

FORM B – BUILDING

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

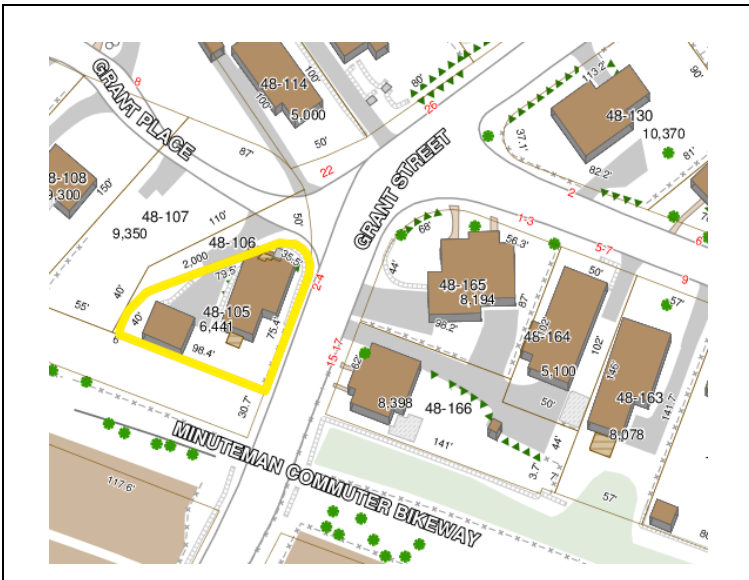
Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

48/105/1 and 2 2224

Photograph



Locus Map



Town/City: Lexington

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Lexington Center

Address: 2-4 Grant Place

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1890s

Source: assessors' records; style

Style/Form: Queen Anne

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite rubble

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Detached garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Rear addition, changes to fenestration on back elevation (L 20th c)

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.15

Setting: Small residential enclave on a dead-end street, parallel to former railroad tracks. Typically small-scale houses of widely varied periods, styles, forms, and siting.

Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

2-4 GRANT PLACE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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	2224
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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.

2-4 Grant Place occupies a small, almost triangular lot at the corner of Grant Place and Grant Street, adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway rail trail. The lot slopes down to the back, affording a fully exposed basement level at the rear of the building. The site is bordered by a random ashlar retaining wall with a granite cap at the street corner and a wall of massive granite blocks at the former railroad abutment. The building is set very close to both its adjacent streets. Its narrow front setback is occupied mainly by small shrubs and trees, which extend around the right side of the house as well. The slender left side setback is planted with perennials, while the small back yard is maintained in lawn. Most of the right side yard is occupied by a broad, gravel driveway. The building consists of a 1 ¾ story main block and a one-story rear addition above a raised basement level.

The modest main block rises from a random ashlar foundation with grapevine mortar joints to a front gable roof with no gable returns and decoratively sawn brackets at the wall corners. Walls are clad with wood clapboards and trimmed with sill boards, flat corner boards, and a plain flat fascia with a narrow bed molding. Windows typically have 6/1 or 8/1 double hung replacement sash. Some casement and awnings windows are located towards the back of the main block and at the addition. The two-bay façade has an offset door and small angled bay on the first floor, joined by a continuous flat hood with decoratively sawn and paneled brackets and a geometric railing above. The single-leaf, original or early entry door has wood and glass panels. A dentil course and crown molding trim the plain flat casing of the front door, the continuous header joining the two second floor windows, and the small window centered in the attic story.

The right side elevation contains two square windows with geometrically-gridded Queen Anne-style sash and a hip roof porch with square posts. At the back, a modest perpendicular ell rises 1 ½ stories above a fully-exposed basement to a gabled roof, with a single window centered in the first floor and half story. The basement level on this side contains sliding glass doors and a pair of casement windows. The left side elevation displays a narrow shed-roofed wall dormer towards the front and a modest cross-gable dormer at the back, each with a single window. The first floor has two pairs of windows generally aligning with the dormers above. The basement contains single and paired windows.

The back elevation of the main block has two narrow shed-roofed wall dormers. The gabled rear addition is utilitarian in design, with sliding windows on the main floor, a single-leaf door on the lower level on the right side, and sliding doors from its main floor to a contemporary wood deck on the back elevation.

2-4 Grant Place is an unusually well-detailed example of late 19th century workers' housing in Lexington. Well preserved and maintained, it is notable for its decorative façade details, corner eave brackets, lively roofline, prominent corner location, and carefully detailed granite retaining wall.

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.

Grant Place extends from the intersection of Grant and Sherman streets, parallel to the old Boston & Maine railroad tracks (now the Minuteman Bikeway), and ends just short of Oakland Street. The history of this piece of land is not well known at present, but seems closely related to Lexington's industrial history. The railroad arrived in Lexington in 1845-46, and the area now traversed by Grant Place was part of a large rail yard at least through 1906, including a turntable and locomotive house. A wood footbridge connected the depot and Oakland Street, crossing the tracks just south of M. H. Merriam & Co.'s shoe findings factory (1918, 1927, and 1935; NR 2009). Between 1927 and 1935, most of the railroad buildings were removed from the area.

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Residential development of today's Grant Place was sporadic, and both 2-4 and 11 Grant Place may have been moved to this streetscape, as they seem stylistically to pre-date the street itself.

An extension of Sherman Street west of Grant Street first appears on the maps in 1889 as an informal passageway into the rail yards, at right angles to Grant Street. A roadway here is not depicted again in any form until 1918, when a stubby Grant Place extends at an acute angle from Grant Street. In 1927, this house and the beginning of Grant Place remain in the same configuration. Between 1927 and 1935, the original stub of Grant Place was joined by the Sherman Street Extension, apparently just a road on paper, which extended perpendicular to Grant Street and is shown as 50 feet wide and connecting with Oakland Street. By 1950, the Sherman Street Extension was renamed Grant Place, but was still hypothetical.

2-4 Grant Street appears on its current site by 1918; 11 Grant Place by 1950. Two buildings at what is now the end of Grant Place (a side by side duplex and a single-family dwelling) are also in place by 1918; the present pair of buildings there may be re-workings of those two early residences. A house at the head of Grant Street (#22, apparently extant), facing Sherman Street, was standing here by 1927.

The present house at 2-4 Grant Street is first shown in its current location in 1918. A variety of outbuildings have stood on the site between 1918 and 1950, changing in size, shape, height, and location from time to time. It is not clear that any are the current garage.

The first known residents at this address (as early as 1930 and into the 1980s) are the family of Joseph P. Grace, who was a laborer in the Jefferson Union Co. machine shop. Members of the Grace family included his wife Mary (husband and wife were both born in the Azores), and their daughter Mary, who worked as a bookkeeper in an office. Other individuals residing here with the Graces included four adults of various ages and names (two of whom seem to be mother and daughter; 1935); Everett Humphrey (a clerk) with his wife Violet and young son (1940); Eugene Taylor, an "operator", and his wife Sarah (1945 and 1955); and octogenarian Ethel J. Brown (1965)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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

Lexington Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1922, 1930, 1934, 1936.

Lexington *List of Persons*: 1935, 1945, 1955, 1960, 1965.

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

U.S. Census: 1920, 1940.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



Left side and front (facade) elevations



Front (facade) elevation



Garage: Front (facade) elevation