

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

13/32/7	Nashua South	G	CLM.396
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Town/City: Chelmsford

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

Photograph



Address: 30-32 Princeton Street

Historic Name: Benjamin Adams Rental House

Uses: Present: multiple-family dwelling

Original: multiple-family dwelling

Date of Construction: between 1831 and 1856

Source: 1831 and 1856 maps of Chelmsford

Style/Form: altered beyond recognition

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: vinyl siding/vinyl

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Ca. 2000 replacement siding and windows

Ca. 1990 front porch enclosure

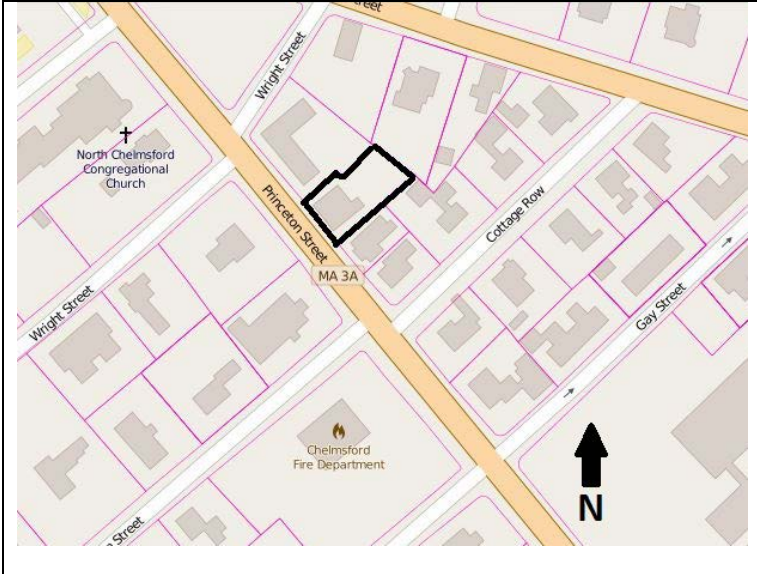
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .15 A

Setting: The building is located against the sidewalk of the north side of Princeton St. between Wright St. and Cottage Row. A drive is along the northwest of the building. The lot has a small backyard and a few shrubs against the front of the house. The surrounding area includes 19th c. residential development. The North Town Hall is across the street.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Jennifer Burden, Gray & Pape, Inc.

Organization: Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): June 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

30 PRINCETON STREET

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.

This building is located on the east side of Princeton Street between Wright and Cottage Row streets. It is a ca. 1840, one-and-a-half-story, wood frame house. It follows a rectangular plan with a short cross-gabled wing at the rear or northeast side of the building. Brick chimneys are located in the ridge of the roof near each of the two gabled ends of the house. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the exterior walls are covered with vinyl siding. The house rests atop a stone foundation. The primary (southwest) façade faces Princeton Street. The façade has been severely altered with an enclosed porch addition that extends the length of the first story. The front entrance is located in the center of the facade, behind the enclosed porch addition. The only windows on the primary façade are replacement, one-over-one, aluminum frame windows located in the porch enclosure. The sides of the house extend four bays deep and features the same replacement windows. The building follows the same plan as the one at 40 Princeton Street (CLM.397).

The building is an altered example of a mid-nineteenth century residence that retains historic integrity of location, setting, and association.

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 building does not appear on the 1831 map of Chelmsford, but is present on the 1856 map of North Chelmsford, therefore is was constructed between these dates. The 1856 map appears to contribute ownership of the building to Benjamin Adams. Adams (1801-1876) and his brother Thomas Jefferson Adams (1805-1881) owned several parcels throughout North Chelmsford and operated a tavern. Benjamin Adams's main residence appears to have been located at 9 Princeton Street (CLM.393), so this would have been a rental property.

The 1875 map shows that an H. Hall owned the property at this date. The 1880 US Population Census lists Harrison Hall (ca. 1811-1888) living in Chelmsford with wife Esther (born ca. 1811) and daughter Sarah (born ca. 1856). At this date Harrison was listed as a harness maker. The next family on the census tract were the Bearces, which included Elijah (born ca. 1824), wife Mary (born ca. 1827), daughter Clara (born ca. 1850), and son Hubert (ca. 1857-1922). Sarah Hall and Hubert Bearce married in September 1880. After Harrison Hall's death, the property transferred to Sarah and Hubert, and then to their son Hubert Hall Bearce (1883-1953). Elijah Bearce resided nearby at 7 Cottage Row. Hubert Bearce moved his family to a new house on Newfield Street sometime before 1896. In 1907 the property returned to the Hall family. The Bearce family then relocated to California ca. 1912. A search of city directories showed that no member of the Hall family lived on Princeton Street during this period. In 1919 Justin Potter purchased the property. The 1920 census lists Justin (1884-1934), wife Sarah (born ca 1886), four young children born between ca. 1903 and 1917, mother-in-law Sarah Donovan (born ca. 1864 in English Canada), and brother-in-law Joseph Donovan (born ca. 1899) living in Chelmsford. At this date Justin and Joseph were employed in the wool mill. The property remained in the Potter family until 1996; then marking the end of the 77-year ownership history of the family. The property was sold one additional time in 2010 to the 30-32 Princeton Street Realty Trust.

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance

The area of North Chelmsford was determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP by MHC in 1987 for its local level of historical significance. The historic district boundary of Area G roughly includes resources along Middlesex and Princeton streets between Wright Street, Gay Street, and Edwards Avenue. The district is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the industrialization of North Chelmsford in the mid- to late-nineteenth century and under Criterion C for its examples of workers' cottages, modest single-family houses, and elaborate residences owned by local industrialists. The building at 30 Princeton Street retains sufficient historic integrity to contribute to this potential historic district.