

FORM B – BUILDING

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

44-172-5

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

Town/City: Chelmsford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): East Chelmsford

Photograph



View looking west. House is at far right.

Address: 7 Gorham Street

Historic Name: Joseph J. and Mary Devine House

Uses: Present: Vacant

Original: Single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1874

Source: Deed; marriage date; stylistic features

Style/Form: No style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Vinyl siding

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Attached ell, garage, and barn.

Major Alterations (*with dates*): House moved and reoriented. Concrete block foundation. Poured concrete porch floor. Metal porch posts. Vinyl siding. Vinyl windows.

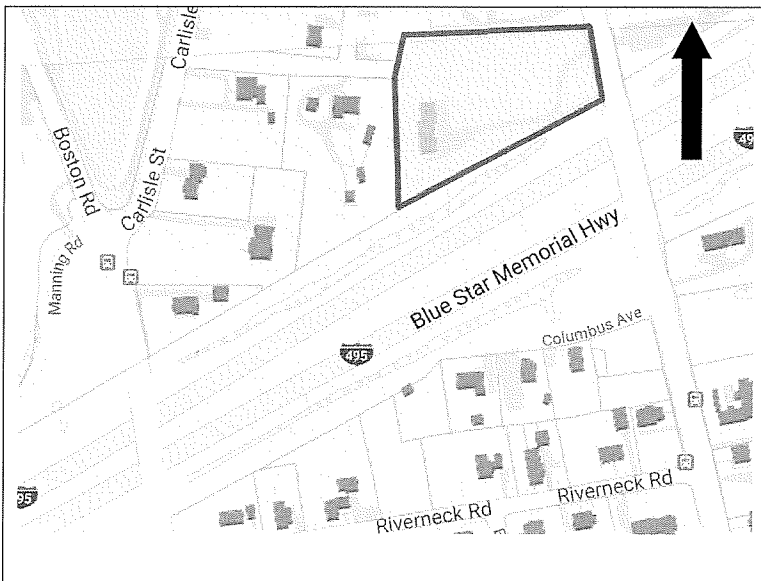
Condition: Poor

Moved: no yes **Date:** ca. 1961

Acreage: 2.04

Setting: Located on a suburban street at edge of interstate highway right-of-way. Houses to north, east, and west date from early 20th century to mid-20th century and are located near road frontage.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies, Historic Preservation Consultant

Date: July 2, 2019

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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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 Gorham Street is a 1½-story frame dwelling with a series of lateral ells that extend from the south (rear) elevation of the house: ell; garage; and, barn. The building is located in the southwest corner of the lot. The lot slopes dramatically downward as one moves west from Gorham Street. A long, curving, asphalt driveway leads from Gorham Street to a large asphalt parking area that abuts the east elevation of the building. The lot is heavily wooded with mature evergreens and deciduous trees. Vegetation has overtaken much of the grassy lawn. The house is vacant and several openings are unsecured or missing fenestration.

The building's unusual arrangement and siting is a result of its relocation circa 1961 as part of the construction of Interstate 495. The north, gable-front, elevation of the house likely originally faced east near the Gorham Street frontage. The small ell was likely attached to the house's rear (west) elevation. The detached barn was located west of the house. (See History below.) When the buildings were relocated, the house was rotated to face north, the ell was attached to the house's rear (south) elevation, a new garage connector was constructed, and the barn was attached at the south end of the structure. The entire building was placed on a new concrete block foundation. The house and outbuildings underwent alterations at that time, including the addition of the poured concrete porch floor, metal porch posts, shed dormers, and garage doors. A detailed description follows.

The house and ells rests on a concrete block foundation. The entire building is covered with vinyl siding over wood clapboard. Windows are predominately 2/1 wood sash; vinyl-frame windows are located in the shed dormers.

The gable-front house is oriented to the north. The façade contains two windows and a door at the west end. A single window is centered in the gable peak. The door is paneled wood with a light in the top half and an Eastlake-style brass escutcheon. The east elevation contains three window bays below a three-bay shed dormer. A porch with exposed rafters and metal posts wraps around the north and east elevations. The porch floor is constructed of poured concrete. An exterior brick chimney is located on the west elevation. No windows are located on the north elevation.

