

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

32/200 [] [] 2220

Town/City: Lexington

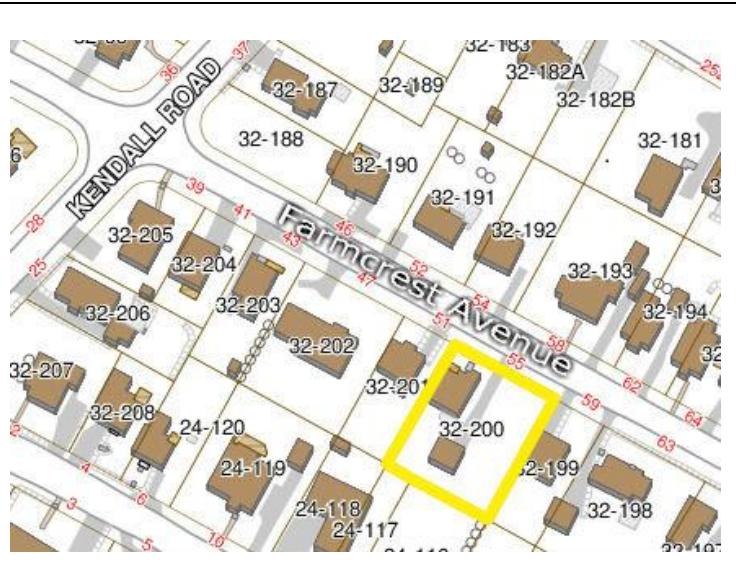
Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



North (façade) and west elevations

Locus Map



Address: 55 Farmcrest Ave.

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: 1910

Source: assessors; visual

Style/Form: Bungalow/Craftsman

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Upper dormer (late 20th c)

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .29 acres

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

Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero, preservation consultant

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date: September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

55 FARMCREST AVE.

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.

55 Farmcrest Avenue stands near the top of a small hill, on a small but comfortably sized lot. The landform slopes down from the back of the parcel to the street, a gradient that is accommodated in the house by a raised basement. The streetscape contains buildings of similar scale, period, and style; it is further unified by consistent building spacing, setbacks, and heights and by regular, medium-sized street trees on both sides.

The three by two bay main block rises 2 ½ stories from a fieldstone foundation to a side gable roof with a small brick interior chimney near the east end. Walls are sheathed with wood shingles and trimmed with a plain flat sill board and a flat fascia with a slender crown molding at the eave lines. Eaves on the gable ends are adorned with sawn concave brackets at the building corners; regularly spaced, slim flat bars applied to the soffits; and a small, decoratively carved finial post at each peak. Windows typically have 6/1 double hung sash with band molding.

The building's three-bay façade (north elevation) contains a center entry vestibule with a shed roof and a single-leaf door with transom on the front. A shallow projecting window bay flanks each side of the door, each displaying a tri-partite window unit. A small porch on a fieldstone base extends to each side of the entry vestibule, its railings comprised of square balusters and posts. The second floor contains a shed roof dormer that extends the plane of the façade below; its tri-partite center window unit is flanked by paired windows to each side. A low shed-roofed dormer occupies the east side of the roof and is lit by small awning windows.

The symmetrical east elevation features paired windows on the first floor, single windows on the second floor, and a single casement window at the peak. The similar but asymmetrical west elevation contains a pair of small 6-light windows near the front corner with two single windows beyond on the first floor, two single windows on the second floor, and a 6/6 window in the peak.

A concrete walkway leads from the street to a short flight of cast concrete steps and then an upper flight of fieldstone steps with granite slab treads. Lined with cast concrete curbs, the driveway leads to a two-bay garage that is sheathed with board and batten siding and surmounted by a hip roof. A tall evergreen hedge defines the northeast corner of the property.

Well-preserved and well-maintained, 55 Farmcrest Avenue is a good example of relatively modest, early 20th century suburban development in Lexington. Along with its congenial streetscape, the house is noteworthy for its siting, pleasing proportions, careful detailing, and early garage.

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. The Remick family lived here from at least 1924 through 1950. Edward J. Remick (b. ca. 1877) was a coal dealer in Somerville; his wife Violet M. Remick (b. ca. 1886) is identified as a housewife. Their daughter Minnie (b. ca. 1907) may have lived here with them initially, but she is not listed at the house in 1930. Between 1922 and 1924, the Remicks moved to Farmcrest Avenue from Arlington, where they had rented a house. Edward Remick was a self-made businessman, as the highest academic level he achieved was the eighth grade.

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Barry E. Supply, a professor, and his wife Sonia lived at 55 Farmcrest Avenue in 1960, moving here from Cambridge in 1959. By 1965, the house was occupied by Edward M. Gaposchkin, described as a scientist, and his wife, Anne. The Gaposchkin family remained at this property at least through 1975.

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 (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. Remick, the coal dealer at #55, there were a college professor, dentist, 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: Stadly 1898; Walker 1906; Sanborn 1908, 1918, 1927, 1927/1930, 1935, 1935/1950
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U.S. Census, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



East and north (façade) elevations (view SW)



Garage: north (façade) elevation