

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Area Letter      Form numbers in this Area

D	3641-3687
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Newton, Mass. MRA

Town NEWTON (West Newton)

Name of Area (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Putnam Street Historic District

Present Use Residential

General Date or Period \_\_\_\_\_

1860-1890

General Condition Fair-Good

Acreage 7.85 acres

Recorded by Peter Stott

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date April 1986

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

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

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

UTM REFERENCE    A 19/316340/4690150  
                       B 19/316220/4690350  
                       C 19/316460/4690480  
                       D 19/316570/4690260

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA  
 SCALE 1:25,000

## **NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

The Putnam Street Historic District is an unusually uniform grouping of Mansard and Queen Anne-style residences reflective of the post-Civil War growth of West Newton as a commuter suburb. It thus meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

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

The Putnam Street Historic District is a 7.8-acre residential area containing twenty properties on the north slope of West Newton Hill, overlooking the commercial center of West Newton. Although the most elaborate houses are located on Putnam Street, which has given its name to the district, the area also includes nine residences along its perpendicular, Winthrop Street, as well as two houses at its intersection with Temple Street. In the uniformity of its architectural styles, the district provides an unusual window on the post-Civil War building period, 1865-1885. Of the twenty buildings in the district, nearly three-quarters were constructed at this time in the Mansard, Stick, or Queen Anne idiom.

Six of the ten residences on Winthrop Street are Mansard-style houses built between 1866 and 1872. Probably the earliest, 3 Winthrop Street, built as the parsonage of the Second Congregational Church about 1868, displays a bellcast Mansard roof with curvilinear dormers. Attached to the

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

This portion of West Newton remained completely undeveloped until several decades after the arrival of the Boston & Worcester Railroad in 1834. With the inauguration of regular commuter service into Boston in the 1840s, the first real estate developments began to appear in West Newton (see Area E). Temple Street (originally known as Pleasant Street) was accepted by the town in 1849. The construction of 34 Temple Street about that time, probably as a summer cottage for Andrew J. Allen, is a reflection of this early commuter spirit. According to research by Thelma Fleishman and Susan Abele for the Jackson Homestead, Allen was a Boston stationer and manufacturer of patent account books. When the "Newton Special" began providing the first regular commuter service between Boston and West Newton in 1843, Allen bought the first season ticket (Smith, p. 813).

Most of the district was laid out for house lots in 1866 by the West Newton Land Company, organized by David Sanger and Charles Elliott. (The plan for this development [#407-D4-Bk2] is held by the City Engineer's Office.) Like several of the pre-war subdivisions of Alexander Wadsworth, such as Webster Park (see Area E) or Kenrick Park (NR-7/8/82), the West Newton Land Company oriented the development toward a public park. Lincoln Park, at the foot of Shaw Street, was a large tree-lined oval, demolished in 1962 for the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension. Shaw and Winthrop

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton, Mass. MRA	Form No: Area D
Property Name: Putnam St. H.D.	

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

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

two-story main block is a matching single-story wing with paired cornice brackets matching those on the main block. Its builder may have also been responsible for a similar Mansard example, 50 Shaw Street, built at the same time. This residence shows the same bellcast roof and curvilinear dormers. The majority of Winthrop Street's Mansard houses, however, appear to have been built by a single builder in the early 1870s. Three houses, at 4, 44, and 52 Winthrop Street, show similar elevations and details. All three display pedimented dormer windows, bracketed cornices, and a two-story high projecting bay on each of two adjacent facades. The verandas of both 4 and 52 Winthrop Street were later altered with Queen Anne modifications, although the porch at 44 Winthrop Street appears to be original.

Most of the residences along Putnam Street were built in the late 1870s and 1880s. The pair of houses 38 and 39 Putnam Street, both constructed in 1877, both utilize Stick Style details, but with different results. On 38 Putnam Street, a steep Mansard roof pierced by steep hipped dormers provides a picturesque roofline, while clapboard facades are interrupted by vertical members meant to reflect the framing members within. The same ornament is also utilized in its neighbor across the street, 39 Putnam Street, where intersecting gable roofs display both jerkin head gables and bargeboards. Elaborately scrolled, sawn, turned, and incised wooden trim appears at the building's projections -- a porch with flanking deck, bays, canopies, and pavilions.