The east elevation of the ell contains four bays contained within a projecting enclosed porch. The north elevation of the ell contains a single window and an entry door. The paneled wood door contains a light in the top half. The west elevation contains two window bays above a bulkhead basement entry. A shed dormer with a hopper window is located on the west slope of the roof. A slender interior brick chimney pierces the east roof slope near the ridge, which runs north-south.

The connected garage extends from the south elevation of the ell. The east elevation contains two garage bays with overhead wood doors, a personnel door, and a single 2/1 window. The west elevation contains three window bays and a shed dormer containing a hopper window. A single door is located at the northwest corner of the garage. The gable ridge runs north-south.

The connected barn extends southward from the south elevation of the garage. The east elevation contains a garage bay with an overhead wood door and a vertical-board personnel door in the south end. The west elevation contains a single vertical-board door in the south end and a single boarded-up window. On both elevations, the vertical-board doors are placed flush with the corner posts of the barn. A rectangular window opening is centered in the east and west gable peaks. The south elevation contains three window bays. The gable ridge runs east-west.

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.

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The house at 7 Gorham Street was constructed circa 1874 for Joseph J. Devine and remained in the Devine family for 100 years. In October 1874, Joseph J. Devine of Salem, Massachusetts, purchased this parcel of land from John McCann.¹ Four months later, in February 1875, Joseph J. Devine (1840-1923) married Mary Hurley (1851-1911), a native of Cambridge, Massachusetts, in Lowell.² The house was likely constructed during late 1874 and early 1875. The house was originally located in the northeast corner of the lot at the Gorham Street frontage. (See maps below.)

Joseph J. Devine emigrated from his native Ireland at age 12. Devine worked as a "moulder," a worker who casts molten metal into sand molds to produce solidified castings, both before and after his move to Chelmsford.³ By 1900, Devine was working as a farmer⁴ and was employed by the town of Chelmsford to transport pupils to and from school in School District 6.⁵

Joseph J. and Mary Devine had eight children, six of whom were alive at the time of the 1900 census.⁶ At the time of the 1910 census, four of their adult children lived with them: Mary; Lizzie; Arthur; and, Henry. City directories from the period indicate that family members lived in other locations on Gorham Street and on nearby Carlisle Street. Devine Street in Lowell is located a short distance northwest of the 7 Gorham Street property.

After Joseph J. Devine's death in 1923, the property passed to daughter Mary F. Devine and son Henry F. Devine. Siblings Mary F. Devine (1878-1931) and Henry F. Devine (1885-1974), neither of whom appear to have married, resided at 7 Gorham Street for the remainder of their lives. Henry F. Devine worked as an engineer for North Chelmsford box manufacturer Wm. P. Proctor and as a boiler inspector for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Henry F. Devine served Chelmsford in 1922 as a member of the building committee for a new East Chelmsford fire station.⁷ Mary Devine worked as a teacher at the Greenhalge and Weed Street (Butler) Schools and later, as Supervisor of Schools, in Lowell.⁸

In 1960, the southern portion of the property (approximately 2.36 acres) was taken for the construction of Interstate 495.⁹ By 1963, the house had been moved from its original location at the northeast corner of the parcel facing Gorham Street and relocated to its present location on a new foundation with a new orientation facing north.¹⁰ The detached barn was attached to the southernmost end of the house and garage ell.^{11,12}

In 1974, William Trainor (1924-2008) and his wife, Mildred Trainor (1919-1990), purchased the property from the estate of Henry F. Devine. William worked as a health inspector and Mildred worked as a secretary and child care provider. In 2017, the present owner purchased the property from the Trainor family.¹³

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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¹ Middlesex North Deed Book 99, page 211.

² Massachusetts Marriage Records, 1840-1915, New England Genealogical Society, Ancestry.com. Accessed July 1, 2019 and Findagrave.com Memorial #130361253, Accessed June 27, 2019.

