

FORM A - AREA SURVEY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

Form numbers in this area	Area no.
1-6	S



town Brookline MRA
 name of area (if any) Beaconsfield Terraces
Historic District
 general date or period 1889-1892
 area uniform (explain):
 style? Chateausque, Flemish, Georgian
Revival
 condition? Good
 type of ownership? private
 use? residential-apartments, condominium

5. Map. Use space below to draw a general map of the area involved. Indicate any historic properties for which individual reports are completed on Forms B thru F, using corresponding numbers. Show street names (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. Indicate with an "x" existing houses not inventoried on Form B.



Newton Quadrangle
 UTM References:
 A: 19/324400/4689300
 B: 19/323820/4689100
 C: 19/323740/4689300

Acreage: approximately 6 acres

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
 USGS Quadrant _____
 MHC Photo no. _____

6. Recorded by Carla Benka, Leslie Larkin
 Organization Brookline Historical Com.
 Date May 1980

(over)

7. Historical data. Explain the historical/architectural importance of this area.

The Beaconsfield Terraces are seven groups of attached townhouses located on Beacon Street*, Tappan Street, and Garrison Road which, at the time of their construction, were described as "an experiment in Domestic Economy." They represent an early and successful attempt at condominium living, with families enjoying the privacy of their individually owned units and communally owned amenities, including a six acre park, stables, a casino, playground for children, tennis courts, and conservatories. It should be noted that the casino, stables and conservatories have been demolished, while the land comprising the six acre park has since been developed. The terraces offered "the summum bonum of material comforts with complete relief from the worries and cares of the average household." The residents had the benefits of a private estate without the trouble and individual expense of maintenance.

Eugene Knapp, the largest Australian wool "operator" in the United States, invested his fortune in the development of the Beaconsfield Terraces, having been inspired by similar arrangements which he had seen while traveling in England. Between 1885 and 1889, he purchased from the West End Land Company and/or Henry Whitney the former Williams Estate which was bounded by Beacon and Tappan Streets and Garrison and Winthrop Roads. (Knapp's own house was a Second Empire style mansion on the corner of Beacon and Tappan Streets).

The first terrace consisted of eight houses, built of yellow brick and fieldstone in a variation of the Chateausque style. Architects were Fehmer and Page. Carl Fehmer was born in Germany and is probably best known for his design of the Oliver Ames Mansion on the corner of Massachusetts and Commonwealth Avenues in Boston's Back Bay, and of the Worthington Building at 33 State Street, one of the earlier steel framed office buildings in Boston. The Chateausque style was also used in the design for Richter Terrace (1889, see Beacon Street area form), the second of the group of terraces to be built; Gordon Terrace at 11-25 Garrison Road (1891-2); and Marguerite Terrace at 316-326 Tappan Street (1891). Steep hip roofs, round arched entranceways, brick corbeling, gable wall dormers, and polygonal bays and towers are typical features.

Unique to the collection is Fillmore Terrace, designed in a Flemish style by Fehmer and Page with steep slate gable roofs, hipped dormers and cross gables, and large wall gables with volute buttresses and pinnacles of limestone. The cornice has brick dentils while the windows in the Flemish gables have stone banding. This series of originally seven townhouses is constructed of yellow brick and fieldstone, like those designed in the Chateausque style.

*The seventh terrace, Richter Terrace, is located on Beacon Street and ^{is} included in the Beacon Street nomination; see map and form number K-51.

8. Bibliography and/or references such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.

Knapp Obituary-Brookline Chronicle, July 8, 1905, p. 8, vol.32

Boston Directory-1885

Plan-Engineering Department, L/13/A/36

Atlases-1888, 1893, 1897, 1900

New England Magazine, 1892, "Beaconsfield Terraces" by John Waterman, p. 625

Tax lists and directories-1889-1893

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

BROOKLINE

Form No:

AREA FORM S

Property Name Beaconsfield Terraces

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

The remaining terraces are located on Garrison Road and were built in 1891-2 in the Georgian Revival style. Of red brick, these two blocks of originally six townhouses have symmetrical facades and such decorative elements as Palladian windows, classical cornices, porticoed entryways with Corinthian columns, and low hip roofs.

