1937, the house at **223 Snell Street** became the property of Gilbert Roberts, an African American Amherst High School graduate who, at the age of 102, still occupies the house. Mr. Roberts was a member of the town's Western Massachusetts League championship high school hockey team in 1914. He later became a jazz musician who played banjo and clarinet across the country, in Egypt and in Spain with Paul Carlyle's orchestra. He returned to Amherst to work as a custodian at Amherst College and played banjo two nights a week at local establishments into his 60s. Josephine Baker, Sydney Bechet, Louis Armstrong and Ernest Hemingway were some of his notable acquaintances.

Residents of **15 Hazel Avenue** in the early 20th century, according to research performed by local historians, were Amherst College employee Harold "Pop" and Tee Ward on the second floor. Harold's aunt Mary Bias was on the first floor. Mr. Ward was involved in the founding of the Hope Congregational Church on Gaylord Street and is said to have drawn Amherst's largest funeral gathering. Mary Bias worked in 1870 as a domestic servant for Ebenezer Hanks. Immigrant laborer Peter Stelinokas (also Stelmoksa) may have shared the house with the Wards. Subsequent occupants were the Ukrainian immigrant Andre (Andro) Oleksiw and later Edgar, Mae and Harold Ward by 1968. The house at **21 Hazel Avenue** was built in 1891 and it remains in the family after 108 years. Original owners Perry and Ellen Roberts had 8 children including Gilbert, who now (May, 1999) lives at **223 Snell Street**, and Charles who served as a captain in the infantry in WWI. Charles Roberts lived here until his death in 1947 at which time the property transferred to his son Gilbert and his wife Ida. Other occupants of the house include Gilbert's brothers Perry and Arthur, who lived here in the 1950s. Gilbert's relative Vivienne, the current occupant, assumed ownership in 1968.

Bessie Alexander Taylor bought the house at **29 Hazel Avenue** in 1930 from Bessie's father George Davis, and occupied it until sometime after 1968. Mason Davis may have been a boarder from 1937-43, as he is indicated by prior research to be a resident at that time. Alexander Taylor owned a paint store called Amity Decorating Company at the corner of Amity and North Pleasant Streets, which burned in the 1920s. Mrs. Taylor was born

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in the house, became a registered nurse and ultimately worked at Kane's Nursing Home on Lessey Street. She also served as secretary to the Hope Congregational Church on Gaylord Street. Mrs. Taylor lived to the age of 104 and, as oldest resident, was a recipient of Amherst's gold-headed cane award in 1983. **Thirty-five Hazel Avenue** was the home of the African American Lord family from 1918 until 1943. Joseph Lord worked as a mason in the early 20th century while his wife Annie was a laundress employed by Amherst College. Mrs. Lord lived here alone from 1937 until after 1943, when the house was transferred to Edward Coles. Charles and Sarah Finnemore sold the house at **39 Hazel Avenue** to Frederick Newport in 1916, who lived here until 1938 when he sold it to the Ernest H. and Mable Bias. Mr. Bias worked for T.L. Paige Livery on Amity Street as a truckman and his son Charles was a chef at the Amherst House Hotel. **Forty-three Hazel Avenue** was occupied in 1912 by George Cooley, whose descendants continue to occupy the house.

Conclusion

The Westside district fulfils National Register criterion A by constituting an area contributing to our understanding of the growth and development of a working-class neighborhood from the second half of the 19th century through the 20th century. Within this diverse neighborhood, many residents historically held employment in local trades and businesses, as well as at Amherst College and in the homes of college professors.

During this period, Westside holds Amherst's most clear and lasting associations with many of the town's leading Black citizens. The period of significance for the Westside district spans the period during which Black residents progressed from being former slaves to being leading citizens of society as a whole. Many moved to Amherst from the South in order to escape slavery and unfair treatment after Emancipation. It was their hope that in the North, they could encounter less opposition to social advancement and become a part of a community at large. This they found while living in the Westside neighborhood. During this same period, Eastern European and Irish immigrants also settled in the Westside neighborhood, and quickly became active contributors to the community's economy and society as well.

The Westside district is also significant under Criterion C because its architectural resources embody characteristics of 19th and early 20th century construction methods and design elements shared by more than two dozen of its buildings. The modest Victorian Eclectic houses on Snell and Baker Streets, which share a common floorplan and roof shape, represent a locally common house type. These properties define a neighborhood that has been occupied by a diverse community for over 130 years. The Colonial Revival-style houses on Northampton Road are a middle-class expression of suburban architecture, seen in houses that served as home to many of the district's diverse residents both Black and Caucasian.

In recent years, a walking tour of African American Historical Sites in Amherst MA (put together by town residents with the assistance of the Amherst History Museum and the Amherst Chamber of Commerce), has heightened awareness of the neighborhood and this important part of Amherst's history.

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Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of prehistoric occupation in Amherst are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Prehistoric sites in this area may contain information that helps researchers better understand how Native Americans adapted to life in a riverine environment, especially in interior tributary regions of major drainages. Information might also be present at sites to help understand the dynamics of Native trade, especially the movement of goods along the east/west routes of tributaries of the Connecticut River, an important north/south transportation corridor. Important evidence relating to the analysis of lithic technologies, ceramics and development of horticulture may also be present.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on the social, cultural and economic characteristics responsible for the growth of an ethnic working class neighborhood in Amherst from the 19th through 20th centuries. Archaeological evidence of settlement in the district dating to the 18th century may be present, however, these patterns have yet to be demonstrated. Most of the Westside District's significance results from its settlement as home, and in the case of farming residents, workplace to locally significant African American residents. Other ethnic groups also played an important role in the district's history, especially at later dates. However, the historical significance of the district is largely due to its occupation by African Americans. Any evidence of agricultural activities that predated actual settlement of the district could be significant by providing examples of agricultural growth and development in Amherst's early settlement. Archaeological evidence might be the only source of information for these activities. Evidence may also exist indicating African Americans played an important role in these early agricultural activities either as slaves or as free person farmers. Potential structural evidence of 18th and 19th century settlement of the district by African Americans could also highly significant in the district's nomination. Nineteenth and Twentieth century historical records document the importance of the Westside District as a locus of settlement for African Americans for over 100 years. Archaeological evidence of earlier settlement might exist that was not documented in historical records of the time. Structural evidence from earlier African American sites combined with the detailed analysis of occupational related features can also be used to test the validity of commonly held theories of residence patterns in the early African American Community. Early Black residence with whites may be based on known sites and documented families or residences. Archaeological sites may exist from 18th and early 19th centuries that expand our knowledge of African American settlement history introduce new information to commonly held beliefs. Structural evidence from residences, outbuildings and the detailed analysis of occupational related features may also contain information indicating cultural change in the Black community as residents progressed from former slaves to free citizens and the leading members of society as a whole. This information may indicate evidence of cultural traits common to the Black community in the American South or from West Africa. Cultural traits could include mortuary customs, diet, agricultural techniques and family structure. This type of ethnicity could also be common to other ethnic groups in the district and town.

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(end)

Westside HD
Name of Property

Hampshire, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property c. 40 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 18 703090 4693380
Zone Easting Northing

2. 18 703500 4693570
Zone Easting Northing

3. 18 703610 4693370
Zone Easting Northing

4. 18 703460 4693210
Zone Easting Northing

x 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 Sanford Johnson, preservation consultant; with Betsy Friedberg, MHC, NR Director

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date June 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 multiple

street & number telephone

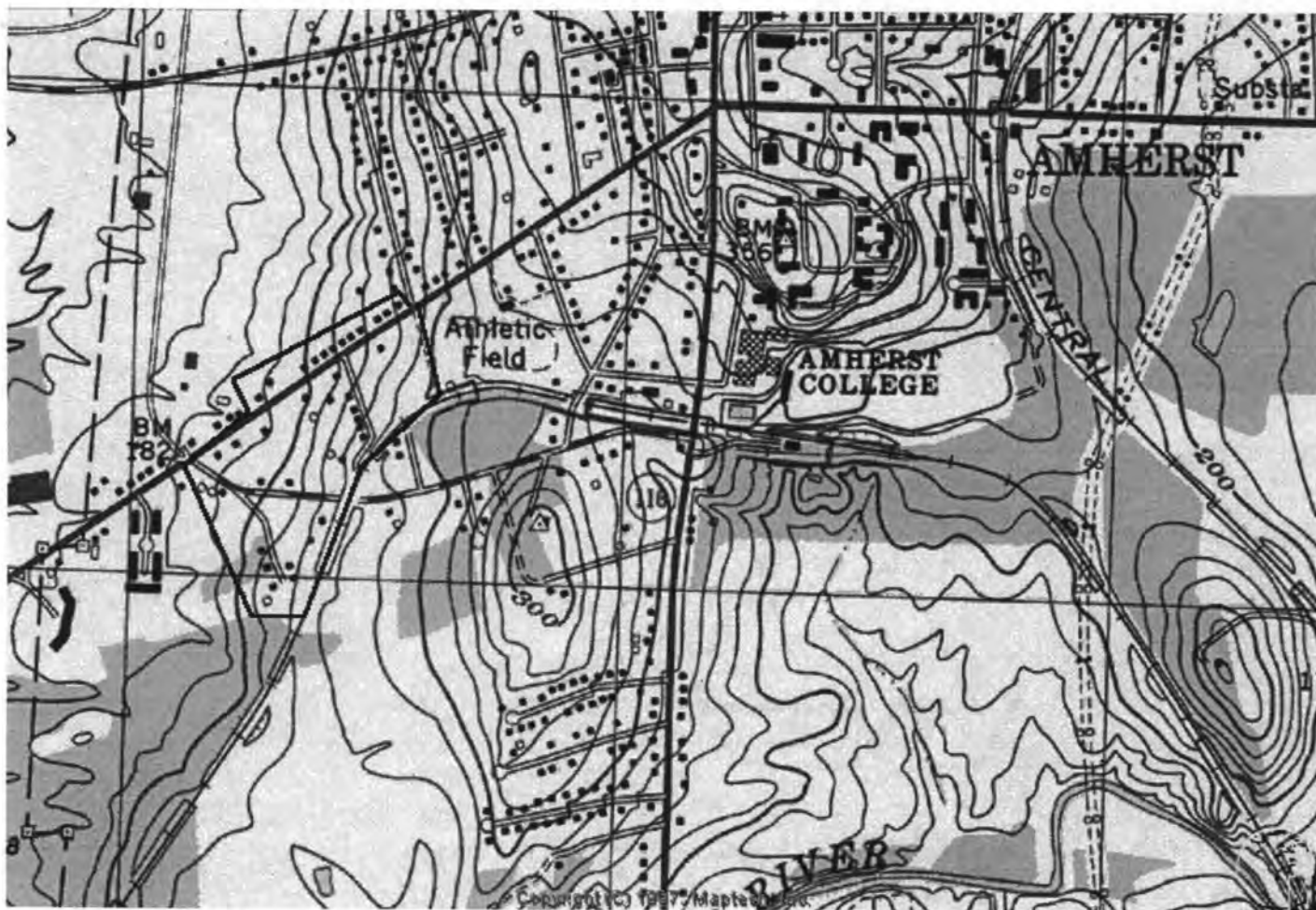
city or town state zip code

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.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:
see USGS map

Boundary Justification

The Westside Historic District is the residential and agricultural neighborhood historically associated with Amherst's African American population. Black ownership and occupancy of a large percentage of the homes began in the 1860s and continues in the district today. While members of other ethnic groups have occupied homes in the district, the 130 years of African American influence on the buildings and land in Westside has been the dominant factor in their development. The density and locations of intact resources further define the boundaries of the district.