The best example of the Queen Anne style in the district is the Howard House at 44 Putnam Street (1885), notable for its gabled hip roof, corner tower, and highly ornate veranda. Of the remaining structures on Putnam Street, two (64 and 74 Putnam Street) are more modest Queen Anne examples from the 1880s. The remaining houses in the district frame the period with the earliest and latest structures. The oldest house in the district is the small Gothic cottage at the head of Putnam Street, 34 Temple Street (c.1849). However, this residence was substantially modified with Stick Style and Shingle details in the 1880s and 1890s, and only its steeply pitched roof recalls its earlier Gothic Revival antecedents. The last house built in the district, 50 Putnam Street (1898), shows both Colonial Revival and Shingle Style origins.

Although two non-contributing, post-1907 structures are included within in the district's boundaries, most of the district has seen little change in the intervening decades of the 20th century. Synthetic siding materials have been employed in some instances, but most of the structures are in a good state of preservation, and the neighborhood still retains much of its 19th-century character.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton, Mass. MRA	Form No: Area D
Property Name: Putnam St. H.D.	

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

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.**

streets formed the heart of the proposed development, framed by Putnam, Temple, and Perkins streets.

The lots appear to have been bought up relatively quickly, and in the late 1860s and early '70s, Mansard-style houses appeared on all the streets in this development. (Examples on Perkins and Shaw streets have been excluded from the district because of the larger number of intrusions.) Among the earliest to build was the Second Congregational Church, which constructed a new parsonage at the corner of Putnam and Winthrop streets (3 Winthrop St.) for its new pastor, the Rev. Henry J. Patrick (1827-1909). Until 1916, the church stood on Washington Street at the head of Highland Street. Bankers were among the early settlers of Winthrop Street. John J. Eddy (1840-1901) built a house at 4 Winthrop, opposite his church's parsonage; a banker all his working life, at his death in 1901 Eddy was president of the Commonwealth Avenue Bank. Eddy's neighbor at 14 Winthrop Street was William Elder (1846-1923), for many years head paying teller of the First National Bank of Boston. Other businesses were also represented. Joseph B. Whitmore (1825-1888), for many years employed in the provision business at the Boylston Market in Boston, may have built the house at 52 Winthrop Street on his retirement in 1873. Whitmore was an ardent anti-slavery advocate and a personal friend of Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison. No. 34 Winthrop Street was the home of Heman L. Putnam (1830-1893), head of the Putnam Company, a large Boston manufacturer of bedding. Lewis Chase, at 44 Winthrop, was the proprietor of a lozenge manufacturing company in Boston. The house at 17 Winthrop Street was owned by Milo Lucas (1820-1905), one of West Newton's most prominent building contractors. Born in Northumberland, New Hampshire, Lucas was a long-time resident of West Newton and responsible for several prominent city buildings. His eldest son, M. Frank Lucas was proprietor of Lucas's Planing Mill in West Newton. Lucas may well have been involved in the West Newton Land Company. He lived in a house on Lincoln Park (now demolished) and evidently built 17 Winthrop Street as a rental property.

Seven properties have been included from land not owned by the West Newton Land Company: the small cottage at 34 Temple, and six lots on the west side of Putnam Street. All six were built on land that had been part of the estate of Lucius G. Pratt (1824-1905). Pratt's large mansion, built about 1870 stood on land to the rear, facing Highland Street. (On its demolition, the land was subdivided for the small cul-de-sac, Inis Circle.) In 1877, possibly as a result of the recent business depression, Pratt began to build on the Putnam Street portion of his property. No. 38 Putnam Street was constructed that year as a rental property.

The district has boasted of several other prominent residents who lived in West Newton briefly. Among them was the novelist Nathaniel Hawthorn, brother-in-law of West Newton resident Horaca Mann. Hawthorn is thought to have stayed at 34 Temple Street in the early 1850s while writing his story of the Brook Farm community, The Blithedale Romance. Then the house was an isolated cottage, whose nearest residence was Mann's own home (now demolished) on Highland Street. Hawthorn's brief stay, however, was not a success. His son wrote: "A more dismal and unlovely suburb than West

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newton, Mass. MRA	Form No: Area D
Property Name: Putnam St. H.D.	

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

Newton was in the winter of 1851 could not exist outside of New England." The same house was later the summer cottage of the Hon. Horatio King, former U.S. Postmaster-General during Buchanan's administration in the late 1850s. King's son Henry lived across the street in a multi-towered house at the northeast corner of Putnam and Temple streets (demolished).