Knapp negotiated the sale of the land for the terraces at a time when Beacon Street was being widened and transformed from a fifty foot wide, ungraded, muddy road into a one hundred and fifty foot wide urban boulevard with an electric streetcar running its length. Clearly one reason for the success of the Beaconsfield Terraces was the proximity to public transportation (and therefore Boston); the uniqueness of the complex with private park, recreational facilities, and social gathering spot, and the soundness of the construction which followed the "English plan of solid foundations (five feet thick walls, lessening to two at the eaves of the roofs); solid roofs made to keep out the rain and look ornamental, and well seasoned timbers." The interiors of the forty eight houses afforded an abundance of light and generous views. There was even a separate boiler house to provide steam heat to each unit. Not surprisingly, the houses were sold quickly, to merchants, business executives, and doctors. Among the earlier owners of Richter Terrace were William Lloyd Garrison, an attorney and the son of the noted abolitionist, and William Shreve, a partner in the firm of Shreve, Crump and Low.

A later addition to the complex was the construction of the Hotel Beaconsfield which burned to the ground in 1966. The hotel, built at the turn of the century and designed to resemble the southwest front of Stoneleigh Abbey in Kenilworth, England, contained 200 rooms, an oval dining room which seated more than 75 people, mahogany furnishings, and oriental rugs. Presidents stayed there as well as tennis stars who played at the tournaments of the Longwood Cricket Club. It even had its own private railroad station on the Boston and Albany line.

According to Knapp's obituary, when the panic of 1903 came, Knapp was overextended financially and sold his Beaconsfield complex to Henry Whitney who rehired Knapp as manager. The loss of "life's work"; his son through an accidental drowning, and finally his unexpected dismissal by Whitney led to his suicide by drowning near Boone Island, Maine.

The Beaconsfield Terraces meet NR Criteria A and C, being a forerunner in the now very popular concept of condominium/cluster housing. Designed by the well-known and established Boston architectural firm of Fehmer and Page, their turrets and towers established an architectural theme which can be seen in many of the buildings on Beacon Street.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Brookline	Form No: AREA "S"
Property Name: BEACONSFIELD TERRACES	

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

11-25 GARRISON Rd



Detail
11-25 GARRISON Rd

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Brookline

Form No:

AREA "S"

Property Name: Beaconsfield Terraces

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



44-55 GARRELSON RD



33-43 GARRISON RD

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Brookline

Form No:

AREA "5"

Property Name: Beacon's Field Terraces

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

Detail -

55 GARRISON RD



Staple to Inventory form at bottom

BEACONSFIELD TERRACES - AREA S

<u>MAP#</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>ARCHITECT</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>STATUS</u> *
S-6	11-25 Garrison Road	1891-92	Fehmer and Page	Eugene Knapp	C
S-5	33-43 Garrison Road	1892	Fehmer and Page	Eugene Knapp	C
S-4	44-55 Garrison Road	1892	Fehmer and Page	Eugene Knapp	C
S-3	316-326 Tappan Street	1891	Fehmer and Page	Eugene Knapp	C
S-2	332-344 Tappan Street	1890	Fehmer and Page	Eugene Knapp	C
S-1	350-366 Tappan Street	1889	Fehmer and Page	Eugene Knapp	C

* C - Contributing Property

85003248

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Beaconsfield Terraces Historic District
(Brookline MRA)
Norfolk County
MASSACHUSETTS

SEP 4 1985

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 10/3/85 - 10/19/85
Action: ACCEPT 10-17-85
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 Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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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