³ Salem, Massachusetts City Directory, 1874, Ancestry.com, accessed June 27, 2019. 1885 Birth record for son Henry F. Devine lists Joseph J. Devine's occupation as "moulder." Massachusetts Birth Records. Ancestry.com. Accessed June 27, 2019.

⁴ United States Census. 1900. Ancestry.com. Accessed June 27, 2019.

⁵ Eleanor Parkhurst. *History of Chelmsford, 1910-1970*. Chelmsford, Mass.: Chelmsford Historical Commission. 2011: p. 155.

⁶ United States Census. 1900. Ancestry.com. Accessed June 27, 2019.

⁷ Parkhurst, p. 49.

⁸ Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts, 1914.

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112111412471&view=1up&seq=165>. Accessed June 27, 2019. And Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Lowell, Massachusetts, 1921.

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⁹ Order of Taking. Middlesex North Deed Book 1480, p. 210ff. Parcel 8-TS-9, 8-30 recorded on pp. 223-224.

¹⁰ <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>. 1963. Accessed June 27, 2019.

¹¹ United States Geological Survey maps, 1950, 1965. <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#15/42.6140/-71.3041> and <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#15/42.6140/-71.3041> Accessed June 28, 2019.

¹² <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>. Accessed July 2, 2019.

¹³ Middlesex North Deed Book 31490, P. 166.

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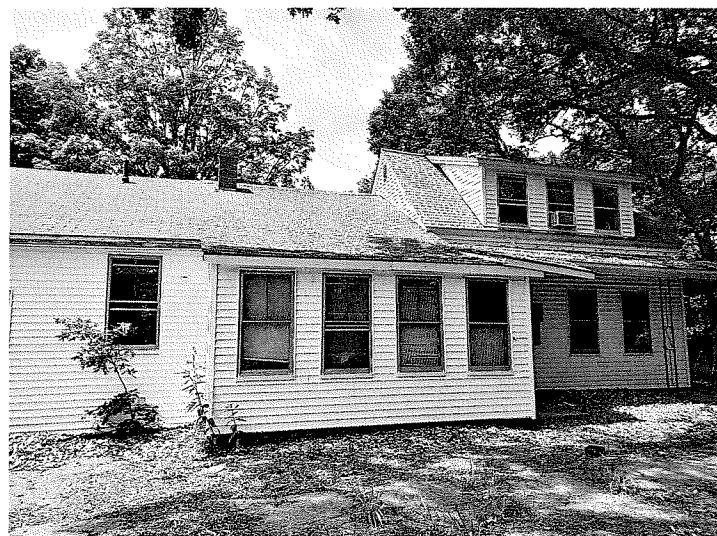
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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES

East and north elevations, north end of building.



East elevation, north end of building. Ell at left. House at right.

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Main door, north elevation.



Detail. Main door, north elevation.

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North elevation. Ell.



Entry door. Ell.



View looking southeast. From left to right: House, ell, garage, barn.

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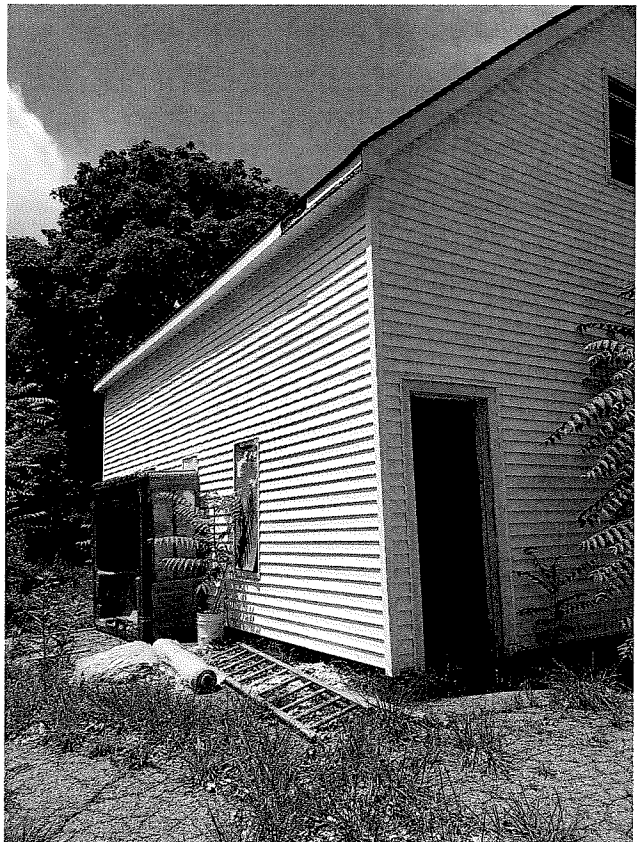
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View looking southeast. West elevation. Garage at left. Barn at right.