Another prominent resident was Capt. S. Edward Howard (1840-1912), a Civil War veteran and the builder of 44 Putnam Street in 1885. Born in Jamaica, Vermont, he engaged in the hardware business in Brattleboro after his Civil War service. In the 1880s he was also involved in the western cattle markets in Texas and Montana. In 1891 and '92 he represented Newton in the state legislature, and from 1900 until his death he was an active member of the city's School Committee. As a real estate investor, Howard as also connected with the organization of the North Gate Club and the laying out of the North Gate subdivision west of Waltham Street (see 121 Adena Road, #3201).

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Friends of the Jackson Homestead, Newton's Older Houses: West Newton Publication #12 (1978).

Newton Journal various issues.

Newton's 19th Century Architecture: West Newton (1978)

Smith, Samuel Francis, History of Newton, Massachusetts (Boston: American Logotype, 1880).

Sweetser, M.F., King's Handbook of Newton, Massachusetts (Boston: Moses King, 1889).

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

Newton, Mass. Multiple Resource Area  
PUTNAM STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

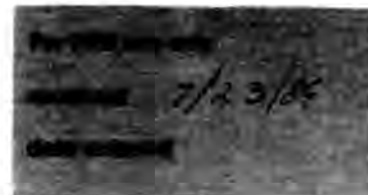
Address	S-B-L	Historic Name	Date	Style	C/NC	Inven. #	Area
38 Putnam St.	32-7-17		1877	Mansard/Stick Style	C	3660	18,703
39 Putnam St.	32-13-11	John S. Leonard House	1877	Stick Style	C	3652	21,230
44 Putnam St.	32-7-16	S. Edward Howard House	1885	Queen Anne	C	3659	18,164
50 Putnam St.	32-7-15		1898	Shingle Style/Col. Revival	C	3658	10,892
56 Putnam St.	32-7-14		1956	Ranch	NC		13,634
64 Putnam St.	32-7-13	Franklin D. Child House	1885	Queen Anne	C	3657	15,059
67 Putnam St.	32-12-50		1931	Colonial Revival	NC		7,984
74 Putnam St.	32-7-12		1880s	Stick Style/Queen Anne	C	3656	11,917
50 Shaw St.	32-13-8	John Bliss House	c.1868	Mansard	C	3641	9,420
34 Temple St.	32-8-5	Andrew J. Allen House	c.1849	Queen Anne	C	3687, WHN175	17,667
35 Temple St.	32-12-1	Edward Alden House	c.1874	Stick Style	C	3672	30,258
3 Winthrop St.	32-13-10	Cong. Church Parsonage	1863	Mansard	C	3651	19,370
4 Winthrop St.	32-12-49	John J. Eddy House	early 1870s	Mansard	C	3649	10,416
14 Winthrop St.	32-12-48	William Elder House	c.1872	Italianate	C	3648	17,104
17 Winthrop St.	32-13-9	Milo Lucas House	c.1870	Italianate	C	3650	16,308
22 Winthrop St.	32-12-47	Theodore Fleu House	1890	Queen Anne/Col. Revival	C	3647	17,110
34 Winthrop St.	32-12-46	Heman L. Putnam House	c.1874	Stick Style	C	3646	33,367
44 Winthrop St.	32-12-45		c.1872	Mansard	C	3645	23,383
52 Winthrop St.	32-12-44	Joseph B. Whitmore House	c.1870	Mansard	C	3644	20,578
58 Winthrop St.	32-12-43		c.1860	Mansard	C	3643	9,255

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20 properties with an area of 341,819 square feet (7.85 acres).  
(20 Buildings, 2 non-contributing)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA  
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Newton Lower Falls  
Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

12. Newton Theological Institution  
Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

13. Newton Upper Falls  
Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

14. Newtonville Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

15. Old Chestnut Hill  
Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

16. Our Lady Help of Christians  
Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

17. Putnam Street Historic  
District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

18. Sumner and Gibbs Streets  
Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

19. Union Street Historic  
District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

20. Webster Park Historic  
District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 9/4/86

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Putnam Street Historic District (Newton MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUL 23 1986  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 8/21/86 - 5/6/86  
Action:  ACCEPT 9-4-86  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

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

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

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**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_  
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

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

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_  
Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_\_ national \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet*



Newton, Mass; MRA

Putnam St. H. D.