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UTM Coordinates:

Vertex	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	0703090	4693376
2	18	0703500	4693569
3	18	0703613	4693369
4	18	0703465	4693214
5	18	0703340	4692880
6	18	0703271	4692889
7	18	0703108	4693223
8	18	0703243	4693327

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PHOTOGRAPHS

8 x 10" Taken by Sanford Johnson (June 1999)
Negatives at Amherst Planning Department

1. Baker Street (facing S)
2. 43 Hazel Avenue (facing E)
3. Northampton Road (facing N)
4. Northampton Road (facing E)
5. Northampton Road (facing E)
6. 240 Northampton Road (facing S)

4 x 6" Taken by Sanford Johnson (various dates)
Negatives at Amherst Planning Department

7. Baker Street (facing N) (June 1999)
8. 34 Baker Street (facing E) (December 1998)
9. 52 Baker Street (facing E) (December 1998)
10. 58 Baker Street (facing E) (December 1998)
11. Hazel Avenue (facing N) (June 1999)
12. 43 Hazel Avenue (facing W) (June 1999)
13. 43 Hazel Avenue, field and outbuildings (facing N) (June 1999)
14. 203 Northampton Road (facing N) (June 1999)
15. 221 Northampton Road (facing N) (June 1999)
16. 227 Northampton Road (facing N) (June 1999)
17. 260 Northampton Road (facing S) (December 1998)
18. 208 Snell Street (facing W) (December 1998)
19. 208 Snell Street, rear (facing W) (December 1998)
20. 223 Snell Street (facing SE) (December 1998)
21. 236 Snell Street (facing E) (December 1998)

(end)

**Amherst Westside Historic District
Amherst (Hampshire Co.), Mass.
District Data Sheet**

Assessor's #	Address	Property Name	Date	Style	Status
13D 25	33 Baker Street	Hawkins House	c.1869	No Style	C/B
13D 46	34 Baker Street	Larned House	c.1900	Cape	C/B
13D 24	43 Baker Street	Hasbrook House	c.1897	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 38	52 Baker Street		c.1870	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 23	55 Baker Street	Barn #1	c.1870	No Style	C/B
13D 23	55 Baker Street	Charles Thompson House	c.1870	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 23	55 Baker Street	Barn #2	c.1870	No Style	C/B
13D 39	58 Baker Street	Shed	c.1900	No Style	C/B
13D 39	58 Baker Street		c.1870	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 32	15 Hazel Avenue	Ward House #2	c.1893	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 33	21 Hazel Avenue	Perry Roberts House	c.1891	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 33	21 Hazel Avenue	Garage	c.1930	Colonial Rev.	C/B
14C 10	29 Hazel Avenue	Garage	c.1930	No Style	C/B
14C 10	29 Hazel Avenue	Davis/Taylor House	c.1891	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
14C 11	35 Hazel Avenue	Lord House	c.1910	No Style	C/B
14C 12	39 Hazel Avenue	Charles Bias House	c.1870	No Style	C/B
14C 43	43 Hazel Avenue	Cooley House	c.1910	No Style	C/B
14C 43	43 Hazel Avenue	Barn	c.1900	No Style	C/B
14C 43	43 Hazel Avenue	Outbuilding	c.1900	No Style	C/B
14C 13	Northampton Road	Farm field	c.1870	N/A	C/Si
14C 6	193 Northampton Road	Dwight Newport House	c.1910	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
14C 5	199 Northampton Road	Edward Newport House	c.1910	Vict.Eclectic	C/B

**Amherst Westside Historic District
Amherst (Hampshire Co.), Mass.
District Data Sheet**

Assessor's #	Address	Property Name	Date	Style	Status
14C 4	203 Northampton Road	William Jenkins House	c.1910	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
14C 4	203 Northampton Road	Shed	c.1900	No Style	C/B
14C 13	212 Northampton Road	Richard Whalen House	c.1920	Craftsman	C/B
14C 13	212 Northampton Road	Garage	c.1950	No Style	NC/B
14C 3	215 Northampton Road		c.1912	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
14C 3	215 Northampton Road	Garage	c.1930	No Style	C/B
14C 2	221 Northampton Road		c.1912	No Style	C/B
14C 2	221 Northampton Road	Garage	c.1930	No Style	C/B
14C 1	227 Northampton Road	Garage	c.1930	No Style	C/B
14C 1	227 Northampton Road	House	c.1900	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 16	235 Northampton Road	Robert E. Till House	c.1917	Colonial Rev.	C/B
13D 31	240 Northampton Road	Ralph H. Ward House	c.1894	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 15	241 Northampton Road	Charles A. Brooks House	c.1920	Colonial Rev.	C/B
13D 14	247 Northampton Road	Amos Avery House	c.1920	English Rev.	C/B
13D 30	250 Northampton Road	Adam Rabinski House	c.1920	Cape Cod	C/B
13D 13	255 Northampton Road	Stanley E. Matuszko House	c.1920	Bungalow	C/B
13D 29	260 Northampton Road		c.1870	Italianate	C/B
13D 12	263 Northampton Road	Anthony M. Rowell House	c.1955	English Rev.	NC/B
13D 11	271 Northampton Road		c.1900	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 28	290 Northampton Road		c.1950	English Rev.	NC/B
13D 27	306 Northampton Road		c.1890	No Style	C/B
13D 26	324 Northampton Road		c.1900	No Style	C/B

Page 2 of 3
Amherst Westside Historic District
Amherst (Hampshire Co.), Mass.
District Data Sheet

Assessor's #	Address	Property Name	Date	Style	Status
13D 36	208 Snell Street	House	c.1890	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 36	208 Snell Street	Barn	c.1900	No Style	C/B
13D 36	208 Snell Street	Outbuilding	c.1900	No Style	C/B
13D 35	223 Snell Street		c.1890	Vict.Eclectic	C/B
13D 36	236 Snell Street	House	c.1990s		NC/B
13D 44	239 Snell Street		c.1950	Cape Cod	NC/B

TOTALS

	C	N/C
Buildings	44	5
Sites	1	
	45	5

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Westside Historic District

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Hampshire

DATE RECEIVED: 6/12/00 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/26/00
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/12/00 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/27/00
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 00000793

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: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Historically and architecturally significant 19th
century working class residential neighborhood*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A/C

REVIEWER Patrick Anderson

DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 7/25/00

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



Westside District
Amherst Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/99
Baker Street South
Mass @ Planning Dept



Westside District
Amherst, Hampshire Co, Mass
Sanford Johnson 6/99
43 Hazel Ave East
negs. @ planning Dept.



Westside District North
Amherst Hampshire Co. Mass
Sanford Johnson 6/99
Northampton Rd
Mass St Planning Dept



Westside District
Amherst Hampshire Co. Mass
Sanford Johnson 6/99
Northampton Rd East
Mass at Planning Dept.



West side District
Amherst Hampshire co. MASS
Sanford Johnson 6/99
Northampton Rd. East
negs @ Planning Dept



Westside District 240 Northampton Rd
Amherst. Hampshire Co. MA.

Sanford Johnson 6/99 still
negs @ planning dept



Baker st. North view
westside district
Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/99

(7)



Westside District

Hampshire Co

Amherst MA

Sanford Johnson

12/98 E 45

34 Baker

⑧



Westside District

Hampshire Co.

Amherst, MA

Sanford Johnson

12/98 E #43

52 Baker st

⑨



Westside District
Hampshire Co
Amherst MA

Sanford Johnson

12/98 E 44

58 Baker
10)



Hazel Ave
Westside District
Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/99
North



43 Hazel Ave
Westside District
Hampshire Co MA
Sanford Johnson 6/51
West



Field, outbldgs at 43 Hazel
Westside District
Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/99



203 Northampton Rd North
Westside district
Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/99



221 Northampton Rd North
Westside District
Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/97



227 Northampton Rd North
Westside District
Hampshire Co. MA
Sanford Johnson 6/99

(16)



Westside District
Hampshire Co
Amherst, MA
Sanford Johnson

12/98 5 50

(17)
260 Northampton



Westside District
Hampshire Co
Amherst MA
Sanford Johnson
12/98 W 48
208 Swell



Westside District
Hampshire Co
Amherst MA
Sanford Johnson
12/98 W 49
(19)
208 Sued, rear



Westside District
Hampshire Co
Amherst MA
Sanford Johnson
12/98 SE 46

222 Snell
(20)



Westside District
Hampshire Co
Amherst MA
Sanford Johnson

²²³
~~225~~ Snell St
Middle ground

43 HAZEL
Background

12/98 E #41

236 Snell
~~Baker~~ St
(2)

Westside District
Amherst
Hampshire Co. Mass

1) 0703090
4693396
2) 0703350
4693569
3) 0703613
4693369
4) 0703465
4693214
5) 0703340
4692880
6) 0703271
4692889
7) 0703108
4693223
8) 0703243
4693227



Feet	Meters
1 3048	
2 6096	
3 9144	
4 12192	
5 15240	
6 18288	
7 21336	
8 24384	
9 27432	
10 30480	

To convert feet to meters
multiply by 3048
To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

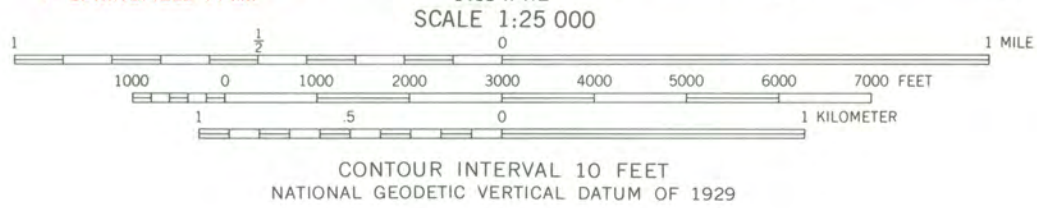


Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1935. Revised 1964
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 18

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1976 and other source data. This information
not field checked. Map edited 1979

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,
move the projection lines 5 meters south and
38 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