View looking east. Barn. West elevation.



View looking northwest. Barn. South and east elevations.

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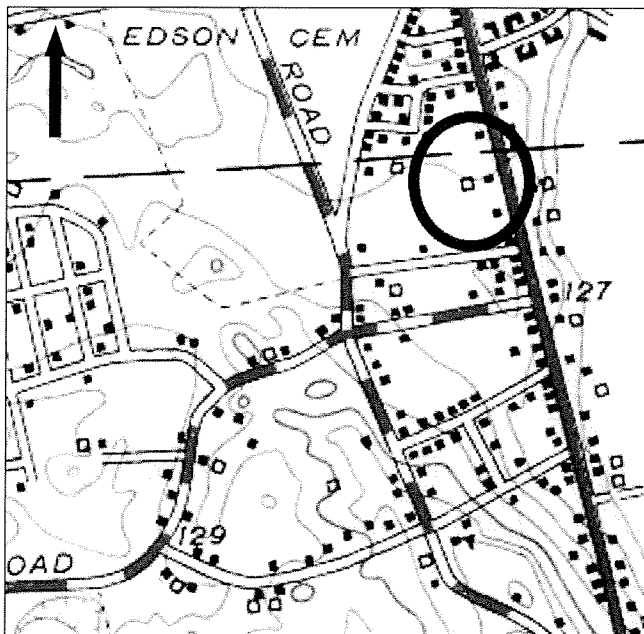
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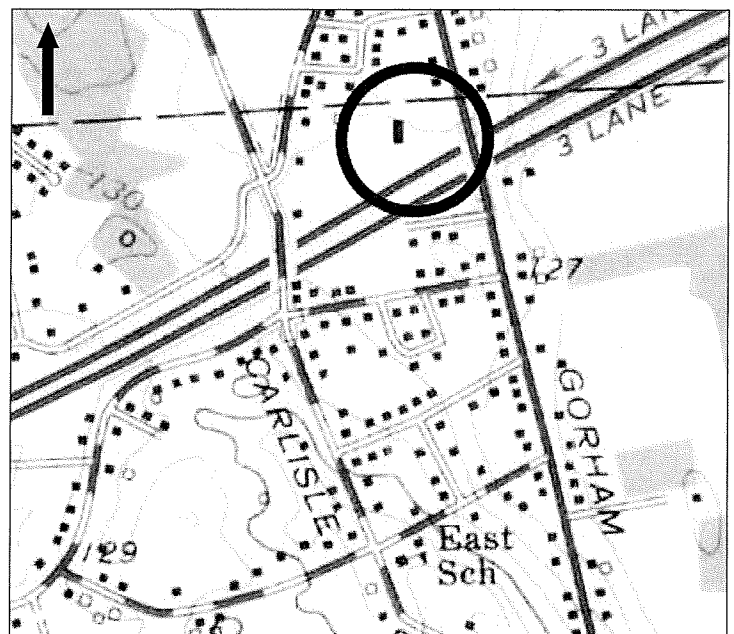
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View looking west. Barn, east elevation.



USGS 1950. Billerica quad.



USGS 1965. Billerica quad.