64 Putnam St. (left) & 74 Putnam St. (right)



Newton, Mass. MRA

Putnam St. H.D.

38 Putnam St. (left) & 44 Putnam St. (right)

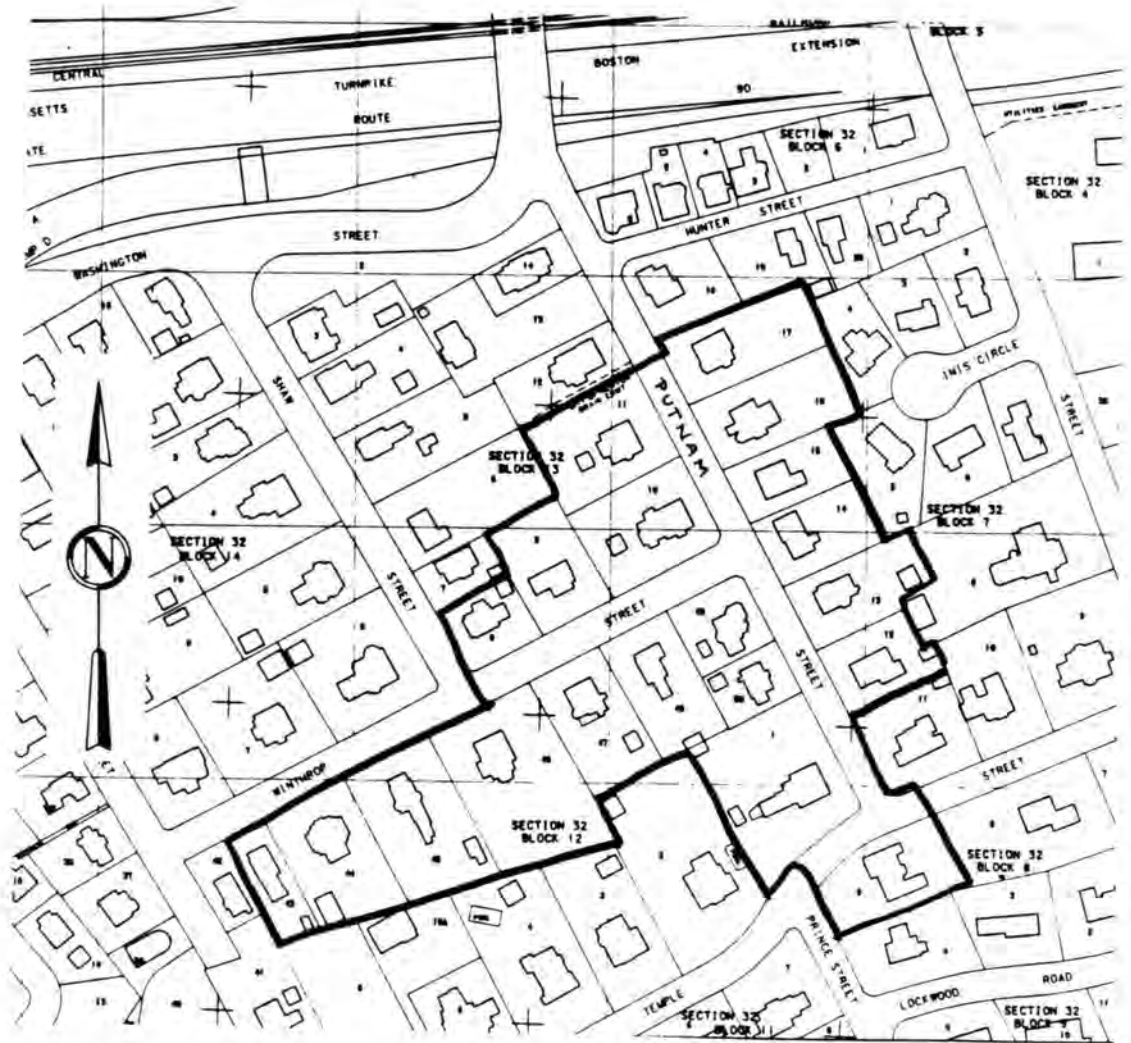


Newton, Mass. MRA

Putnam St. H. D.

Corner of Shaw & Winthrop streets.

50 Shaw St. in foreground



City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheet 41  
 Metric Series. 1979  
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA  
 AREA D  
 PUTNAM STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT