

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER  
March 10, 2011**

**LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

**Commission Members Present:** Thomas Constantine, Chair  
Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair  
James Crowley  
Kevin Provencher

**Staff Present:** Joel Fontane, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services  
Edgar Luna, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

**REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Constantine called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

**MINUTES:**

Mr. Luna informed the Commission that the February 24, 2011 minutes would be submitted at later date.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- 1. Crown Hill Local Historic District Study Report:** Mr. Fontane thanked the Commission for the opportunity to present the proposed project. He indicated that since the last Historical Commission meeting on February 24, 2011, when the Commission met to discuss the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District and boundary delineations, two important pieces of information had emerged. The first one was that at such meeting, the Commission made decisions regarding what the edge of the district boundaries would be. However, he noted that the map provided by staff at such meeting (Exhibit A), incorrectly indicated that 43 Austin Street and 47 Irving Street were not MACRIS-listed when, in fact, they are, and indicated that the Commission removed such parcels from the proposed District that night thinking that they were not listed. However, further staff research demonstrated the map error, and confirmed that said parcels were MACRIS-listed. Secondly, the owner of 40 Irving Street expressed opposition to his parcel being included in the district. Therefore, Mr. Fontane indicated that based on such information, he wanted to make some recommendations regarding the delineation of the boundaries.

Chair Constantine stated that he had received a letter from Francis Carroll (Exhibit B), owner of 40 Irving Street, requesting that his parcel be removed from the district, and asked Mr. Fontane if staff supported Mr. Carroll's request. Mr. Fontane confirmed that staff was recommending removing 40 Irving Street parcel from the proposed District, but recommended maintaining the district boundaries in the area of 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street, should the Commission reconsider to include them, due to the fact that such parcels were MACRIS-listed. Therefore, he stressed that the recommended district configuration would not include the 40 Irving Street parcel but would include 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street parcels. He further indicated that the rest of the boundary delineation would remain as the Commission had suggested on February 24, 2011, and as depicted on the map provided.

Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane if the 41 Irving Street parcel would be included, and Mr. Fontane responded affirmatively. Mr. Fontane clarified that 41, 39 and 46 Irving Street parcels would be included in the proposed District. Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane to explain to the Commission the basis for the City's recommendation not to include 40 Irving Street in the District. Mr. Fontane responded that the February 24, 2011 meeting was an informal meeting to vet the District proposal, discuss the delineation of the boundaries, and solicit input from the property owners. He indicated that all property owners in the proposed District had been notified of the meeting. Mr. Fontane further stated that at that meeting, a representative of the owner of 40 Irving Street expressed concern regarding the inclusion of the parcel in the proposed District; Mr. Fontane stated that he felt that his response to the owner's representative on February 24, 2011 had addressed the concern however.

Mr. Fontane further stated that after the meeting, he received a letter from the owner of 40 Irving Street parcel stating more clearly that he was opposed to its inclusion in the district. Mr. Fontane indicated that given the fact that 40 Irving Street was a vacant lot located on the edge of the district, and that the owner had expressed strong opposition, staff concluded that it was not important to include it in the proposed District; therefore, he recommended excluding it. Chair Constantine asked Mr. Fontane to clarify if 43 and 47 Irving Street parcels were MACRIS-listed and he responded affirmatively. He also indicated that at the February 24, 2011 meeting, the Commission had been provided with a map which incorrectly listed these properties as not being MACRIS-listed, which may have contributed to the Commission's decision not to include them. Mr. Fontane further indicated that if the Commission had second thoughts on the matter, he would advocate for their inclusion, should the Commission agree.

Commissioner Constantine asked Mr. Fontane to clarify if at the last meeting the Commission had voted to exclude those two properties and Mr. Fontane responded affirmatively. Chair Constantine asked the Commission if they had any comments regarding the inclusion of the 43 Austin Street and 47 Irving Street parcels in the District. Mr. Luna informed the Commission that he had the MACRIS Form-B for both parcels (Exhibit C), in case the Commission wished to see them. Commissioner Crowley stated that both properties were consistent in terms of their age and architectural design and similar to the 46 Irving Street property, across the street.

Commissioner Provencher agreed with Commissioner Crowley regarding his statement that such buildings were consistent in terms of age and architectural design. In addition, he stated that due to the fact that the buildings at 41, 43, 47 and 46 Irving Street were consistent in architectural character and masonry construction, and are in the MACRIS list, he suggested that they be included in the District boundary. Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane if 40 Irving Street was the only parcel the city had received a formal opposition to inclusion, and Mr. Fontane responded affirmatively.

