

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

55/221/16//

Billerica

B

Town/City: Chelmsford

Place: *East Chelmsford*

Address: 62-68 Riverneck Road

Historic Name: McKennedy House

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: 1895

Source: taxes

Style/Form: Queen Anne

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: dressed granite blocks

Wall/Trim: vinyl

Roof: asphalt shingles on house and carriage barn
Slate shingles on 2 car garage

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Condition: fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 9.5 acres

Setting: suburban. Last piece of farmland in the area and is surrounded by numerous smaller homes.



MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad__IMG_3344_CHC_2014

Recorded by: Linda V. Prescott

Organization: Chelmsford Historical commission

Date March 11, 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD 62 Riverneck Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

B	
---	--

 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:

62 Riverneck Road is an example of a large Queen Anne. Set on a hill, the 43 ft. by 26 ft. house rises 2 1/2 stories from a cut granite stone foundation and has the massing characteristics of that style. The hipped roof main block has projecting gables to the northwest and southwest and evidence of a balustrade on the roof. A 23 ft. square single story 2 bay garage is attached to the rear of the building with a one story with loft carriage house attached as an ell off the garage. The facade (NW) is 2 bays wide and possesses a recessed integral porch with square posts beneath the second floor, a full bay adjacent to the porch. The second floor has a pair of 2/1 windows, above a gable with a single window on the northeast end of the roof. Another facade (SW) is 3 bays wide, possessing a full bay window on the south corner and a window on the north corner under 3 evenly spaced windows on the second floor and a gable dormer on the south corner. A brick chimney is located in the middle of the roof. The NE facade is 3 bays wide with an integral porch on the north corner and a single window. Centered at 1 1/2 story, is a large stained glass window typical of the period. On the second floor are a pair of windows under a plain roof. Attached to the rear of the house is a 19 ft by 15 ft. ell with gable roof and peak dormer centered in the middle of the roof. The SW facade on the first floor has an attached enclosed 7 ft. by 15 ft. porch. Attached to the rear is a single story garage with 2 garage doors and a slate roof. The attached carriage house rises from a granite foundation. The NW facade has a large door and a peak in the center of the roof just over the door. The SW facade has 3 stories with a window in the center of each floor and a door on the lower west corner. The SE facade rises 2 stories has 4 bays, the first floor has 3 windows, the second floor has a pair of windows on the south end. The north east facade has a single window in the peak. The carriage house has a gabled roof with a square cupola centered on the ridge line. Currently the whole house and carriage house is covered with vinyl siding.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Although this stately Queen Anne house still sits on top of a hill surrounded by the 9.5 acres referred to as the "Pierce Land". Adjacent parcels of land were sold for development around the farm mostly in the 1920's and then in the 1960's. Most of those homes are small ranches.

It is the history of the land that makes it unique. The Pierce Land was originally part of the Wamesit Purchase, a large parcel of land on the west side of the Concord River where the Merrimack and Concord Rivers meet. It was a favorite summer camp ground for the local Indians. By 1696, Thomas Hinchman and Col. Tyng, both original inhabitants of Chelmsford, had purchased the land, divided into 50 lots and sold the lots. Stephen Pierce(Jr.), who's father Stephen(Sr.) had arrived in Town in 1671, bought 2 lots. The Stephen Pierce, Sr., a tailor, instilled in all of his descendants the importance of civil service. Church records indicate they were very well respected deacons in the church. They were appointed to the committee that divided both the first and second Indian land purchase into lots. In June 1725, the Massachusetts General Court refused to seat the representative of Chelmsford Deacon Stephen Pierce who lived in Wamesit, apart that was not considered Chelmsford but paid taxes to Chelmsford. His name is on the petition to create a separate town. On April 9, 1729, the Court ordered Wamesit annexed to Chelmsford and not a separate town.

Stephen Jr. was an active member of the local militia during the Revolutionary War and marched in response to the April 19, 1775 alarm. This Stephen Pierce who is the grandfather of Pres. Franklin Pierce passed the land down through the family until 1882, when Orrin Pierce sold a portion of the land to John McKennedy.

John Mc Kennedy was an Irish immigrant who arrived here in 1855. The 1860 Census shows John living with Orrin and Alviria Pierce working as a farm laborer on the Pierce family land. In 1882, Orrin Pierce sold the 9.42 acres to John McKennedy. The 1880 Non-Populated Agricultural census shows John was already farming 16 acres of his own land. In 1895, John moved his wife and 5 children into the large Queen Anne style home on Riverneck Road. One of the largest in the area of farms. the house is poised on a hill, readily noticeable to any one passing by. This house represents an immigrant family living their "American Dream" by working that all important land. The McKennedy family continued to farm the land, passing the land from child to child until it's last sale in 2012. The McKennedys were active in town, providing labor such as preparing wood for the schools, working for the DPW maintaining roads. In 1950 and in 1956, the McKennedy Bros. were awarded the Town's garbage disposal contract. During the later years the family had a roadside farmstand. Locals remember they had "the best corn in Town".

This parcel has been sold 3 times since 1655.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD 62 Riverneck Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

B	
---	--

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Town of Chelmsford, Assessor's Data base, GIS Mapping, Real Estate Tax Records 1957-1882, Cemetery Burial Records, Annual Town Reports 1895, pg. 16 and 24, Building Inspector Records
- Middlesex North Registry of Deeds, see attached summary
- Maps; Chelmsford Historical Commission; 1795 East Chelmsford, 1856 Map East Chelmsford, GIS Map Pierce Genealogy, Being the Record of Thomas Pierce an Early Inhabitant, Frederick Beech Pierce, Boston, Press of Charles Hamilton, 311 Main street, Worcester, MA, 1882, copyright Fred. B. Pierce., pgs. xvii, xviii, 22, 27, 38.
- History of Chelmsford 1910-1970, Eleanor Parkhurst, published by the Chelmsford Historical Commission, Courier Corp., North Chelmsford, MA 2011, pg. 118 and 120
- Water's History of Chelmsford, Rev. Wilson Waters, Courier-Citizen Co., Lowell, MA, 1917, pgs. 142, 261, 399, 339, 399, 516, 518, 521, 522, 541, 556
- Ancestry.com, Federal Census: 1860, pg. 112, line 4, 1870; unable to locate John McKennedy; 1880, pg. 11 line27; 1880 Non-Populated Agricultural schedule, pg. 7 line3; 1900, pg. 19A, line 7; 1910, sheet 9B, line 61; 1920, pg. 13, line 17; 1930,line 21
- Lowell Sun, Lowell MA, Aug 16, 1927, pg. 3; April 15, 1970, pg.19
- Fred Merriam, photographer

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

B	
---	--



Southwest Facade

MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad__IMG_3351_CHC_2014

Front Door



MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad__IMG_3346_CHC_2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD 62 Riverneck Road

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

B	
---	--



MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad___IMG_3353_CHC_2014

West Facade with
Image House



MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad___IMG_3355_CHC_2014

East Facade

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

B	
---	--



east Facade

MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad__IMG_3349_CHC_2014

Stain Glass Window



MA_Chelmsford_62_RiverneckRoad__IMG_3377_CHC_2014

















