

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

32/205 [] [] [] 2219

Town/City: Lexington

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Front (Farmcrest Ave. facade) and right side (Kendall Road) elevations

Address: 39 Farmcrest Avenue

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1918-27

Source: town directories, historic maps

Style/Form: Bungalow

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: fieldstone

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Enclosure of entry porch, fenestration, shed dormer, gabled dormers (L 20th – E 21st centuries)

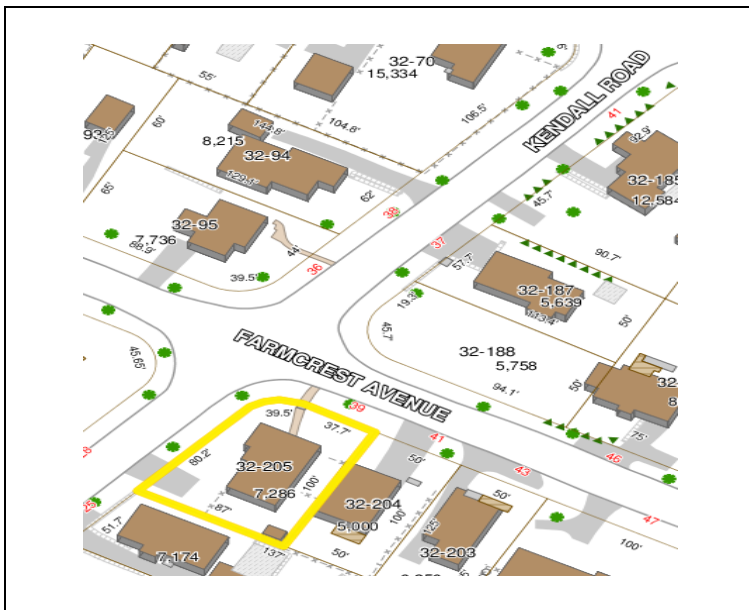
Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.17

Setting: Suburban, hillside location. Located in a densely-built residential area in south-central Lexington, near intersection of Marrett Road and Waltham Street. Surrounding building are of similar period, siting, and form.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

39 FARMCREST AVENUE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

39 Farmcrest Avenue occupies a small corner lot that slopes up from both street edges to the house. Maintained mostly in lawn, the yard also features foundation plantings, scattered small trees, and a hedge along most of Kendall Road. A paved parking area abuts Kendall Road behind the house, with poured concrete steps joining it to the back entrance. A paved walkway with poured concrete steps connects Farmcrest Avenue and the front entrance. The house is roughly centered in its lot, with modest setbacks on all sides.

The rectangular building rises 1 ½ stories from a fieldstone foundation with deeply recessed joints to a front gable roof with a saltbox extension at the front right corner, which encloses an entrance vestibule. One chimney is located on the left slope of the roof, near the front of the building and the ridgeline; another projects from the back of the right slope, also near the ridgeline. Walls are clad with wood shingles. Windows typically have 6/6 double hung windows with band molding. The façade (Farmcrest Avenue elevation) comprises, on the first floor, a triplet of casement windows at the left side, a modern bow window with casement sash positioned slightly off-center, and the entrance porch at the right. Small, paired 6/6 windows are centered in the half story. Accessed by wood steps, the entry features a single-leaf door facing Farmcrest Avenue, banded windows around its front corner, and a small six-light window at the rear, facing Kendall Road.

The left side elevation has a pair of rectangular awning windows towards the front of its first floor, along with paired windows near the center. A shed dormer spans nearly the entire elevation, containing three widely spaced, 6/6 windows of varied heights in the half story.

The right side (Kendall Road) elevation has a tri-partite window near the center and paired casements towards the back on the first floor, surmounted by three gabled dormers with square, 8/8 window sash. The rear elevation has a small recessed entrance at the back right corner of the building, with a shingled post, a single-leaf door facing Kendall Road, and wood steps with wrought iron railings. On the rear wall, a single-leaf basement door is set near the center, with paired windows to the right on the first floor level; paired, large awning windows are centered in the half story.

Well maintained, 39 Farmcrest Avenue has lost historic integrity through significant changes in its fenestration and the addition of multiple dormers. A modest example of early 20th century suburban development, the house is notable for its front gable form with integral entry porch (exploiting the property's corner location) and its rustic masonry foundation.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Farmcrest Avenue was laid out between 1918 and 1922 as part of the suburbanization of southern Lexington. 39 Farmcrest Avenue appears on the 1927 Sanborn map with a small, one-story accessory building—likely a garage—in the back, near Kendall Road. (The outbuilding survived until at least 1950.) The first known occupants of the house, in 1935, were Edwin T. Sleeper, a dentist with a practice in Arlington, and his wife Helen. Edwin remained in the house through at least 1965; Helen was with him through at least 1955.

Farmcrest Avenue is part of a cohesive, early 20th century subdivision created from the former Valley Field Farm, which was owned by Francis Paul Kendall. Descendant of a family that had settled in Lexington by the early 18th century, Francis Kendall

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(1854-1912) was married to Frances Aline Webber McGinness (b. 1868) of Missouri. Valley Field Farm occupied the entire area bounded by Marrett and Stedman roads on the north and east and Allen and Waltham streets on the south and west.

New transportation systems established in the early 20th century opened up large areas of rural land in Lexington for residential and commercial development. Street railway service began in Lexington in 1900, replaced by bus lines in 1924). Two state roadways were designated in the town, including Marrett and Middle streets as the Route 2A bypass in the 1920s, and parts of Mass. Ave., Woburn Street, and Waltham Street as components of an early Route 128 in the 1920s and 30s. By 1921, 35 new residential subdivisions were being developed in Lexington. Small commercial centers were established to service the expanding population at various cross roads, including what was known as Grape Vine Corner at the intersection of Waltham Street and Marrett Road, near the western end of Farmcrest Avenue.

Known as "Farmhurst," the subdivision encompassing Farmcrest Avenue was developed by Neil McIntosh, a Lexington resident who was active in Lexington, Wellesley, and Arlington. McIntosh's properties comprised more than 500 acres throughout Lexington, including Farmhurst, Fair Oaks (just to the north across Marrett Road), the Cary estate, and the Prospect Hill Road area.

In the 1930 federal census, the first to represent Farmcrest Avenue, residents of the street worked in a diverse array of occupations: in addition to Mr. Sleeper at #39, there were a college professor, coal dealer, owner of a radio service business, plumber, landscaper on a farm, and several salesmen (for furniture, automobiles, printing office supplies, and tea). Reflecting the rapid popularity of the automobile, in 1927, of the approximately 37 parcels laid out on Farmcrest Avenue, 23 were occupied by new houses and more than half of them (13) also had garages.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Historic maps and atlases: Walling 1853; Beers 1875; Walker 1889; Stadly 1898; Walker 1906; Sanborn 1908, 1918, 1927, 1935, 1935/1950.

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<http://historicsurvey.lexingtonma.gov/index.htm> Accessed Jul 23, 2015.

Lexington Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1934, 1936.

Lexington *List of Persons*: 1935, 1945, 1955, 1965.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Lexington." 1980.

U.S. Census: 1930, 1940.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Left side and front (Farmcrest Ave. façade) elevations



Right side (Kendall road) and rear elevations

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