Chair Constantine stated that his understanding was that the boundaries discussed were only preliminary boundaries; therefore, they could be retracted but not expanded at a later date; Mr. Fontane confirmed. Commissioner Provencher stated that due to the consistent architectural character of the buildings located at the intersection of Irving and Austin Streets, leaving 40 Irving Street out of the District would be a missed opportunity to create consistency around that intersection. Commissioner Crowley stated that based on the map submitted (Exhibit A) and the information provided, removing the 40 Irving Street parcel from the proposed District would essentially create a hole at such boundary intersection. He further stated that the Commission had dealt previously with the issue of vacant lots and new construction, and felt that since the regulations for Local Historic Districts do not address new construction adequately, 40 Irving Street parcel should be left out of the proposed district.

Commissioner Crowley further indicated that although he did not know Francis Carroll personally, he was aware that he had demonstrated significant dedication to the City and to doing business in the City; therefore, he felt comfortable that he would be sensitive to leaving such property adjacent to the district when and if Mr. Carroll decides to build a structure in it. On the other hand, he indicated that he understood Commissioner Provencher views that 40 Irving Street parcel was located at an important intersection for the proposed District, and that a new structure that was not compatible with the District's historic character could be built there and, thereby, have negative impact in what the Commission was trying to accomplish by creating the Crown Hill Local Historic District.

Mr. Fontane stated that he understood the sentiments expressed by the Commission and indicated there were equally important arguments for the inclusion as well as the exclusion of said parcel; one of them being the stated opposition by the property's owner. However, he said that it was important to focus on the proposed District in its entirety. He acknowledged that although the intersection of Austin and Irving Streets constituted an important entry point to the proposed District, in terms of the core district, the 40 Irving Street parcel was an edge property. He stressed that the significant buildings around its perimeter could be preserved and included in the District without having to include 40 Irving Street in the District. Mr. Fontane further added that it was a trade off and indicated that the proposed District had strong support from the neighborhood for the proposed Local Historic District and no stated opposition, except for this particular parcel. In addition, he indicated that the parcel was vacant, did not have a significant building on it, and was not listed in MACRIS. Therefore, he stated that he believed it to be reasonable for the Commission to consider removing it from the District and indicated that it was the Administration's recommendation as well.

Commissioner Crowley asked if Mr. Carroll was present and Robert Lamarsh stated that Mr. Carroll was not present but indicated that he was his representative. Mr. Crowley indicated that he hoped the property would be more valuable by virtue of being surrounded by, and/or, being in the district, and stated that, in his opinion, Mr. Carroll was benefiting from his parcel being adjacent to the District but none of the burden. He asked Mr. Fontane if the District residents and Dr. Thomas Johnson had been notified of the request to remove the property from the District. Mr. Fontane responded that he had notified the Chair of the Crown Hill Neighborhood Association, who in turn, notified Board members, residents and Dr. Johnson of the request and understood that the matter would be discussed tonight.

Commissioner Provencher asked Mr. Carroll's representative to address the Commission regarding the removal of the parcel from the District. Mr. Lamarsh indicated that the site was currently an eyesore and needed to be cleaned up. He also said that Mr. Carroll's long-range plan was to construct a one-story warehouse on site to store company files; however, he indicated that for the immediate future, the parcels would be cleaned of debris and used as a parking lot for employees. Commissioner Provencher asked Mr. Lamarsh to confirm if Mr. Carroll's long-range development intent for the property was a warehouse use, and he responded affirmatively, and re-emphasized that the immediate plan is to use it as a parking lot for employees.

Commissioner Provencher stated that although zoning uses were not under the purview of the Historical Commission, the Commission would benefit from knowing what uses were permitted in the surrounding zones. Mr. Fontane indicated that the BG-3 zone where the parcel was located allowed for a wide variety of business uses, including the proposed record storage facility. He indicated that the underlying uses permitted by zoning would not be affected by a Local Historic District and that only the design review would apply to the uses proposed in this area. He also indicated that the vast majority of the District is zoned residential and contained primarily residential uses. Mr. Fontane added that area surrounding Irving Street near Main Street was zoned BG-6, Worcester's downtown zone, which permits a wide variety of business uses at a high intensity. He added that 40 Irving Street and surrounding parcels were located in an area zoned BG-3 which allowed a wide variety of uses but the intensity was less than the downtown BG-6 district. He also pointed out that the number "3" in the BG-3 zone indicated the floor to area ratio of 3 to 1; therefore, a 3 story building could be built on such parcels. He stressed again that zone-related regulations would not be affected in terms of the Local Historic District.