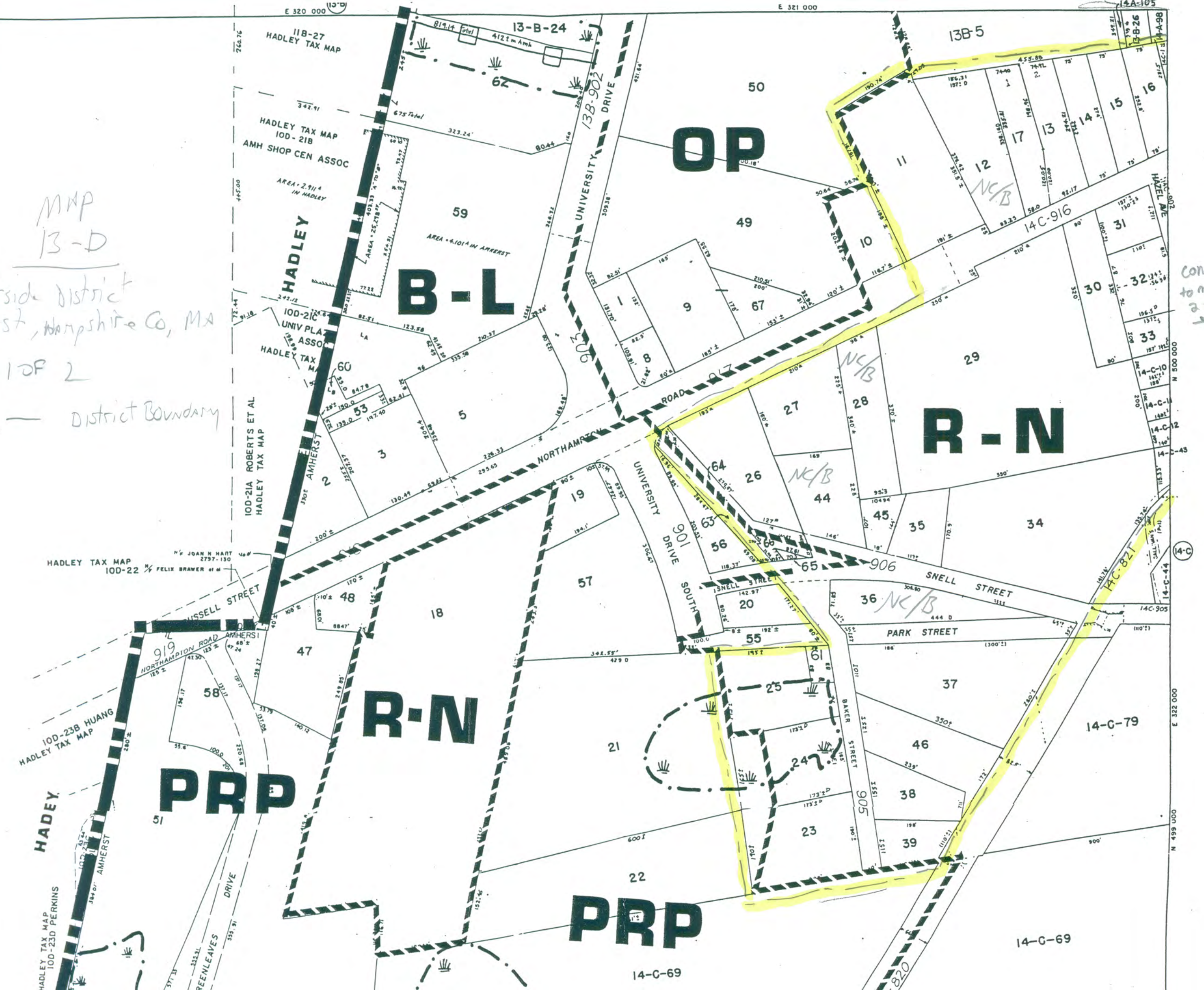
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

MT. HOLYOKE, MASS.
42072-C5-TF-025

1964
PHOTOREVISED 1979
DMA 6468 1 SE-SERIES V814



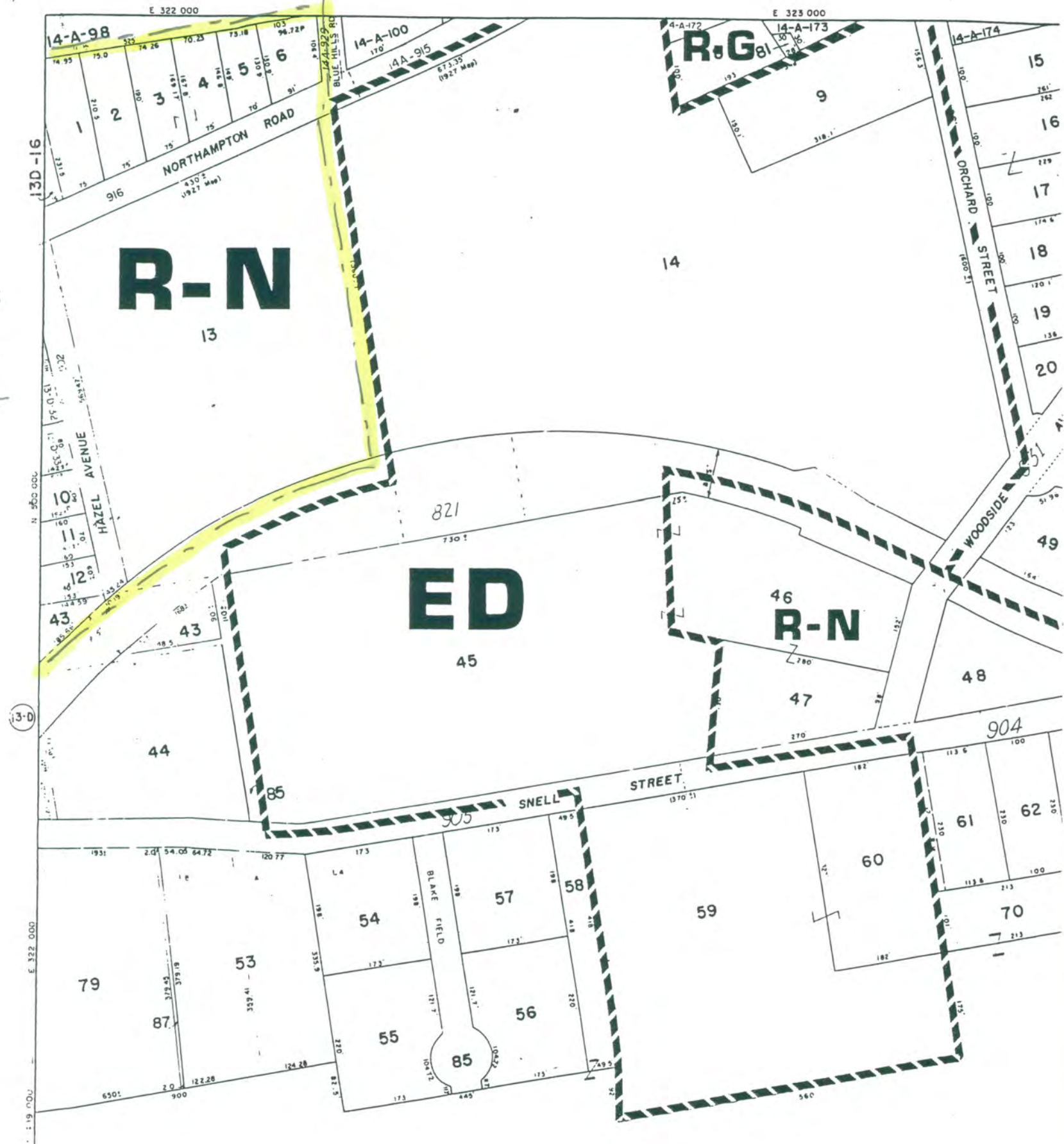
MWP
13-D
Westside District
Amherst, Hampshire Co, MA
Mwp 10P 2
District Boundary



MAP 14

Westside District,
Hampshire Co. MA
sketch
map 2 of 2

connects
to
map 1
←



Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

February 10, 2000

RECEIVED

FEB 18 2000

MASS. HIST. COMM.

notanized
objection

BF
NR
file

Dear State Historic Preservation Officer McDonough:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Westside historical district as presented at the February 8, 2000 Massachusetts Historical Commission meeting in Amherst, MA. I am opposed to this proposal for reasons which include: the degree of incomplete and inaccurate representation of historical significance; the elimination and negation of the importance of my personal heritage and the heritage of other ethnic groups in this area; and the lack of advanced notification concerning public meetings.

My compulsion to write this letter is to ensure the proposal is corrected to accurately reflect the historical significance of the area by returning the focus to the individual homes referenced in the original letter of intent. Highlights of my opposition include:

Inaccurate representation of historical significance

- The original letter of intent identified 12 individual homes consisting of a total of 5.27 acres.
- The current proposed area has been expanded to include 34 homes and 40 acres.
- The increase to the current proposed district from the original letter of intent was unknown to most, if not all, of the residents in the current proposed district.

Incomplete account of historical ethnic and hereditary significance

- The original letter of intent requested the registration of 12 individual homes for their historical significance related to African American families.
- The current proposal was developed under the guidelines of the original letter of intent, identifying the historical significance of African American families only.
- Ethnic groups of Eastern European and other descent were briefly mentioned but were not acknowledged for their significance or contribution in the district.
- My heredity and family connection, as well as other families, related to the length of association to properties other than African American, were not identified or recognized as significant in the proposed area.

Limited public meeting notification

- Several residents in the current expanded district did not receive notification relating to the proposed district or the public meeting held on December 7, 1998.
- Residents who did receive notification for the December 7th meeting live in or border properties of the original 12 individual homes.
- Most of the residents did not learn of the increased study area until the February 8, 2000 public meeting. As a result very little time is available to submit opposition to the proposal.

Inaccurate representation of historical significance

On September 15, 1996, Dorothy and Dudley Bridges, Sr. submitted a letter of intent to the National Historical Commission (c/o the Amherst Historical Commission), Attention Donald Frizzle, to request the registration of 15 homes as historical sites. Twelve of these homes are located in the boundaries of the now proposed Westside Historical District. The desire of the original letter of intent requested 'that individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'.

At some point during the development process the decision was made to increase the number of homes and acreage in the proposed historic district beyond the 12 individual homes referenced in the original letter of intent. This decision has resulted in a large degree of incomplete and inaccurate information and the inclusion of non-contributing structures into the proposal - leading one to conclude there is an attempt to justify historical significance to suit the needs of the expanded area.

The cumulative land area associated with the 12 homes identified in the original letter of intent equals 5.27 acres. The proposed Westside district consists of 34 homes and land area of approximately 40 acres. This proposal, as written, overstates the significance of the original request by 659% in land area, and 183% for homes.

While attempting to unite the proposed area, the use of broad descriptors to identify the one connecting thread each structure possesses (i.e. date of construction) undermines the importance and desire of the original request - to identify and record individual residential dwellings owned or occupied by African Americans and the histories of these homes.

