

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

17/84/2	Nashua South, NH		
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Town/City: Chelmsford

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

Photograph



Southwest façade and northwest elevation (left). View looking northeast.

Address: 225 Groton Road

Historic Name: Elgin and Leslie Bill House

Uses: Present: Single-family dwelling

Original: Single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: circa 1919

Source: Census; deed; city directory

Style/Form: No style

Architect/Builder: Not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone; concrete block

Wall/Trim: Vinyl siding / Plywood Siding panels/ Vinyl trim / Wood trim

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Frame garage (post-1958)

Major Alterations (*with dates*): West porch added (post-1958); Addition along north elevation; vinyl windows and metal doors (late 20th C); vinyl siding; side porches enclosed.

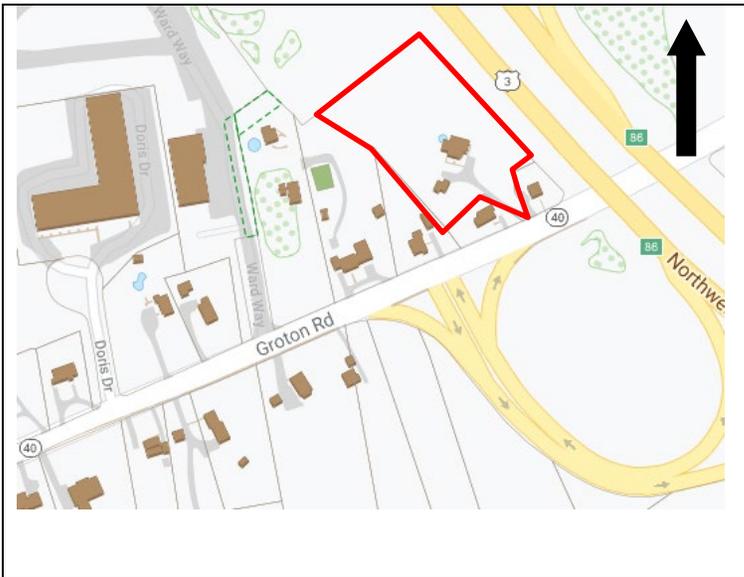
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.7 acres

Setting: Located on a suburban street at edge of interstate highway right-of-way. Highway Route 3 forms the northeast boundary of the property. Small houses to the south and west date from the early 20th century to mid-20th century and are located close to the roadway.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies, Historic Preservation Consultant

Date: April 9, 2021

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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.

225 Groton Road is located on a large lot that slopes downward to the north. The house is banked into the slope, allowing for a full-height walk-out basement on the northeast (rear) elevation. An asphalt-paved drive leads from Groton Road to the front of the house. A tall berm rises from the northeast side of the lot to meet the roadbed of Highway Route 3. Route 3 forms the northeast boundary of the property. The lot is covered with a grassy yard near the house with scrubby woodlands beyond.

The house is a 2-story frame dwelling with a side-gabled roof. A slender interior brick chimney pierces the northeast roof slope. The main house block (i.e., the original house) is three bays wide and rests on a stone foundation. The three-bay façade contains a center entrance flanked by bay windows at the first floor. On the façade's second floor, a diamond-pane fixed window with wood muntins is flanked by two sash windows. The rear second-floor elevation contains two windows. The second-floor side elevations contain one and two windows, respectively. All windows with the exception of the diamond-pane window are replacement vinyl- or metal- frame windows flanked by screw-on vinyl shutters. The metal entry door was installed during the last quarter of the 20th century, based on its stylistic features. A shed-roof porch extends along the width of the façade and is supported by corner posts constructed of rough-surfaced boards that appear to be later additions (perhaps boxing in original porch posts?). A square-section balustrade and valance enclose the porch, which has a poured concrete floor atop a concrete block foundation.

A hipped-roof porch spans the width of the northwest (side) elevation. The porch is enclosed with ribbon windows above plywood siding panels. A metal door with a multi-light window in the top half is located on the southwest elevation. A metal awning, dating from the mid-20th century, is located above the doorway. A wood deck is attached to the northwest elevation of the enclosed porch.

A one-story, shed-roofed addition extends along the length of the northeast (rear) elevation. The addition rests atop a walk-out concrete block foundation. The basement level contains three sash windows, a small hopper window, and two cross-braced wood doors. The first-floor of the addition contains two single windows and a bay window.

A one-story frame porch is located along the southeast (side) elevation and wraps around the north corner of the house to meet the addition at the rear of the house. The porch rests on a concrete block foundation. The porch contains a ribbon of five sash windows on the southeast elevation and two sash windows on the northeast elevation. The porch entrance on the southwest elevation contains a metal door with a 9-light window in the top, which is sheltered by a shallow projecting roof.

A 2-story frame garage is located south of the house at the south edge of the lot. The building rests on a concrete block foundation and is covered with vinyl siding. The mansard roof is covered with asphalt shingles. 1/1 vinyl sash windows are located throughout the building. A metal overhead vehicle door fills the northeast elevation. A 1-story, shed-roof ell is attached to the southwest corner of the garage. The ell contains two 6-light, wood-frame hopper windows in the west elevation; other windows are 1/1 vinyl sash.

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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.

In 1919, Elgin J. Bill (1872-1949)¹ and his wife, Leslie Farrington Bill (1885-1966),² purchased 24 acres of land, including an unspecified number of buildings, on Groton Road.³ (1938 aerial photography shows what appears to be two barns and two outbuildings near the house.) Born in Vermont, Elgin Bill served in the Spanish American War as a member of the hospital corps. Leslie Farrington Bill was born in Nova Scotia and immigrated at the age of 11. At the time they purchased the property in Chelmsford, Elgin Bill was working as an assembler in a machine shop. He also worked as a salesman.⁴ The couple wed in Lowell in 1905 and had four children. By the time of the 1930 census, Elgin was the proprietor of an automobile service and filling station.

Walter E. Bill (1916-1999),⁵ son of Elgin and Leslie Bill, lived with his parents and was working for the Lowell Insulated Wire Co. in Lowell when he was drafted for World War II, which he entered as an aviation cadet.⁶ Upon his return from service, Walter Bill entered the Lowell Textile School, from which he was graduated in 1949.⁷ By 1950, Walter Bill was working as a textile chemist. (Lowell Textile School became Lowell Technological Institute in 1951, which later merged with Lowell State College in 1975 to become University of Massachusetts, Lowell.)

After Elgin Bill's death in 1949, a small house was constructed for Leslie Bill at 225 Groton Road. Walter Bill and his wife, Marion, moved into 225 Groton Road at time. In 1956, Richard J. and Theresa D. Soucier purchased the house and 8.95 acres from Walter and Marion Bill.⁸ Richard Soucier worked as a security guard at Hanscom Air Field in Bedford, Massachusetts⁹ and, later, for the highway department.¹⁰ Theresa Soucier worked as an expediter.¹¹ The size of the 225 Groton Road property was greatly reduced as a result of the Route 3 construction in the late 1950s.¹²

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¹ Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/215818896/elgin-j.-bill>. Accessed April 9, 2021.

² Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/141212853/leslie-bill>. Accessed April 9, 2021.

³ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 599, page 541. The property included what is now 227 Groton Road. It is unclear whether Elgin and Leslie Bill made 225 or 227 Groton Road their residence.

⁴ U.S. Mason Membership Cards. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 9, 2021.

⁵ Findagrave.com. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18164553/walter-edgar-bill>. Accessed April 7, 2021.

⁶ World War II Enlistment Records, 1938-1946. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 7, 2021.

⁷ Yearbook collection. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 7, 2021.

⁸ Middlesex North Registry of Deeds Book 1356, page 325.

⁹ Chelmsford City Directory. 1957, 1959. Accessed April 7, 2021.

¹⁰ Chelmsford Registrar of Voters. *List of Men and Women*. 1975.

¹¹ Chelmsford Registrar of Voters. *List of Men and Women*. 1975.

¹² Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. Plan Book M, Plan 539, Sheets 8 and 9. Order of Taking. Route 3 Alignment, Chelmsford. 1958.

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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



NW (right) and NE (left) elevations, view looking S.

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NE (right) and SE (left) elevations, view looking SW.



SW (left) and SE elevations, view looking N.

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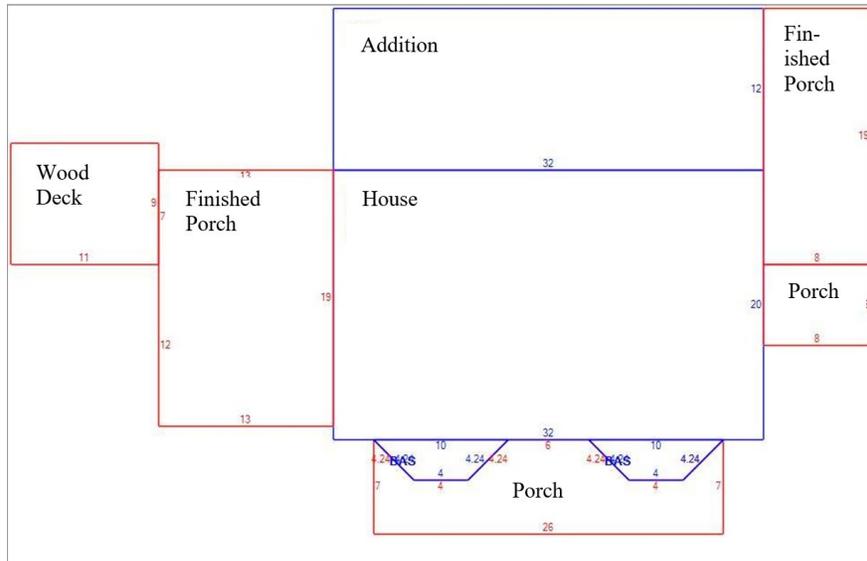
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Building footprint per assessor's records.



Garage. View looking S.

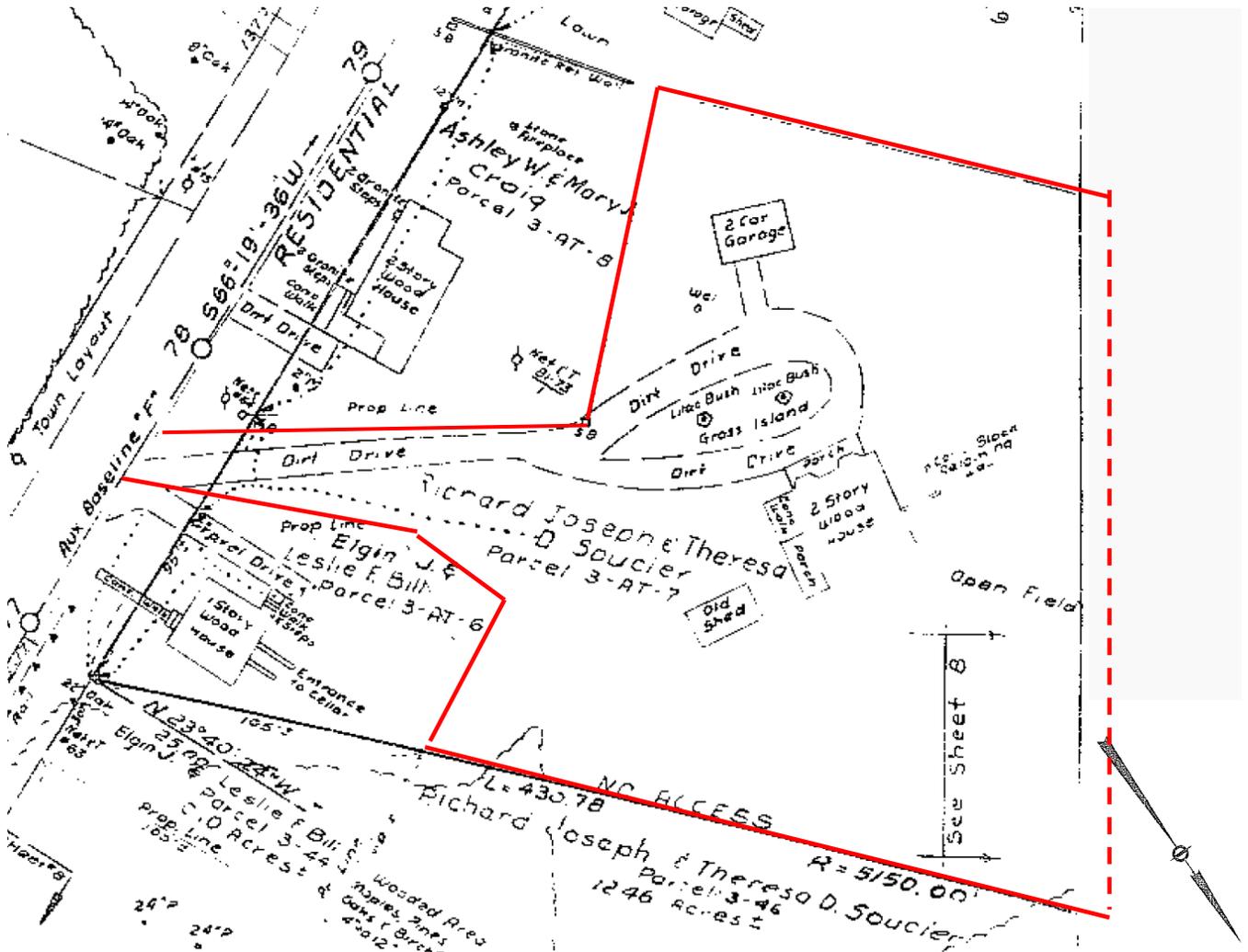
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225 Groton Road, as surveyed in 1958.
(Middlesex North Registry of Deeds. Plan Book M, Plan 539, Sheets 8 and 9.
Order of Taking. Route 3 Alignment, Chelmsford.) Garage and Old Shed not extant in 2021.