

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
30 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

Photos

21:9 attic

21:12 right-hand chamber

21:13 left-hand room

21:14 detail, summer beam, left-hand room

21:16 detail, summer tie beam at south
wall, right-hand chamber

21:20 recessed joints, laid flatwise, cellar

21:21 south and west facades

21:22 south and east facades

Town Ipswich

009

Address 37 Argilla Road

Historic Name Giddings-Burnham House

Use: Present Residence

Original Residence

DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1680-1690

Source A.L. Cummings' research and
stylistic analysisStyle First Period core, Second
Period exterior

Architect Unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric Clapboards

Outbuildings garage - 20th c.

Major Alterations (with dates) Lean-to
raised to 2 stories, ca. 1884

Condition Good

Moved No Date N/A

Acreage 8.35 acres

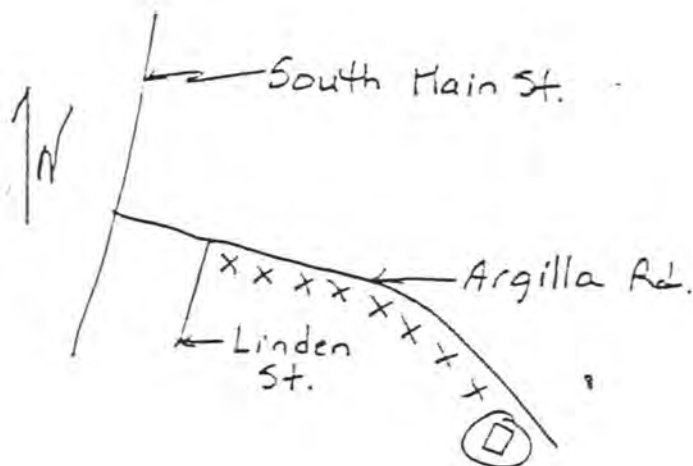
Setting rural: suburban street of
houses of mixed date set back from
street, facing south

Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Boston University

Date June 1986

Sketch Map:



Z E N

M REFERENCE 19 / 349-900 / 4725-970

GS QUADRANGLE Ipswich

SCALE 1:25,000

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: IPSWICH	Form No: 36
Property Name: Giddings-Burnham House	

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

SIGNIFICANCE

The Giddings-Burnham house retains integrity of location, design, workmanship, materials and setting in its First Period structure which embodies distinctive characteristics of form and construction eligible under Criterion C.

The house is representative of First Period construction in the last quarter of the 17th century in beam chamfering, joist spacing, and framing system. However, the house incorporates certain conservative features which link the house to carpentry practices in the earliest years of settlement. These features are the wattle and daub wall fill, the use of flat-wise joists in the cellar and the two story lapped studs in the north wall. Cummings argues that the conservative features are present for two reasons. There was an earlier house on the site from which material was salvaged, and the presumed builder of the present house, Carpenter Thomas Burnham, was an elderly man by the time the house was built.

George Giddings, who was granted the land in 1635, sold the property with dwelling house to Thomas Burnham in 1667. Burnham was sixty-two in 1680, the earliest date Cummings felt the house could have been built on the basis of style. In using wattle and daub, a wallfill method which had pretty well passed out of common use by the 1680s [2], and survives today in only one other example (Fairbanks House), Burnham may have been clinging to construction methods learned in his youth. Familiarity with or preference for traditional methods may have predisposed Burnham to salvage and use the flatwise joists in the cellar and two story studs in the north wall. Flatwise joists, already being superseded in England by depthwise joists when the first settlers arrived, survive in only one other known location in Massachusetts, the Fairbanks House of 1637. The tusk tenons of these joists are likewise a conservative feature. The use of two story studs occurs in some of the earliest surviving houses, although very occasionally also in later houses. The 2 story studs in the Burnham house may have been part of the earlier house. Their redundant use along with one story studs in the present house is not readily explainable.

The possibility exists that carpenter Burnham built the two 17th century houses on Heartbreak Road. They are close geographically, Thomas Burnham was the father of James Burnham, owner of the house at 37 Heartbreak Road, and the Giddings-Burnham shares with the Low House a rather distinctive collar beam configuration. The potential for comparative study with the two Heartbreak Road houses, should their concealed features be uncovered, adds to the importance of the Burnham house.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: IPSWICH	Form No: 36
Property Name: Giddings-Burnham House	

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Giddings-Burnham house is 5 bays wide, one room deep, and 2 1/2 stories in height with a rear lean-to and a 1977 gambrel roofed addition to the left side. The house was built as a double cell, central chimney structure c. 1680-1690, and has history of several rear additions, possibly there was at first a lean-to. Then c. 1730 a gambrel roofed one story ell was built. The ell was later raised to two stories and in the 1930s was remodelled to the present lean-to with full dormer. The clapboarded exterior is First Period in appearance except for the sash windows. The windows are atypically arranged on the facade, with four windows on first floor and three above. There is a hewn overhang on the facade and sides, and a second overhang at the gable ends. The roof pitch is relatively steep. Small consoles at the overhang on the facade appear to be a restoration feature. The pilastered central chimney is a reconstruction made during restoration of the house in 1935.