Incomplete account of historical ethnic and hereditary significance

I am proud of my heritage and dedicated to ensure that it is reflected accurately. Not only does this proposal present inaccurate information concerning my family's residence at 260 Northampton Road, there was no reasonable attempt to present any of our history at all. Six homes on Northampton Road were mentioned in one paragraph, not one receiving even moderate historical consideration. However, keeping consistent with the original request, all properties identified as African American owned or occupied were researched in depth and described in detail concerning the individual or families residing there.

I am the fifth generation of my family to own or occupy the property known as 260 Northampton Road, this occupancy remains unbroken for over 120 years. My house was constructed in the early 1870's by a family named McCarthey or McCarty. A couple named John and Louisa McCarty owned the property until the 1920's, at which time they sold the property to Mary Bowler. Ms. Bowler sold the property to my Grandparents, Maurice and Suzanne Garvey in the early 1950's. The Garvey's owned and occupied the property until late 1997, at which time the property was bought by Michael and Kimberley Como. Very few families in this area can state that their homes have been owned by family members for over 120 years or have the family lineage connecting them to their home as my family represents to our house.

Inclusion of 260 Northampton Road in this proposal does not represent the historical significance and heritage of the family connected to this residence. The connection to this proposed district is based solely on the date of construction of the house.

Limited public meeting notification

Members of the Amherst Historical Commission indicate they took appropriate actions concerning advanced notification for the first public meeting for the proposed Westside historic district held on December 7, 1998. While I can not dispute their claim, I did not receive the mailing announcing this public meeting. The same holds true for several of my neighbors.

The only residents who have confirmed receiving notification for the December 7, 1998 public meeting are property owners associated with the 12 houses requested in the original letter of intent. At some point between receipt of the original letter of intent in September, 1996, and the February 8, 2000 public meeting, the size of the study area was increased. This increase was unknown to most, if not all, of the residents in the current proposed district.

I believe the Amherst Historical Commission could benefit by reviewing their notification process and incorporating the use of registered mail, return receipt, when notifying residents of critical issues that will alter the look or atmosphere of their neighborhood.

Conclusion

If the information contained in this proposal is not complete and historically accurate, and many structures and ethnic classes are not represented as historically significant, how is this district representing history?

The area described in the current proposal only serves to overstate the historical significance of the individual houses identified in the original letter of intent, and lessens the significance of those homes and associated heritage. Any modifications to include other ethnic histories or architectural structures to this proposal will only serve to reduce the importance originally requested by Mr. and Mrs. Bridges concerning the history and significance of the African American families in the area.

Allowing this proposal to remain dedicated to the individual houses listed in the original letter of intent; three houses on Baker Street, five houses on Hazel Avenue, three houses on Northampton Road, and one house on Snell Street, unquestionably supports the research and recognition of the original intention.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Como, Resident and owner
260 Northampton Road
Amherst, MA 01002

cc: Donald Frizzle, Chairman, Amherst Historical Commission
Sanford Johnson, Preservation Consultant
Philip Bergen, Massachusetts Historical Commission
Linda Faye, Amherst Historical Commission
Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges, Amherst Residents

Subscribed and sworn / affirmed to before me,
in my presence, this 12 day of Feb 2000,
a Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth
of Massachusetts.



MY COMMISSION EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 9, 2005

Paul W. Waldron
271 Northampton Road
Amherst, MA 01002

RECEIVED

MAR 06 2000

MASS. HIST. COMM

March 3, 2000

Judith B. McDonough
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Office
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Ms. McDonough:

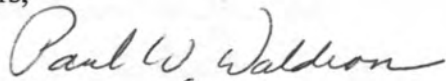
As senior member of the Waldron Family Trust, which owns the property at 271 Northampton Road, I declare that we respectfully object to the property's inclusion in the proposed Westside Historic District in Amherst.

The reasons are as follows:

1. The property is on the western edge of the proposed district and is not relevant to the main thrust of the proposal.
2. This western fringe has already been compromised by the presence of a nursing home, a hospital satellite building, and a large assisted-care facility (The Arbors)—all of which abut it.
3. The draft copy of this proposal contains at least three significant errors in the history of the properties at 260, 263, and 271 Northampton Road.

We and our neighbors, Michael Como (260) and Nancy Kowal Russell (263) join in requesting *exclusion* from the proposed district.

Sincerely yours,



Paul W. Waldron

Harriet J. Como
my commission expires 8/19/05

BF
RECEIVED

MAR 08 2000

MASS. HIST. COMM

March 3, 2000

Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Ms. McDonough:

As the property owner of 263 Northampton Road, Amherst, I am strongly opposed to the current proposal of the Westside Historic District as written.

Here are just a few of my oppositions:

1. The inaccuracies related to the historical significance of all homes especially family heritages for all peoples involved. My heritage is very important to me but the Amherst Historical Society has completely negated that importance. Apparently some of us do not have equal rights.
2. Many of us did not receive notification of this proposed intent or the expanded version that includes homes such as mine. Notification after the fact seems to compromise what the Amherst Historical Society represents. I received one notice regarding the meeting of February 8, 2000 dated January 21, 2000. This is unacceptable.
3. The research was originally intended for the 12 individual homes related expressly to African American families – leave it as it was originally intended!

As the proposal is presently written, I decline the inclusion into the Westside Historic District and the National Register. I am

Sincerely yours,



Nancy K. Russell
366 River Drive
Hadley, MA 01035

cc: Linda Faye, Amherst Historical Commission

March 3, 2000

Hampshire, ss

Then personally appeared the above-named, Nancy K. Russell, and acknowledged this to be her free act and deed before me.


Janet B. Smead, Notary

My commission expires September 4, 2003

Paul Waldron
271 Northampton Road
Amherst, MA 01002

Amherst Westside 271

RECEIVED BF

APR 12 2000

MASS. HIST. COMM

April 10, 2000

Judith B. McDonough
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

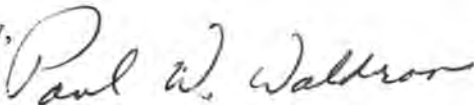
Dear Ms. McDonough:

Thank you for the response to my earlier letter. A month after the March 8th Commission meeting and subsequent neighborhood talks, I would like to summarize my objection to several aspects of the proposed Westside Historic District in Amherst.

1. Off the mark: The original concept, which we all supported, has been diluted and obscured by the enlargement made by representatives of the State Commission.
2. Lack of due process: This enlargement occurred because the state representatives were out of touch with the Amherst people concerned, and then did not keep them informed.
3. Careless research: The supposed research contains multiple errors such as
 - a) Mr. Anthony Kowal of 263 Northampton Road became Anthony M. Rowell.
 - b) Mr. Maurice Garvey of 260 Northampton Road was not a mailman. It was another Garvey.
 - c) Mr. Enio Feliciotti never owned the house at 271 Northampton Road.
4. Too large: The historical interest of the expanded area is negligible—limited both by lack of distinctive architecture and the proximity of commercial buildings.

I am sending similar letters to others at the local, state, and federal levels. It would certainly be unfortunate to see the proposal accepted in its present form.

Sincerely,



Paul W. Waldron

Copies: Sen. John Olver
Sen. Stanley Rosenberg
Dudley Bridges
Betsey Friedberg

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

April 18, 2000

BF
WJM
PB

RECEIVED

APR 19 2000

MASS. HIST. COMM

Dear Ms. Friedberg:

On behalf of many residents currently residing in the recently nominated Westside Historic District in Amherst, Massachusetts, I am submitting this letter and the attached notarized requests to petition the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC) to return the focus of the proposed Westside Historic District back to the 12 individual homes identified in the original letter of intent, received by the Amherst Historic Commission in September, 1996.

I received a letter from the MHC dated March 10, 2000, signed by Judith McDonough, indicating that the proposal would remain open for 45 days to "accept amplifications on information presented in the nomination". After receiving this letter, several neighbors and I began contacting homeowners in our neighborhood to discuss the proposal and determine their knowledge of the proposed district. To our shock we learned the following:

- Initial notification concerning this nomination, dated May 15, 1997, and a follow-up mailing dated November 18, 1998, appear to have been limited to residents of the original 12 homes.
- Notification to all residents concerning the proposal, including the expanded district, was not distributed until January 21, 2000.
- Less than half of the residents in the neighborhood knew the proposal existed.
- Those who knew the proposal existed knew only of the intent to recognize the homes owned or occupied by African American families.
- Not one resident knew the proposal had expanded from these original 12 homes to the current number of 34 homes.
- Not all residents received the March 10, 2000 letter mentioned above.

The actions taken by the Historical Commission place a question of doubt in the minds of several residents of the true representation of historical significance for this area. Many residents have expressed their concern of two proposals contained in one nomination. All residents that we have spoken with support the original request and feel the direction of this recognition should be honored. In addition, we feel the inclusion of the additional 22 homes dilutes the historical significance of the African American heritage.

In the opinion of several residents, the march 10, 2000 letter sent out by the MHC attempting to improve the accuracy of the proposal by stating that homeowners may submit information on the history of their family or home is unacceptable. After contacting the MHC, I am unaware of any information being submitted by homeowners, as of this writing. A large percentage of the homes are occupied by individuals or families who have little or no historical connection with the neighborhood, and very few homes have family connections lasting more than a decade.

The attached notarized letters from residents of 15 of the 22 homes not listed on the original letter of intent, plus a notarized letter from one of the original 12 homes, express our support for the recognition of the original request, and indicate our desire to be removed from the proposal. In addition, several other residents have expressed their support for this direction but have not yet returned their notarized letter.

In summary, we have followed this proposal since being notified in late January, 2000. Most of the residents in our community support recognition for the original request as requested in the letter of intent received by the Town of Amherst in September, 1996. The lack of notification and inaccurate information associated with the additional 22 homes has raised concern among many of the homeowners. Our request is that the proposed Westside Historic District nomination be returned back to the focus of the original request as stated in the original letter of intent requesting that "12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African Americans".

Respectfully submitted,



Michael A. Como
Enclosures

Signed by Michael A. Como
in my presence on April 18, 2000

Helene A. Wegryz
Notary Public

cc: William F. Galvin
Thomas P. McCullough
Dr. Adelaide M. Cromwell
Carol Nelson
Louis Tucker
Marcus A. McCorison
Michael Maresco
Robert Ebersole
Kelly Sinclair
Elizabeth Stone
Lowell A. Warren, Jr.
Patrice Kish
James Hudson Crissman
Rose-Marie Glen
Barbara Luedtke
Charles Sullivan
David Simmons
Franci Gould

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
MAY 13, 2005

We the undersigned, petition the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in our neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. Our appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Name	Address	Date
Michael A. Conno	260 Northampton Road	03/22/2000
May H. Spence	324 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Robert J. Spence	290 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Spence	290 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Lin Conno	260 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Paul W. Waldron	271 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Martha J. Waldron	271 Northampton Rd.	3/23/00
Katherine P. White	306 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Ugary A. Shea	306 Northampton Rd.	3/23/00
Sahabdeen	277 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Faweeda Sahabdeen	277 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Catherine M. Peterson	221 Northampton Rd.	3/25/00
Yvonne J. Jones	236 SNEEL ST Northampton	3/25/00
Ruth E. Allen	209 Snell St	3/25/00
Spencer Jones	239 Snell St.	3/26/00
John J. Minto	52 Baker St	3.27.00

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Ruth E Allen Date: 3/28/00

Address: 208 Snell St. Amherst Ma, 01002

AS SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME ON March 28, 2000.

