

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

20/152 [] [] 2269

Town/City: Lexington

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



West (left side) and south (façade) elevations

Address: 7 Theresa Avenue

Historic Name:

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: ca. 1927-35

Source: historic maps

Style/Form: Craftsman

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: wood shingles and trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

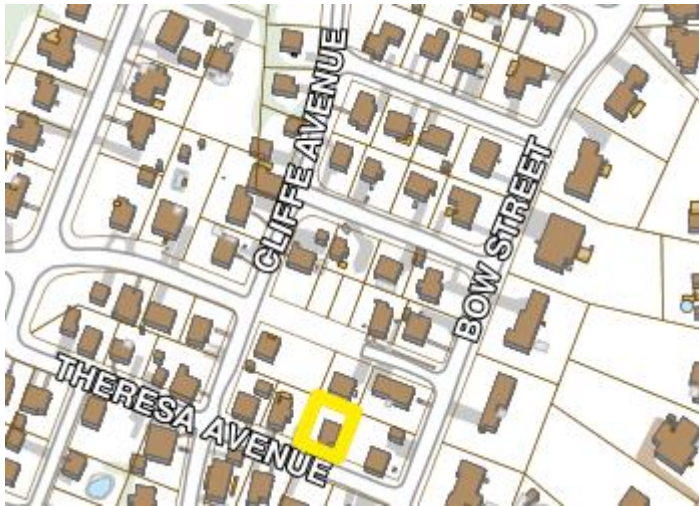
Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.10

Setting: Located on a residential side street, midway between Bow Street and Cliffe Avenue. Densely built, hillside neighborhood contains heterogeneous buildings of similar scale and predominantly early to mid-20th century construction.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

LEXINGTON

7 THERESA AVENUE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	2269
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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.

7 Theresa Avenue occupies a small lot that slopes steeply down from west to east. The house is positioned slightly to the east on its parcel, with modest front and side setbacks. A level, paved driveway occupies the front east corner of the lot. A modern concrete block retaining wall wraps around the small front yard with its lawn, perennials, and shrubs. A concrete walkway leads from the sidewalk to the front entrance. The side yards are heavily landscaped with shrubs and perennials. A tall hedge lines the street edge to the west of the house.

The building consists of a simple, nearly square volume that rises 2 ½ stories from a concrete block foundation to a front gabled roof with exposed rafter ends and a chimney set in the center of the left slope, near the ridgeline. Walls are clad with wood shingles. Windows typically have 1/1 double hung replacement sash with a narrow band molding. The two-bay front façade contains a one-story entry porch with concrete steps and square Tuscan posts supporting a low hip roof with exposed rafter ends; it covers a little more than half of the first story. To the right of the single leaf doorway is a tripartite window with 1/1 sash. Two asymmetrical windows occupy the second floor, and a smaller window is centered in the gable peak. A pedimented gable end is formed by a narrow, flared roof skirt connecting the front corners of the roof. Due to the sloping terrain, the basement is fully exposed at the eastern side of the house; a modern tripartite window having a large picture window in the center and a narrow casement window on each side faces the driveway.

The east (right side) elevation has a fully exposed basement and a variety of 1/1 windows and small rectangular sash. The west (left side) elevation of the house has one 1/1 window and a casement window on the first floor and an offset 1/1 window towards the back of the second story.

Well preserved and maintained, 7 Theresa Street is representative of modest, early 20th century suburban housing in Lexington. The house is notable for its intact simple massing, pedimented gable front, unusual concrete block foundation, classic front porch, and tripartite window on the façade.

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.

The neighborhood centered around Bow Street and Hillcrest, Cliffe, and Rindge avenues covers a steep hillside between Massachusetts Avenue and Lowell Street along the Arlington town line. The Great Meadows and Arlington Reservoir are located to the west and east, respectively. By 1898, a very short stub of road between Mass. Avenue and the B & M Railroad tracks is labeled Bow Street. North of the tracks, it continues as a pathway to a farmhouse identified as J. A. Wilson. The 1899 directory identifies a James Wilson, farmer and market gardener, with a house off Bow, and a James A. Wilson, market gardener, with a house on Bow. The land remained undeveloped as part of the Wilson Farm until at least 1906.

Most of the streets here were laid out and platted for house lots by 1927; development most likely began after 1918. Development slowly crept up the hillside through the early and mid 20th century, most densely along the grid of streets closest to Massachusetts Avenue. The Wilson farm remained in existence east of Bow Street (in the area now traversed by South Rindge Street) until at least 1950, when it encompassed a substantial farmhouse and greenhouse and two other large outbuildings.

The area was likely developed in response to the electric street railway, which began service on Mass. Avenue in 1899. Like Liberty Heights to the south of Massachusetts Avenue (which it resembles, architecturally; LEX.Q), this neighborhood—known

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as Massachusetts Avenue Terrace and Arlington Heights Terrace— was laid out by Jacob W. Wilbur, a prolific Brookline developer. Wilbur typically sited his subdivisions near streetcar lines and appealed to working class residents.

Theresa Avenue was laid out by 1922, when there were only three houses on the street. 7 Theresa Avenue appears on the Sanborn maps between 1927 and 1935; its land was previously part of the parcel with 15 Theresa Avenue. The first known residents at this address, in 1935, are thought to be Andrew J. Ready, Jr., who worked as an auto mechanic, inspector, and clerk; his parents John H. and Catherine Ready; and his niece Catherine Ready. Subsequent occupants included Richard A. Sorrentino, a painter, and his wife Mary D. Sorrentino in 1945. In 1955 and 1965, the house was occupied by Robert J. Conley, an equipment installer, and his wife, Lillian T. Conley. Their daughter Patricia M. Conley, a typist, was living with them in 1965.

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.
- Lexington Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey, Period and Area Summaries.
<http://historicsurvey.lexingtonma.gov/index.htm> Accessed Jul 23, 2015.
- Lexington Directories: 1899, 1908-09, 1915, 1922, 1926, 1930, 1934, 1936, 1942.
- Lexington *List of Persons*: 1935, 1945, 1955, 1965.
- Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Lexington." 1980.
- _____. Form A – Liberty Heights, LEX.Q. Prepared by Anne Grady and Nancy Seasholes, 1984 and 2001.
- U.S. Census: 1930.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



South (façade) elevation