MAJOR FIRST PERIOD FEATURES

First Period features are visible in all four rooms and the cellar. Other important features now enclosed in the walls which were discovered during the 1977 work will also be described.

In the left-hand room, 18 feet deep by 15 1/2 feet wide, the longitudinal summer beam has quarter-round chamfers, flat collars and lamb's tongue stops. Joists, spaced 19 1/2 to 20 1/2 inches on centers, are framed into the summer beam with bare faced soffit tenons. Exposed framing in the room including the joists is of oak, except for the summer beam which is made of another wood, possibly tamarack. When the west wall of the left-hand room was opened in 1977, wattle and daub wall filling was discovered. The wattles, pieces of oak 1 to 2 inches wide and shaped to something of a point at each end, "are sprung into notches in the studs." [1] Clay and straw daub was pressed between and behind the wattles.

Opening up the west end of the north wall in 1977 revealed two sets of studs. One set is composed of 2" x 3" studs, a single story in length, which are mortised into the frame and run from sill to girt and from girt to plate. The second set which is redundant, is composed of studs 2 stories in height which are lapped and pegged to the girt. Possibly the second set of studs is related to the George Giddings house built perhaps as early as 1635 and formerly on the site.

The right-hand room, of dimensions identical to the left room, has similar framing features, including a possible tamarack longitudinal summer beam with quarter round chamfers, flat collars and lamb's tongue stops.

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The stairs are enclosed in vertical feather-edged sheathing. Most of the sheathing appears to date from the restoration of the house in 1935. The left- and right-hand chambers have c. 12 inch wide summer tie beams with quarter round chamfers with flat collars and lamb's tongue stops.

Framing in the attic is of principal rafters and common purlins. There are mortised collar beams. The collar beams are relatively small members placed quite high up on the rafters. (Note: collar beams in the nearby Low House are similar).

Framing in the cellar consists, according to Cummings, of material salvaged from the earlier house on the site. There are longitudinal spanning beams with broad, flat chamfers. Joists laid flat wise are framed into the spanning beams with tusk tenons.

Another feature of the cellar is the positioning of a joist at the inner edge of the foundation and filling the space between the sill and joist with a clay and shell mixture.

LATER SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Finishes in the house include vertical board sheathing and some two panel doors. Because William Sumner Appleton visited the house in 1914 and found most of the original finish removed, we can assume that the current finishes date from the 1935 restoration. Appleton did find an oak wainscot door of sunken panels and shadow molded stiles and rails in a reused position in the house and acquired it for SPNEA's architectural museum. The door, characteristic of English work of the period, is assumed to come from the earlier house on the site.

REFERENCES

1. A. L. Cummings, Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979:139-140
2. David McLaren Hort, Report^s, George Giddings House, 1978 for Mr. and Mrs. Norton Sloan.
3. Cummings, Massachusetts and Its First Period Houses. Publication of the Colonial Society in Massachusetts 51:148-149.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
State _____

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Foster, Stephen, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

5-16 22. Foster, William, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

23. Fowler, Rea Putnam, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

24. French--Andrews House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

5-16 25. Friend, James, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

26. Frye, Samuel, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

3-16 27. Fuller, Joseph, House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

28. Fuller, Lieut. Thomas, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

29. Giddings, George, House and Barn

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Attest

30. Giddings--Burnham House

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

Attest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90000233 Date Listed: 03/09/90

Giddings--Burnham House Essex MA
Property Name County State

First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for [Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

03/09/90
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Geographical Data: VBD

The handwritten scale on the sketch map supersedes the typed or printed one: the handwritten scale is the appropriate scale for the reduced map.

This information has been confirmed with Ann Tait, MASHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Giddings--Burnham House
NAME:

MULTIPLE First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/24/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/07/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/10/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000233

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3/9/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C
REVIEWER Savage
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 3/9/90

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

CLASSIFICATION

___ count ___ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___ historic ___ current

DESCRIPTION

___ architectural classification
___ materials
___ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

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

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___ acreage ___ verbal boundary description
___ UTM's ___ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___ sketch maps ___ USGS maps ___ photographs ___ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



21:22

37 Argyle Rd

Ipswich, MA

Giddings-Burnham House
South + west facades
1985

Is + Period Buildings at E. May, TR



21-21

Giddings - Burnham

37 Argilla Rd

Ipswich

EXTENSION

1985

Let Period Buildings of E. May, JR



Ipswich, T/A

Giddings - Bernham House
37 Argilla Road
attic

1985

1st Period Building at E. May, TR

21-9



Ipswich, T/A

21-13

Giddings - Bernham House

37 Angilla Road

Left hand room

1985

1st Period Buildings of E. Mo., TR



Ipswich, TA

Giddings - Burnham House

37 Argilla Road

right hand chamber

21-12

1st Period Buildings of E. May TR



Ipswich, TTA
Giddings - Burnham House
37 Argilla Road
detail - summer the
1985

21-16

1st Period Buildings of E. May, TR



Ipswich, TTA

Giddings-Burnham House 21-~~21~~

37 Argilla Road

detail - summer

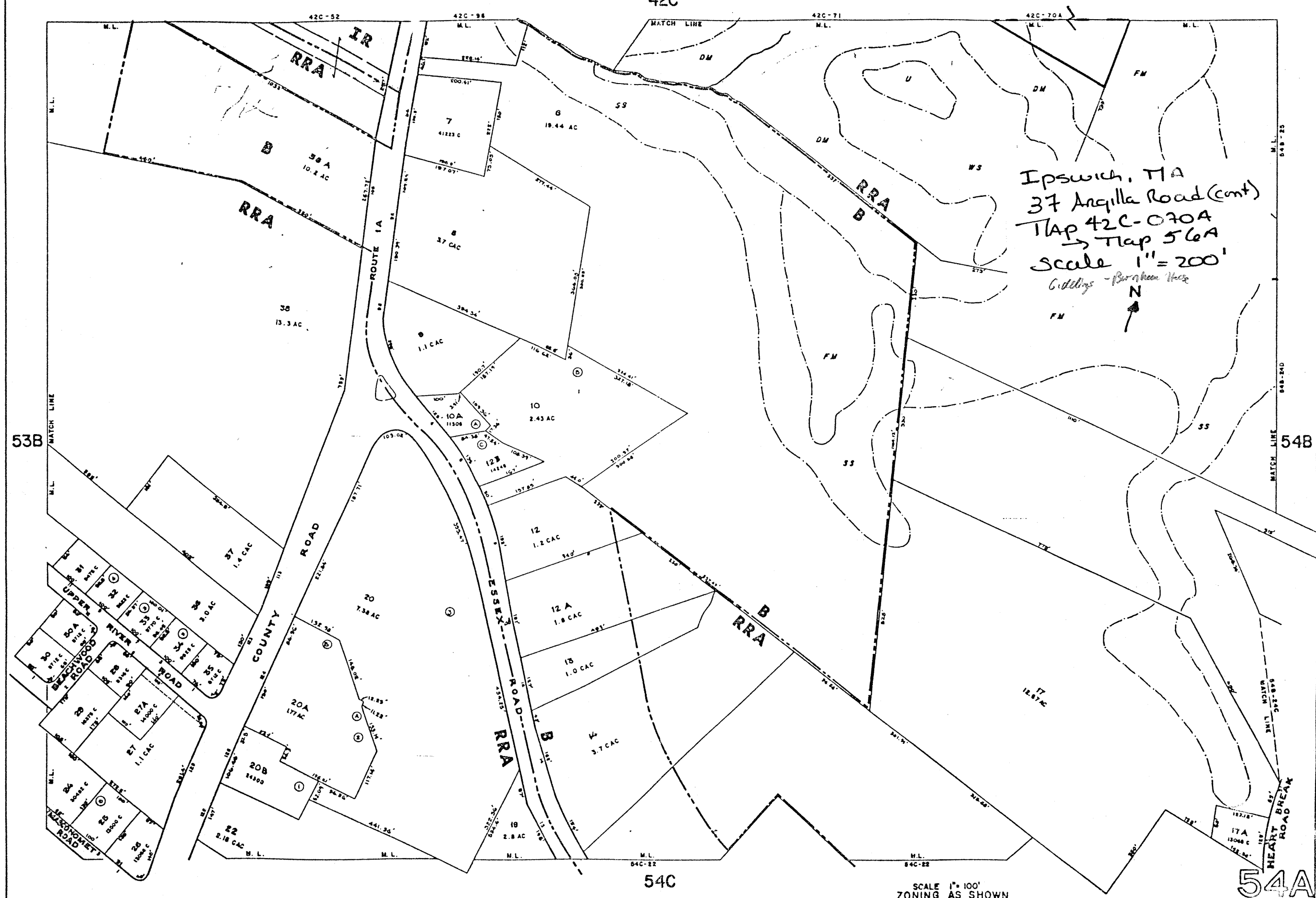
14

37 Argilla Rd

1st Period Buildings of E. May, TR

54C

SCALE 1" = 100'
ZONING AS SHOWN



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000281