Sandra J. Burgess
SANDRA J. BURGESS
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES JANUARY 6, 2006

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Ruth E Allen Date: 7/28/00

Address: 208 Smeal St Amherst Ma, 01002

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Catherine M. Peterson Date: March 27, 2000

Address: 221 Northampton Rd. Amherst, Ma. 01002-2546

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

HAMPSHIRE, SS.

MARCH 27, 2000

Then personally appeared the above-named CATHERINE M. PETERSON and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be her free act and deed, before me.

My Commission Expires: September 8, 2006

Kimberly R. Sargent
KIMBERLY R. SARGENT
Notary Public

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Ann Spence Date: 3-27-00

Address: 324 NORTHAMPTON RD
597 EAST LEVERETT RD AMHERST

Rosemary A. Fern
Comm. exp. Oct. 20, 2006

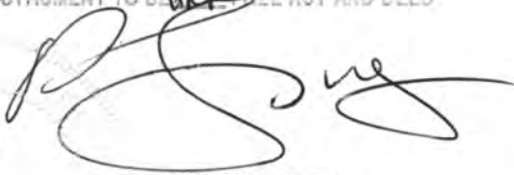
I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Katherine R. White Date: 3/30/2000

Address: 306 Northampton Rd., Amherst, MA

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE, ss.
DATE March 30th 2000
THEN PERSONALLY APPEARED THE ABOVE NAMED
Katherine White
BEFORE ME AND ACKNOWLEDGED THE FOREGOING
INSTRUMENT TO BE HER FREE ACT AND DEED.



BRIAN O'LEARY
Notary Public, Massachusetts
My Commission Expires May 6, 2005

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Veronica C. Robinski Date: April 6, 2000
21 Campus Road Apt. 23
Address: Hadley, Ma 01035-3532

Marvin J. Spence
Notary Public
S.S. Hampshire
338 College Street
Amherst, Mass. 01002

4/6/00

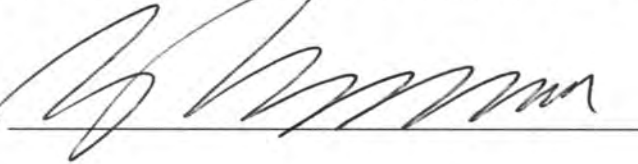
Amor memo

My commission expires January 24, 2003.

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:



Date: 3-27-2000

Address:

239 Snell St. Amherst MA 01002

Chester - Notary

My commission expires June 8, 2001

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

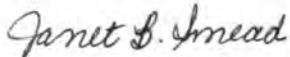
Submitted by:  Date: 3/30/00

Address: 263 Northampton Road, Amherst, MA

March 30, 2000

Hampshire, ss

Then personally appeared, the above-named, Nancy K. Russell, and acknowledged this to be her free act and deed before me.



Janet B. Smead, Notary

My commission expires September 4, 2003

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:

Thomas J. Norton

Date:

3.29.00

Address:

52 Baker St.

Linda A. Fontaine

March 29, 2000

LINDA A. FONTAINE

Notary Public

My Commission Expires March 31, 2000

01213

John S. Como



Mike Como

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Mrs. A. Gons Date: April 6, 2000

Address: 260 Northampton Road

My commission expires January 24, 2003.

4/6/00

Marvin J. Spence
Marvin J. Spence
Notary Public
S.S. Hampshire
338 College Street
Amherst, Mass. 01002

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Paul W. Waldron Date: April 6, 2000

SANDRA P. SMITH
Notary Public

Address: 271 Northampton Rd Amherst MA 01002

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Notary Public
My Commission Expires July 30, 2004
Date: 4/6/00
I have personally appeared the above named
PAUL W. WALDRON
and acknowledged the foregoing instrument
as his free act and deed before me.
Sandra P. Smith

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Jean H. French Date: 4/6/2000

Address: 137 PACKANOVILLE RD PELHAM MA 01002

Sworn before me April 6, 2000

Valerie J. Faith
Valerie J. Faith

Valerie J. Faith
NOTARY PUBLIC
My commission expires Feb. 9, 2007

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: _____

THAWOOD S. SAHABDEEN.

Date: _____

3/24/00

Address: _____

277, NORTHAMPTON RD, AMHERST MA 01002

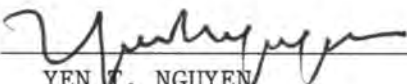
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Hampshire, S.S. Date 3/24/00
Then personally appeared the above named
THAWOOD S. SAHABDEEN
and acknowledged the foregoing instrument
to be his/her act and deed before me
REBECCA A. HOWCROFT, Notary Public
My Commission Expires December 4, 2003

Rebecca A. Howcroft

236 SNELL
NOT IN DISTRICT
INCORRECT. 236
SNELL IS NEW
CONSTRUCTION AND
IS WITHIN
DISTRICT
NB

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:  Date: 3/27/00
YEN T. NGUYEN

Address: 236 SNELL STREET, AMHERST, MA 01002

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

HAMPSHIRE, SS.

MARCH 27, 2000

Then personally appeared the above-named YEN T. NGUYEN and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be her free act and deed, before me,

My Commission Expires: November 25, 2005


KELLY A. RICHEY
Notary Public

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

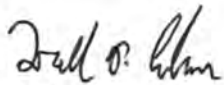
Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Cooby Robinson Hospital Date: 03/24/00
by Ernest M. Margeson Director of Facilities

Address: 313 Northampton St. Amherst

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

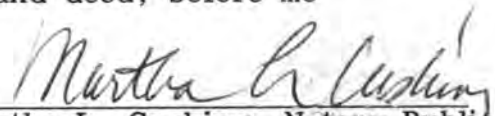
Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:  Date: 04-17-00
Donald P. Erickson

Address: 203 Snell Street; Amherst, MA 01004-2426; (Formerly 43 Hazel Ave.)
(P.O. Box 2426)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
HAMPSHIRE, SS.

Then personally appeared the above-named Donald P. Erickson and acknowledged the foregoing to be his free act and deed, before me


Martha L. Cushing, Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 03/31/06

203 Snell not in district
(43 Hazel Ave is in district
with different owner listed)



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth

Massachusetts Historical Commission

June 7, 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:

Westside Historic District, Amherst (Hampshire 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 properties included in the district were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Three letters of objection were received from residents of the proposed district, and one letter of support from the Amherst Historical Commission.

Subsequent to the State Review Board meeting additional correspondence was received from residents of the proposed district.

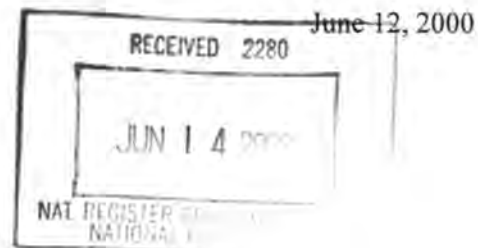
Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Donald Frizzle, Chair, Amherst Historical Commission
Sanford Johnson, Preservation Consultant
Bryan Harvey, Chair, Amherst Board of Selectmen
William O'Neill, Chair, Amherst Planning Board
Linda Faye, Amherst Historical Commission
Michael Como, 260 Northampton Road

Patrick Andrus
National Register of Historical Places
1849 C Street, NW
Room NC 400
Washington, DC 20240



Dear Mr. Andrus:

I am expressing my opposition to the Westside Historic district recently nominated by the Massachusetts Historical Commission for Amherst, Massachusetts, Hampshire County. This opposition also holds true for many of my neighbors. The nomination for the Westside Historic district is presented as two proposals contained in one nomination; 1) Recognition of the people, families, and homes of the African American heritage, and 2) Architectural reference for the 22 homes not affiliated with the original ethnic heritage identified.

The original intent for recognition was to register 12 homes as historic sites as they are historically homes of African Americans. A letter sent out by the Amherst Historic Commission (AHC) dated May 15, 1997, and the information presented in the nomination, support this direction for recognition of the 12 homes. At some point in the development of this nomination the focus moved away from the original 12 homes, resulting in 22 additional structures not meeting the criteria of the original request being added to the nomination. Please refer to Attachment A – Original Letter of Intent, and Attachment B – Amherst Historic Commission's Response for the Intended Direction.

All homeowners contacted in the proposed district support recognition of the 12 homes and related heritage, and many have petitioned the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to return the focus of this nomination back to these 12 homes. A copy of the letter and signed petitions are attached for ease of reference (See Attachment C). Opposition from many homeowners has developed for several reasons, including; to support the recognition of our African American neighbors based on the original request, the lack of commitment demonstrated by the AHC, incomplete documentation concerning residents of the area, inaccurate information listed for many of the 22 additional homes plus some of the other homes, and other concerns. If our request to recognize the 12 homes on their own merit is not honored, additional research is essential to recognize all the homes and families within the boundaries of the district.

Recognition for the African American Heritage

The request to register 12 homes as historical sites originated from a letter sent to the AHC dated September 15, 1996. History shows that many African Americans did settle in the proposed area, however, information presented in the proposal, and the expansion from the 12 homes to 34 homes (22 of which are non-African American), overstates the extent of the African American influence on the district. Currently four families, occupying five homes, continue to reside in the area. The length of association to the district is not known. Please refer to the Site Map on Attachment D.

The expanded district incorrectly represents the historical accuracy of the area and lessens the significance of these 12 homes and heritage. The families and culture of the African Americans calling this neighborhood their home have contributed to the multi-cultural mix of this area and the economic well being of the neighborhood for over a century. The inclusion of additional structures for architectural reference - only serves to dilute the recognition requested for the African American heritage.

Lack of Support and Commitment by the Amherst Historical Commission

During the past five months, I have attended public hearings, written letters, and researched information on the history of the neighborhood my family has called home for over 130 years. During this time the AHC has continued to support the architectural significance of the 22 homes subsequently added to the proposal. This support remained unchanged until the evening of June 5, 2000.

The residence at 313 Northampton Road, built in the early 1890's, is a modest two-story Craftsman-style house with unique and ornate characteristics and a large front porch facing the main street. The style of this house is listed on Page 2 of the Registration Form under Item 7 – Architectural Classification. This house was home to the resident homeowners for many years, as well as their workplace during the 1940's through the 1950's. A small convenience store and gas station was operated from this house – the main proprietor was the female homeowner. On many summer evenings neighborhood residents from all ethnic backgrounds would congregate at the store for social interactions.

This information is presented for two reasons: First, this property was the first agenda item for a Public Hearing held on June 5, 2000. This agenda item was the consideration of the historic significance for 313 Northampton Road, for demolition purposes. Second, this property falls within the boundaries of the proposed district, however, there is no mention of the house, business, homeowners, or cultural significance associated with the property in the nomination.

The AHC stated they were unaware of any history associated with this house or the previous owners. As previously mentioned, the Craftsman-style of this house is listed under the Architectural Classification criteria, in addition, the geographic location of the house and the business operated on the property invited local residents to gather socially. This information was not considered by the AHC and as a result the Commission found no historical significance associated with the house.

The house and property was considered for less than 5 minutes before the AHC voted unanimously to support demolition of the house in favor of construction of a parking lot. The decision made by the AHC was based on their unwillingness to conduct appropriate research for the property. The lack of historical significance identified by the AHC is consistent with comments presented by members of the State Review Board on March 8, 2000 for many of the homes in the proposed district (to be discussed later in this text).

It is my feeling that the AHC's commitment to the additional 22 homes added to this proposal is similar to their commitment to the home at 313 Northampton Road. Little, if any, research has been attempted to document the history and background of these homes and residents. This lack of research is evident by the inadequate and superficial information presented for these homes. Inclusion of the additional 22 homes appears to be supported by the AHC for purposes other than historic significance or accuracy.

Incomplete Documentation

On Page 1 of Section 8 in the Registration Form for the Westside Historic district nomination, justification for Criterion A states in part 'Westside's contributions have been to serve as home, and in the case of farming residents, workplace, to locally significant African American residents for over one hundred years'. While this statement does contain historical validity, it is only partially complete. The Areas of Significance listed on Page 3 of the Registration Form identify the Ethnic Heritage of the district as Black and European. The descriptive information presented on the families of African American resident is detailed and consistent with the original direction of this proposal – to recognize the historical significance of African American homes and families. The nomination mentions that other ethnic groups were in Westside during the period, including Irish and Polish. However, at no point in this nomination is there researched information presented on locally significant residents of European descent.

I presented my concerns of inaccuracy and incomplete information to the State Review Board on March 8, 2000. As a result of information presented at the meeting, several Board members indicated that additional information was needed, and some Board Members questioned the architectural significance of the homes in the nomination in general. Discussions that followed prompted the MHC to leave the nomination open for an additional 45 days. This action was summed up in a letter by the Executive Director of the MHC to some of the residents of the proposed district, stating that 'amplifications on the information presented in the nomination will be accepted until April 24th'.

As of this writing, no information has been submitted to the MHC to 'amplify' the nomination. This may be due to a large percentage of the homes being occupied by individual or families who have little or no historical connection with the neighborhood, and very few homes having family connections lasting more than a decade.

Inaccurate Information

Remaining dedicated to the desire to recognize the historical significance of the African American homes and families in this section of town, descriptive information is presented on African Americans in the area. The Westside nomination attempts to recognize people of the European descent by architectural reference, and the information presented on the families and individuals of European descent is brief and largely inaccurate, and includes:

- Minimal research on home ownership – for homes identified, length of residency was incorrectly recorded for several residents;
- In most cases discussion on ownership was limited to current owners or owners immediately prior to the current owner;
- There is one listing of a tenant as the homeowner of a house - the house has been owned and occupied by the actual owner for almost 50 years;
- There is no mention of a gas station, convenience store, restaurant, or bar once operated in the area;
- There is no reference to a former Amherst Town Clerk born and raised in this area.
- Remaining dedicated to the original request, the pictures attached to the nomination represent a construction style consistent with the original 12 homes, with a few exceptions. Several pictures are duplicate, and one picture includes a house built just three years ago.

Members of my family have owned and occupied my current residence since the house was constructed over 130 years ago. I am the fifth generation to reside at the property known as 260 Northampton Road – this occupancy remains unbroken since the mid 1800's. The inclusion of 260 Northampton Road does not represent the historical significance, contribution, or heritage of the family connected to this residence. The connection to this proposed district is based on the style of the house - which is not consistent with any other house in the district, and the date of construction.

Concern of Resident Homeowners

All residents contacted support the recognition requested in the original letter of intent. The people calling this neighborhood home have worked hard to ensure a successful and cooperative multi-cultural neighborhood, and are proud of their history. The ability to effectively unite diverse ethnic backgrounds within one community throughout the past 130 years continues to be accomplished through the efforts of all residents.

Many residents have expressed concern that their heritage and family history will be negated for the recognition of one ethnic group. In addition, the only significance relevant to their home is that the house falls within convenient boundaries arbitrarily determined by non-resident supporters. The concerns and desires of two-thirds of the community should not go un-addressed. Several areas of concern which have been identified related to the development of the Westside nomination can be found on the Bulleted section of Page 1 of Attachment C, and the bulleted section of Page 1 of Attachment E – Letter to MHC dated February 10, 2000.

Conclusion

As the nomination for the proposed historic district developed, the area came to be called "Westside", a term which has no connection with this district. Many residents oppose this nomination due to inaccurate representation associated with all ethnic groups, the lack of commitment by local officials, and incomplete information on the homes and families within the neighborhood. This proposal offers no rational justification for expanding the nomination from 12 homes to 34 homes. In addition, opposition to the Westside nomination is compounded by the fact that many residents did not know that any proposal was being considered, and they do not support being included in a proposal that excludes the history of two-thirds of the community, while misrepresenting one-third.

The information presented in this letter demonstrates the support for recognition of the original 12 homes and the desire for removal of the 22 homes added without appropriate consideration. It is our desire to ensure the historical accuracy of all the peoples in this area and the contribution they have made to the town and the country. Please consider visiting our neighborhood to walk the boundaries and see first-hand the impact and significance the 12 homes offer this community. These 12 homes truly deserve the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Como
Resident Homeowner of 260 Northampton Road

Attachment A - Original Letter of Intent

334 Amity Street
Amherst, Ma 01002
September 15, 1996

National Historical Commission
Town Hall
Amherst, Ma 01002
Attn: Donald Frizzle

Dear Donald:

We would like to request that these individual homes, addresses listed below, to be registered as historical sites.

These buildings are historically, homes of African American families.

We have the support of Melinda LeLacheur, director of the Amherst Historical Society, also, James Smith, a writer who has researched and found valuable information on these homes and Daniel Lombardo, historian and curator, of the Special Collection Department at the Jones Library.

List of homes: (all in Amherst)

- 223 Snell St. - house still remains in the Roberts family.
- 39 Hazel Ave. - house still remains in the Bias family.
- 35 Hazel Ave. - house still remains in the Lord family.
- 29 Hazel Ave. - house still remains in the Taylor family.
- 21 Hazel Ave. - house still remains in the Roberts family.
- 15 Hazel Ave. - house now owned by an African American family.
- 193 Northampton Rd. - Formely owned by Dwight Newport.
- 199 Northampton Rd. - house still remains in the Newport family.
- 240 Northampton Rd. - house still remains in the Ward family.
- 43 McClellan St. - house still remains in the Goodwin family.
- 7 Beston St. - Pettijohn previously owned this house, currently new owner.
- 55 Railroad St. - previously owned by Henry Jackson.
- 55 Baker St. - Charles Thompson house.
- 43 Baker St. - Josiah Hasbrook house.
- 33 Baker St. - Hawkins family.

We are looking forward to presenting this at the next Historical Commission meeting.

Sincerely.

Dorothy and Dudley Bridges Sr

Dorothy and Dudley Bridges, Sr.

cc: Melinda LeLacheur
James Smith
Daniel Lombardo

Attachment B - Initial Response by A.H.C.

Amherst Historical Commission

15 May 1997

Dear

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that the Amherst Historical Commission is in the process of developing a new National Historic Register District in Amherst that includes the area in which you live.

At the request of Mr. & Mrs Dudley Bridges our Commission is beginning the work of gathering information about the residences in your area to be used in our proposal to recognize the area where early residents of African-American heritage lived. Survey forms are being developed which will include descriptions of the buildings in the area and a history of each property through the years. You may see members of our Commission taking pictures of your home and taking notes on architectural details. These are an essential part of our proposal. Please feel free to talk to any of the Commission members you may see in your neighborhood for further information.

The Commission is just beginning this process which will take many months to complete. We will keep you informed of our progress and when the proposal is further developed we will be inviting you to a public discussion of it.

Sincerely,

Members of the Amherst Historical Commission:

Carol Birtwistle

Ellen Goodwin

Robin Karson

Nancy Morrison

Perry Thompson

Donald Frizzle, Chair, Tel: 256-6175

Attachment C - Letter and Notarized Petitions

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

April 18, 2000

Dear Ms. Friedberg:

On behalf of many residents currently residing in the recently nominated Westside Historic District in Amherst, Massachusetts, I am submitting this letter and the attached notarized requests to petition the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC) to return the focus of the proposed Westside Historic District back to the 12 individual homes identified in the original letter of intent, received by the Amherst Historic Commission in September, 1996.

I received a letter from the MHC dated March 10, 2000, signed by Judith McDonough, indicating that the proposal would remain open for 45 days to "accept amplifications on information presented in the nomination". After receiving this letter, several neighbors and I began contacting homeowners in our neighborhood to discuss the proposal and determine their knowledge of the proposed district. To our shock we learned the following:

- Initial notification concerning this nomination, dated May 15, 1997, and a follow-up mailing dated November 18, 1998, appear to have been limited to residents of the original 12 homes.
- Notification to all residents concerning the proposal, including the expanded district, was not distributed until January 21, 2000.
- Less than half of the residents in the neighborhood knew the proposal existed.
- Those who knew the proposal existed knew only of the intent to recognize the homes owned or occupied by African American families.
- Not one resident knew the proposal had expanded from these original 12 homes to the current number of 34 homes.
- Not all residents received the March 10, 2000 letter mentioned above.

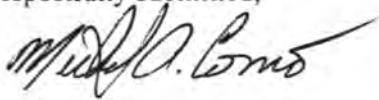
The actions taken by the Historical Commission place a question of doubt in the minds of several residents of the true representation of historical significance for this area. Many residents have expressed their concern of two proposals contained in one nomination. All residents that we have spoken with support the original request and feel the direction of this recognition should be honored. In addition, we feel the inclusion of the additional 22 homes dilutes the historical significance of the African American heritage.

In the opinion of several residents, the march 10, 2000 letter sent out by the MHC attempting to improve the accuracy of the proposal by stating that homeowners may submit information on the history of their family or home is unacceptable. After contacting the MHC, I am unaware of any information being submitted by homeowners, as of this writing. A large percentage of the homes are occupied by individuals or families who have little or no historical connection with the neighborhood, and very few homes have family connections lasting more than a decade.

The attached notarized letters from residents of 15 of the 22 homes not listed on the original letter of intent, plus a notarized letter from one of the original 12 homes, express our support for the recognition of the original request, and indicate our desire to be removed from the proposal. In addition, several other residents have expressed their support for this direction but have not yet returned their notarized letter.

In summary, we have followed this proposal since being notified in late January, 2000. Most of the residents in our community support recognition for the original request as requested in the letter of intent received by the Town of Amherst in September, 1996. The lack of notification and inaccurate information associated with the additional 22 homes has raised concern among many of the homeowners. Our request is that the proposed Westside Historic District nomination be returned back to the focus of the original request as stated in the original letter of intent requesting that "12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African Americans".

Respectfully submitted,



Michael A. Como
Enclosures

Signed by Michael A. Como
in my presence on April 18, 2000

Helene A. Wegrzynski
Notary Public

cc: William F. Galvin
Thomas P. McCullough
Dr. Adelaide M. Cromwell
Carol Nelson
Louis Tucker
Marcus A. McCorison
Michael Maresco
Robert Ebersole
Kelly Sinclair
Elizabeth Stone
Lowell A. Warren, Jr.
Patrice Kish
James Hudson Crissman
Rose-Marie Glen
Barbara Luedtke
Charles Sullivan
David Simmons
Franci Gould

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
MAY 13, 2005

We the undersigned, petition the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in our neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. Our appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Name	Address	Date
Mike Albino	260 Northampton Road	03/22/2000
Mary J. Sprague	324 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Robert J. Sprague	290 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Bridgette	290 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Lin Conner	260 Northampton Rd	3/22/00
Paul W. Waldron	271 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Martha J. Waldron	271 Northampton Rd.	3/23/00
Katherine D. White	306 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Umar A. Shea	306 Northampton Rd.	3/23/00
Sahabdeen	277 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Zaweeda Sahabdeen	277 Northampton Rd	3/23/00
Catherine M. Peterson	221 Northampton Rd.	3/25/00
Yvonne	236 ^{SNELL ST} Northampton	3/25/00
Ruth E. Allen	208 Snell St	3/25/00
Elizabeth	239 Snell St.	3/26/00
John W. Wurt	52 Baker St	3.27.00

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Paul W. Waldron Date: April 6, 2000

SANDRA P. SMITH

Notary Public

Address: 271 Northampton Rd Amherst MA 01002

My Commission Expires July 30, 2004

4/6/00

PAUL W. WALDRON
Sandra P. Smith

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Veronica E. Rabinaki Date: April 6, 2000
21 Campus Road Apt. 23
Address: Hadley, Ma 01035-3532

Marvin J. Spence
Notary Public
S.S. Hampshire
338 College Street
Amherst, Mass. 01002

4/6/00

Not me

My commission expires January 24, 2003.

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Mrs. A. Gross Date: April 6, 2000

Address: 260 Northampton Road

My commission expires January 24, 2003.

4/6/00
Marvin J. Spence
Marvin J. Spence
Notary Public
S.S. Hampshire
338 College Street
Amherst, Mass. 01002

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Jean H. Bridges Date: 4/6/2000

Address: 137 PACKANOVILLE RD PELHAM MA 01002

Sworn before me April 6, 2000

Valerie J. Faith
Valerie J. Faith

Valerie J. Faith
NOTARY PUBLIC
My commission expires Feb. 9, 2007

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:

Thom Vinton

Date:

3.29.00

Address:

52 Baker St.

Linda R Fontaine

March 29, 2000

LINDA A. FONTAINE

Notary Public

My Commission Expires March 31, 2000

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

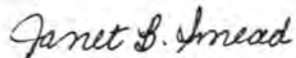
Submitted by:  Date: 3/30/00

Address: 263 Northampton Road, Amherst, MA

March 30, 2000

Hampshire, ss

Then personally appeared, the above-named, Nancy K. Russell, and acknowledged this to be her free act and deed before me.



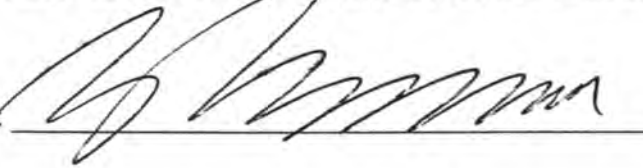
Janet B. Smead, Notary

My commission expires September 4, 2003

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:



Date: 3-27-2000

Address:

239 Snell st. Amherst MA 01002

Cheslean - Notary

My commission expires June 3, 2001

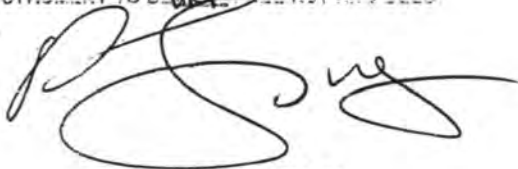
I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Katherine R. White Date: 3/30/2000

Address: 306 Northampton Rd, Amherst, MA

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE, ss.
DATE March 30th 2000
THEN PERSONALLY APPEARED THE ABOVE NAMED
KATHERINE WHITE
BEFORE ME AND ACKNOWLEDGED THE FORGEOF A
INSTRUMENT TO BE WPP NOT AND OLED.



BRIAN O'LEARY
Notary Public, Massachusetts
My Commission Expires May 6, 2005

NORTHAMPTON

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: _____

Thawood S. Sahabdeen
THAWOOD S. SAHABDEEN.

Date: _____

3/24/00

Address: _____

277, NORTHAMPTON RD, AMHERST MA 01002

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Hampshire, S.S. Date 3/24/00
Then personally appeared the above named
THAWOOD S. SAHABDEEN
and acknowledged the foregoing instrument
to be his/her act and deed before me
REBECCA A. HOWCROFT, Notary Public
My Commission Expires December 4, 2003

Rebecca A. Howcroft

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Ann Spence Date: 3-27-00

Address: 324 NORTHAMPTON RD
597 EAST LEVERETT RD AmHERST

Rosemary A. Fern
Comm. ltr. Oct. 20, 2006

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Catherine M. Peterson Date: March 27, 2000

Address: 221 Northampton Rd. Amherst, Ma 01002-2546

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

HAMPSHIRE, SS.

MARCH 27, 2000

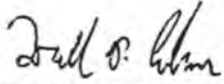
Then personally appeared the above-named CATHERINE M. PETERSON and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be her free act and deed, before me.

My Commission Expires: September 8, 2006

Kimberly R. Sargent
KIMBERLY R. SARGENT
Notary Public

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:  Date: 04-17-00
Donald P. Erickson

Address: 203 Snell Street; Amherst, MA 01004-2426; (Formerly 43 Hazel Ave.)
(P.O. Box 2426)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
HAMPSHIRE, SS.

Then personally appeared the above-named Donald P. Erickson and acknowledged the foregoing to be his free act and deed, before me

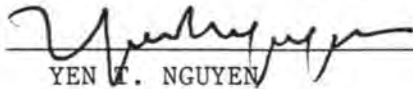

Martha L. Cushing, Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 03/31/06

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by:


YEN T. NGUYEN

Date: 3/27/00

Address: 236 SNELL STREET, AMHERST, MA 01002

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

HAMPSHIRE, SS.

MARCH 27, 2000

Then personally appeared the above-named YEN T. NGUYEN and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be her free act and deed, before me,

My Commission Expires: November 25, 2005


KELLY A. RICHEY
Notary Public

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Cooby Robinson Hospital Date: 03/24/00
by Ernest M. Margeson Director of Facilities

Address: 313 Northampton St. Amherst

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Ruth E Allen Date: 3/28/00

Address: 208 Snell St. Amherst Mass. 01002

AS SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME ON March 28, 2000.

Sandra J. Burgess
SANDRA J. BURGESS
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES JANUARY 6, 2006

I am petitioning the Amherst Historical Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission to honor the request for recognition of the African American families in my neighborhood, as stated in the original letter of intent submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges in September, 1996, 'that 12 individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'. My appeal is to return the focus of the Westside proposal to the recognition requested in the original letter of intent.

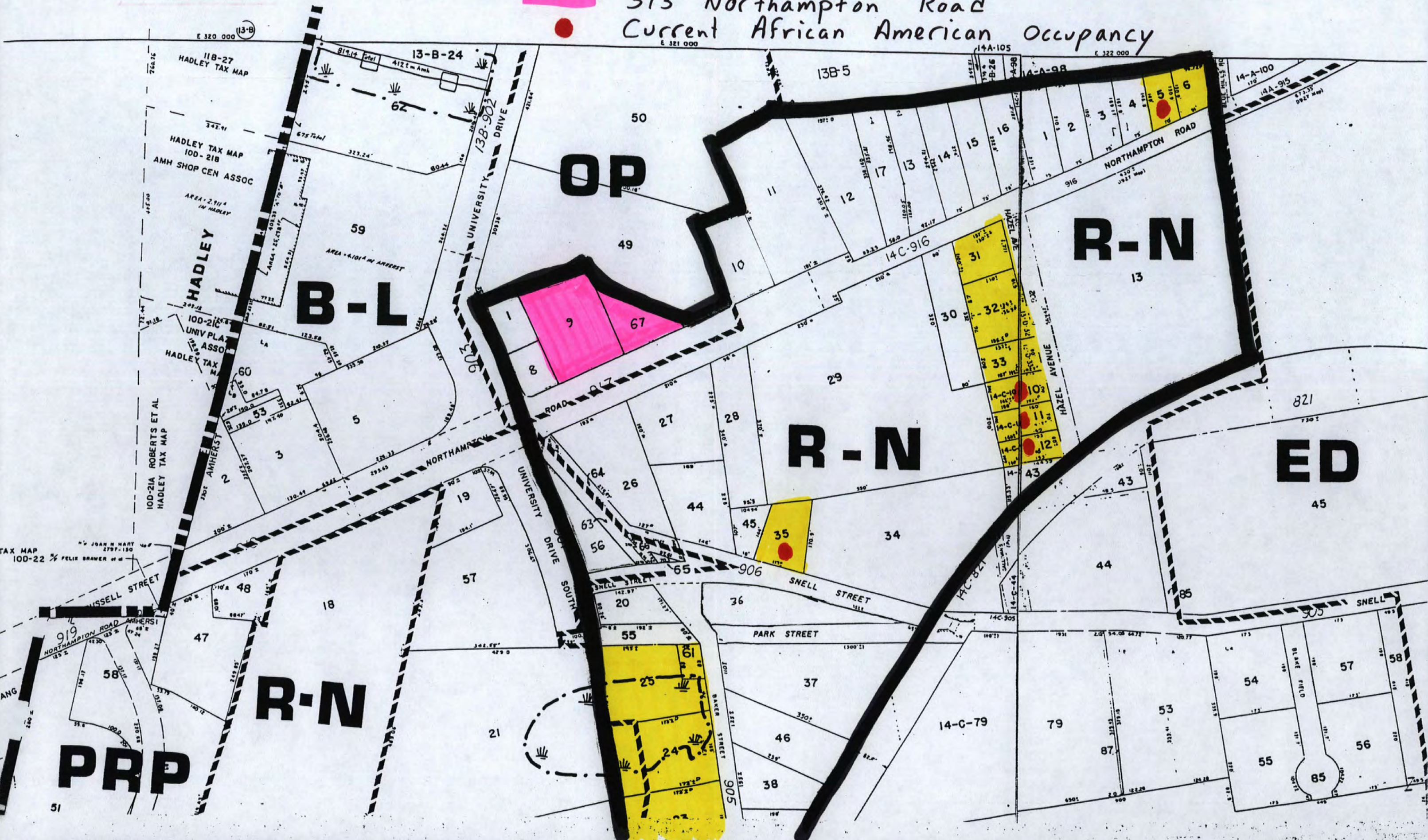
Recognition of these 12 homes honor the African American families and their value to the town of Amherst.

Submitted by: Ruth E Allen Date: 7/28/00

Address: 208 Sneed St Amherst Ma, 01002

Attachment D- Site Map

- Expanded Boundaries
- 12 Homes Identified in the Original Letter of Intent
- 313 Northampton Road
- Current African American Occupancy



Attachment D

Attachment D - Site Map



Current African American Occupancy
313 Northampton Road
12 Homes Identified in the Original Letter of Intent
Expanded Boundaries

February 10, 2000

Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

Dear State Historic Preservation Officer McDonough:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Westside historical district as presented at the February 8, 2000 Massachusetts Historical Commission meeting in Amherst, MA. I am opposed to this proposal for reasons which include: the degree of incomplete and inaccurate representation of historical significance; the elimination and negation of the importance of my personal heritage and the heritage of other ethnic groups in this area; and the lack of advanced notification concerning public meetings.

My compulsion to write this letter is to ensure the proposal is corrected to accurately reflect the historical significance of the area by returning the focus to the individual homes referenced in the original letter of intent. Highlights of my opposition include:

Inaccurate representation of historical significance

- The original letter of intent identified 12 individual homes consisting of a total of 5.27 acres.
- The current proposed area has been expanded to include 34 homes and 40 acres.
- The increase to the current proposed district from the original letter of intent was unknown to most, if not all, of the residents in the current proposed district.

Incomplete account of historical ethnic and hereditary significance

- The original letter of intent requested the registration of 12 individual homes for their historical significance related to African American families.
- The current proposal was developed under the guidelines of the original letter of intent, identifying the historical significance of African American families only.
- Ethnic groups of Eastern European and other descent were briefly mentioned but were not acknowledged for their significance or contribution in the district.
- My heredity and family connection, as well as other families, related to the length of association to properties other than African American, were not identified or recognized as significant in the proposed area.

Limited public meeting notification

- Several residents in the current expanded district did not receive notification relating to the proposed district or the public meeting held on December 7, 1998.
- Residents who did receive notification for the December 7th meeting live in or border properties of the original 12 individual homes.
- Most of the residents did not learn of the increased study area until the February 8, 2000 public meeting. As a result very little time is available to submit opposition to the proposal.

Inaccurate representation of historical significance

On September 15, 1996, Dorothy and Dudley Bridges, Sr. submitted a letter of intent to the National Historical Commission (c/o the Amherst Historical Commission), Attention Donald Frizzle, to request the registration of 15 homes as historical sites. Twelve of these homes are located in the boundaries of the now proposed Westside Historical District. The desire of the original letter of intent requested 'that individual homes be registered as historical sites, as they are historically homes of African American families'.

At some point during the development process the decision was made to increase the number of homes and acreage in the proposed historic district beyond the 12 individual homes referenced in the original letter of intent. This decision has resulted in a large degree of incomplete and inaccurate information and the inclusion of non-contributing structures into the proposal - leading one to conclude there is an attempt to justify historical significance to suit the needs of the expanded area.

The cumulative land area associated with the 12 homes identified in the original letter of intent equals 5.27 acres. The proposed Westside district consists of 34 homes and land area of approximately 40 acres. This proposal, as written, overstates the significance of the original request by 659% in land area, and 183% for homes.

While attempting to unite the proposed area, the use of broad descriptors to identify the one connecting thread each structure possesses (i.e. date of construction) undermines the importance and desire of the original request - to identify and record individual residential dwellings owned or occupied by African Americans and the histories of these homes.

Incomplete account of historical ethnic and hereditary significance

I am proud of my heritage and dedicated to ensure that it is reflected accurately. Not only does this proposal present inaccurate information concerning my family's residence at 260 Northampton Road, there was no reasonable attempt to present any of our history at all. Six homes on Northampton Road were mentioned in one paragraph, not one receiving even moderate historical consideration. However, keeping consistent with the original request, all properties identified as African American owned or occupied were researched in depth and described in detail concerning the individual or families residing there.

I am the fifth generation of my family to own or occupy the property known as 260 Northampton Road, this occupancy remains unbroken for over 120 years. My house was constructed in the early 1870's by a family named McCarthey or McCarty. A couple named John and Louisa McCarty owned the property until the 1920's, at which time they sold the property to Mary Bowler. Ms. Bowler sold the property to my Grandparents, Maurice and Suzanne Garvey in the early 1950's. The Garvey's owned and occupied the property until late 1997, at which time the property was bought by Michael and Kimberley Como. Very few families in this area can state that their homes have been owned by family members for over 120 years or have the family lineage connecting them to their home as my family represents to our house.

Inclusion of 260 Northampton Road in this proposal does not represent the historical significance and heritage of the family connected to this residence. The connection to this proposed district is based solely on the date of construction of the house.

Limited public meeting notification

Members of the Amherst Historical Commission indicate they took appropriate actions concerning advanced notification for the first public meeting for the proposed Westside historic district held on December 7, 1998. While I can not dispute their claim, I did not receive the mailing announcing this public meeting. The same holds true for several of my neighbors.

The only residents who have confirmed receiving notification for the December 7, 1998 public meeting are property owners associated with the 12 houses requested in the original letter of intent. At some point between receipt of the original letter of intent in September, 1996, and the February 8, 2000 public meeting, the size of the study area was increased. This increase was unknown to most, if not all, of the residents in the current proposed district.

I believe the Amherst Historical Commission could benefit by reviewing their notification process and incorporating the use of registered mail, return receipt, when notifying residents of critical issues that will alter the look or atmosphere of their neighborhood.

Conclusion

If the information contained in this proposal is not complete and historically accurate, and many structures and ethnic classes are not represented as historically significant, how is this district representing history?

The area described in the current proposal only serves to overstate the historical significance of the individual houses identified in the original letter of intent, and lessens the significance of those homes and associated heritage. Any modifications to include other ethnic histories or architectural structures to this proposal will only serve to reduce the importance originally requested by Mr. and Mrs. Bridges concerning the history and significance of the African American families in the area.

Allowing this proposal to remain dedicated to the individual houses listed in the original letter of intent; three houses on Baker Street, five houses on Hazel Avenue, three houses on Northampton Road, and one house on Snell Street, unquestionably supports the research and recognition of the original intention.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Como, Resident and owner
260 Northampton Road
Amherst, MA 01002

cc: Donald Frizzle, Chairman, Amherst Historical Commission
Sanford Johnson, Preservation Consultant
Philip Bergen, Massachusetts Historical Commission
Linda Faye, Amherst Historical Commission
Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Bridges, Amherst Residents

Subscribed and sworn / affirmed to before me,
in my presence, this 17 day of Feb 2000,
a Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth
of Massachusetts.



MY COMMISSION EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 9, 2005



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H32(2280)

JUL 26 2000

Mr. Michael Como
260 Northampton Road
Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Mr. Como:

Thank you for your letter of June 12, 2000, concerning the nomination of the Westside Historic District, Amherst, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, to the National Register of Historic Places.

After carefully reviewing all documentation submitted, including the National Register registration form for the district, and your letter and accompanying documentation, we have determined that the Westside Historic District meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation for its local historic and architectural significance. The Westside Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 25, 2000.

The registration form clearly establishes the importance of the Westside Historic District as an intact 19th and early 20th century working class neighborhood with important historic association with Amherst's African American, Irish, and Eastern European ethnic heritage. The registration form further establishes that within the local architectural context the Westside Historic District contains a significant collection of Victorian era and Colonial Revival style residences.

It appears from the correspondence you forwarded to us that many of the concerns you expressed regarding the documentation of the historic district have been addressed in the final National Register registration form which recognizes the importance of all of the groups that historically lived in the Westside Historic District. The Westside Historic District is an area whose history adds to a fuller understanding and appreciation of Amherst's past. We hope that listing the historic district in the National Register will further encourage the continued preservation of these tangible links to the community's heritage.

Sincerely,

for) Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Register, History and Education

cc: MA SHPO

Town of

NR file



AMHERST - Massachusetts

TOWN HALL
4 BOLTWOOD AVENUE
AMHERST, MA 01002-2351

AMHERST HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Amherst Historical Commission affirms the nomination of Westside as a National Register District. The Commission endorses the thematic designations of African American and European and endorses the boundaries to be as described in the nomination.

The Commission wishes to note that basis for this nomination grew out of an interest within the community to address a portion of our history which is frequently overlooked. We tend to nominate those areas that contain the big, architectural gems, and dismiss the neighborhoods that are less overtly impressive. However to do that is to ignore the basis on which our town developed. Many acknowledged historic resources are outstanding examples of a particular architectural style or represent the work of a particular architect. However a community is made up of a variety of structures, most of which are vernacular.

A community evolves as people of all economic standings participate and contribute to it over time. The area described as Westside developed over a period of approximately 150 years. During much of second half of the 19th century African-American families occupied several of the homes. By the turn of the century Irish and Polish immigrants also made their homes in the neighborhood.

The architecture of Westside, the majority constructed between circa 1850 to 1920, contains representative examples of Victorian Eclectic, Italianate, Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival and Bungalow styles. The architecture in Westside is of modest scale with eclectic architecture prevailing.

Although the scale of the architecture in Westside is generally unassuming and no single individual resident has been found to have made a developmentally significant contribution to the development of the town on his/her own, taken as a totality Westside is an excellent example of a 19th century residential neighborhood of farm workers, laborers and small business people.

The Amherst Historical Commission is proud to support the nomination of the Goodwin Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in conjunction with Westside. Of particular importance in the continued African-American presence in the district, Mr. Moses Goodwin, an African-American resident initiated the creation of this church at the end of the 19th century.

The Amherst Historical Commission wishes to express unqualified support for the nominations of Westside, Goodwin Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the West Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places.


Don Frizzle, Chair
Amherst Historical Commission