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

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 _____

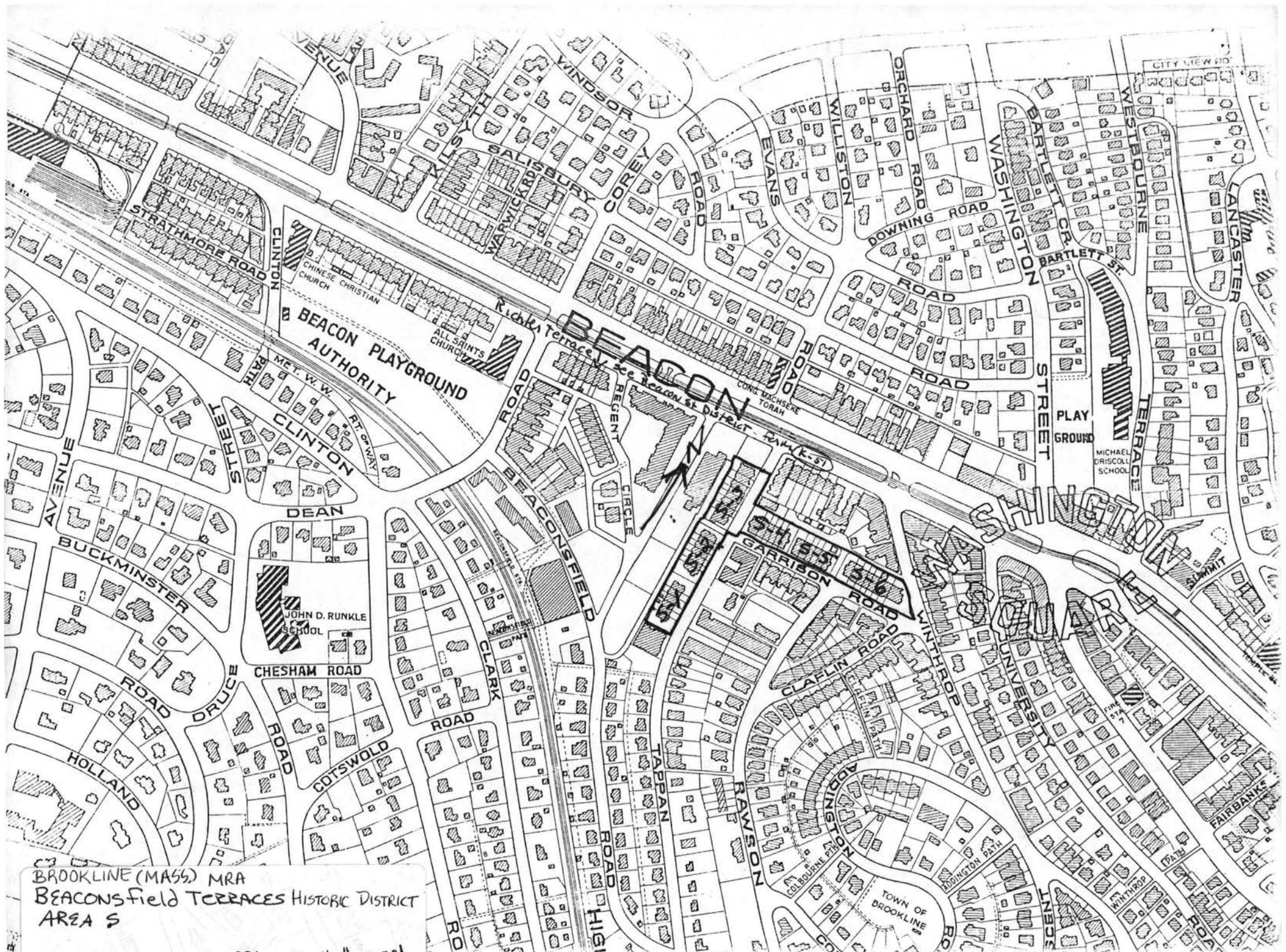
13. Other

- 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



BROOKLINE (MASS.) MRA
BEACONFIELD TERRACES HISTORIC DISTRICT
AREA S

TOWN OF BROOKLINE MAP-1981 1/2" = 200'