Mr. Fontane further indicated that given the fact that the parcel was currently vacant, it was difficult to gauge what the possible design review would be, but stressed that the exterior architectural features and design would be considered by the Commission as it had been done in previous occasions in other Local Historic Districts. Chair Constantine suggested the Commission consider eliminating 40 Irving Street from the proposed District and keep the District boundary delineation within residential zones only, and indicated that such arrangement would eliminate not only 40 Irving Street but also 41 Irving Street (aka 39 Irving Street), 46 Austin Street, 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street.

Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane what the Commission needed to do procedurally tonight. Fontane stated that the purpose of the meeting was to follow up on the previous meeting, at which, the Commission essentially vetted the proposed District boundaries. He stressed that the present meeting was not a formal meeting, was not part of the formal process and was not required by law; however, he indicated that in order to proceed with the study report, staff needed to know what the preferred boundary delineation would be. He further indicated that from a practical standpoint, a significant amount of the study had already been completed; however, he stressed that the Commission needed to discuss these matters in order to provide direction to staff as to where those boundaries would be. Such a determination would allow staff to focus on what direction to proceed in preparation for the formal hearing, as well as narrow down the list of notifications to only those property owners within the designated District boundary, and not the entire area that was surveyed.

Mr. Fontane also stressed that part of the vetting process was to identify and gauge the support and/or opposition to the creation of the Local Historic District; however, he indicated that for the most part, all residents supported the creation of the District. Mr. Lamarsh indicated that, for the record, he wanted to emphasize that Mr. Carroll was planning to construct a building with good architectural features that would enhance the area and not detract from it. He also stated that Mr. Carroll supported the proposed District and was not opposed to it. Commissioner Provencher asked Mr. Lamarsh if the opposition to being included in the District was based on concerns over design of the new facility or the potential cost of complying with any potential design limitations and he responded affirmatively. In addition, Mr. Lamarsh indicated that Mr. Carroll had experienced difficult situations during the past two decades involving regulatory oversight to renovate historic buildings located on Main Street which he owns. He indicated that those experiences compelled Mr. Carroll to request that 40 Irving Street parcel be excluded.

Commissioner Provencher stated that he did no doubt Mr. Carroll would build a quality building on site; however, he indicated that his main concern was to determine what the edge of the District boundaries would be. He stated that if the Commission feels that it makes sense to include 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street parcels, then it would make sense to include 40 Irving Street parcel for consistency across the intersection. If, however, 43 Austin and 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street parcels were to be excluded from the District, it would make sense to also exclude 40 Irving Street parcel.

Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane if the present meeting was part of a series of the study committee meetings, and he responded affirmatively. Commissioner Crowley then asked if the Commission would be making a final decision about the inclusion or exclusion of 40 Irving Street, or if the meeting was just a preliminary discussion to allow staff an opportunity to draw, and/or, narrow down the next proposed boundary. Mr. Fontane stated that the Commission's decision would guide the direction of the matter to the formal hearing process.

Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane to clarify whether or not the parcels excluded at this meeting could not be included at a later date. Mr. Fontane responded that the parcels excluded at this meeting could not be reintegrated at a later date. Commissioner Crowley stated that to his knowledge, most of the buildings located along 86 Austin Street were commercial, and/or mixed-use buildings. Mr. Lamarsh indicated that Mr. Carroll owned all of the parcels located from High Street to Irving Street and indicated that such buildings were used for office uses. Commissioner Crowley stated that he agreed with Commissioner Provencher that the Commission had taken definitive positions on a number of occasions in the past few years regarding open space which, in his opinion, it is no less important in terms of Historic Districts for a number of reasons.

He also stated that excluding 40 Irving Street from the District would essentially create a hole in the District, which made him uncomfortable. He then proceeded to cite an example in Northampton, MA, where the unique downtown historic district faces a large building which is used by the state as repository for records. He indicated that the building is poorly designed and does not complement and/or blend harmoniously with the surrounding historic district. He further added that some people believe that historic preservation is useless and obsolete; however, he indicated that such building was a good example of how poorly designed buildings detract from an area.

He also acknowledged that although Mr. Carroll was a responsible and dedicated businessman, he indicated that he could also sell the property and the next owner may decide to build a structure that is not compatible with the Crown Hill Local Historic District. He further stated that if the property owners of buildings located in the proposed District are asked to bear some extra expenses maintaining their properties to the standards of the District's Design Guidelines, they may be upset that immediately across the street an incompatible and poorly designed building is not required to follow the same guidelines. Therefore, Commissioner Crowley stated that the commission had two choices: (1) leave 40 Irving Street and the other aforementioned properties at the corner of Irving and Austin Street or, (2), remove 40 Irving Street, 41 Irving Street (aka 39 Irving Street), 46 Austin Street, 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street parcels from the District. Commissioner Crowley stated that he supported doing it one way or another.

Mr. Fontane showed the Commission on the map how leaving out the parcels at the corner of Austin Street and Irving Street corner would allow for a regularized delineation of the district, demarcate the lower density residential district, and point out the zoning line. He also noted that the Commission, at the recommendation of staff, excluded a number of vacant properties on Chandler Street, including MACRIS-listed properties fronting Chandler Street as recommended by staff and the Consultant. Mr. Fontane also indicated that other MACRIS-listed properties in the area of Murray Avenue had also been excluded because they were located in a separate neighborhood.

Chair Constantine stated that the purpose of creating a Local Historic District was to preserve a residential neighborhood; therefore, in his opinion, excluding 40 Irving Street and the other parcels was preferred. He further stated that should those parcels be

integrated into the District, the Commission would have difficulties enforcing Certificate of Appropriateness petitions because it will be difficult to decide what is appropriate and what is not appropriate to the District; especially if 40 Irving Street is included. Therefore, he indicated that he proposed excluding 40 Irving Street from the District.

Commissioner Provencher stated that although most of the District was comprised by single-family detached dwellings, the proposed boundary lines on the north side also included commercial buildings, multi-family dwellings and mixed-use buildings. Therefore, he concluded that he did not agree with the notion that the District was comprised primarily by single-family dwellings. He further indicated that the Pleasant Street corridor was a strong edge of the proposed District and stressed that it was comprised primarily of commercial buildings, multi-family dwellings and mixed-use buildings. In addition, he indicated that the Commission should consider the importance of having strong edges and gateways to clearly define the access and egress of the District; therefore, he stated that he supported the inclusion of 40 Irving Street in the District.

Commissioner McCann stated that he supported excluding the buildings at 43 Austin Street from the proposed District because most of the windows in these buildings had already been replaced with vinyl already. He also stressed that given the fact that these buildings were constructed of brick and granite, it was highly unlikely that their facades would be defaced. He indicated that short of demolition, and/or, installation of a new façade, these buildings did not need the protection afforded by a Local Historic District. He further indicated that if such buildings were to be left out of the District, their exclusion would not necessarily imply that the edges of the District in this area would be weak. In addition, he indicated that he agreed with Chair Constantine that if these properties were included in the District, it would be difficult to enforce Certificate of Appropriateness petitions on a Historic District that has many commercial properties. Finally, he concluded that although he would like to see a bigger District, he indicated that he was concerned as to how the Commission would enforce its regulatory processes.

Mr. Lamarsh indicated that the intersection of Austin and Irving Street would not constitute an entryway to the proposed district because both streets were one way towards Chandler Street or Main Street; therefore, the intersection would function more as an egress than an entryway. Commissioner Crowley stated that Mr. Lamarsh was correct and stressed that the intersection did not constitute an entryway but an exit. He also emphasized that whether the Commission chose to leave the parcels or exclude them, he would prefer not to leave an island at this intersection. Commissioner Crowley further indicated that he would like to send a message to Mr. Carroll through his representative that if his future plans were to build a structure with character that would harmoniously in the area, that would be essentially what the Historical Commission would have required him to do, and also acknowledged that Commission membership would be different in the future. He also stressed that the regulatory processes in Local Historic Districts were limited regarding new construction. Commissioner Provencher stated that it was unfortunate that there appeared to be an erroneous perception that having a property included in a Local Historic District conveyed an onerous burden when, in fact, it was

incorrect. He also indicated that it would be important to communicate to property owners the benefits of being included in the District.

Mr. Fontane indicated that the Crown Hill Neighborhood Association had reached out to all residents, but acknowledged that there will be philosophical differences about inclusion in a district. Chair Constantine indicated that Commissioners were well aware of the pitfalls regarding properties adjacent to Historic Districts, as recently experienced in the Montvale Local Historic District of such nature. Therefore, he reminded the Commission that it was important to clearly delineate the boundaries of the proposed District.

Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. Fontane to inform the Commission if the letter from Mr. Carroll was the only letter received in opposition to the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District, and he responded affirmatively. Mr. Fontane also stated that after a careful review of the previously proposed boundaries lines at the intersection of Austin and Irving Street, he was recommending that the Commission consider the new boundary line as indicated by the hand-drawn blue line in the map he had provided (Exhibit A), which, in his opinion, created an unobstructed and well defined boundary line. He further stated that regarding the gateway argument, the Austin/Irving Street intersection would not be used as a gateway to the proposed district because both streets were one way, essentially steering traffic towards Chandler Street, and/or, Main Street. He also pointed out that the existing National Register Historic Districts are located in the mid section of the proposed district and not in the vicinity of the Austin/Irving Street intersection; therefore, he concluded that removing such parcels appeared to be a reasonable compromise, and indicated that in this case, a reasonable compromise is needed.

Mr. Fontane further indicated that in deciding what parcels to include or exclude, the Commission should consider that the Crown Hill National Register Historic District, which constitutes the core of the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District, is located in the middle of the proposed area and none of these parcels in question are included. He also stated that in creating the Crown Hill Local Historic District a compromise would be reasonable and indicated that in this case, excluding 40 Irving Street from the proposed District appeared to be necessary and prudent to do. Chair Constantine indicated that other parcels along Austin Street also had been excluded because it was the rear of the parcels that faced the proposed District. Mr. Fontane indicated that in some cases the rear of these parcels could be developed due to the fact that this was a business zone and such designation was quite flexible and would permit the development of such parcels.

Commissioner Crowley pointed out that the neighborhood group was not in attendance; therefore, it seemed to indicate that they were in agreement with the proposal. Mr. Fontane reiterated that he had spoken with the leaders of the group, and also reminded the Commission that the other Local Historic Districts now have Street signs informing the public of the District's location and boundaries, and stated its importance to have cohesion and buy-in.

Commissioner Provencher made a motion that the properties located at the intersection of Austin Street and Irving Street, which includes the following parcels: (a) 40 Irving Street,

(b) 41 Irving Street (aka 39 Irving Street), (c) 46 Austin Street, (d) 43 Austin Street, (e) 47 Irving Street and (f) 49 Austin Street, be excluded from further study and consideration for the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District. Mr. Fontane asked Commissioner Provencher to clarify if his motion was to exclude the properties located outside of the hand-drawn blue line in the map titled Crown Hill Neighborhood Survey Updated Map dated February 9, 2011, namely 40 Irving Street, 41 Irving Street (aka 39 Irving Street), 46 Austin Street, 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street. Commissioner Provencher responded affirmatively and reconfirmed that the intent of his motion was to exclude the parcels described by Mr. Fontane from further study and consideration for the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion, and the Commission voted 4-0 that the properties located at the intersection of Austin Street and Irving Street which includes: 40 Irving Street, 41 Irving Street (aka 39 Irving Street), 46 Austin Street, 43 Austin Street, 47 Irving Street and 49 Austin Street, be excluded from further study and consideration for the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District.

**Exhibit A: Crown Hill Neighborhood Survey Update Map, dated February 9, 2011.**

**Exhibit B: Letter from Francis R. Carroll to Thomas Constantine, Chair, Worcester Historical Commission, dated March 8, 2011, received March 8, 2011.**

**Exhibit C: 43 Austin Street: Massachusetts Historical Commission, (Form B Building), Inventory No. WOR.1060 & 45-47 Irving Street: Massachusetts Historical Commission (Form B Building), Inventory No. WOR.1013.**

**Exhibit D: GIS Map: Parcels at the intersection of Irving Street and Austin Streets, showing a hand-drawn blue line which depicts the new boundaries lines approved by the Worcester Historical Commission on March 10, 2011. The parcels highlighted in yellow are excluded from further study and consideration for the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District. The blue line was hand-drawn by DPRS staff.**

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

**Exhibit A:**

**Crown Hill Neighborhood Survey Update Map**

**Dated March 8, 2011, received March 8, 2011.**

# Crown Hill Neighborhood Survey Update

Worcester, Massachusetts 2010

## Legend

-  Proposed Local Historic District Boundary
-  Surveyed Properties - (WOR:xxxx)
-  Crown Hill Study Area
-  National Register District Expansion 1980 Boundary
-  Parcels
-  National Register Historic District 1976 Boundary



Map Prepared by: City of Worcester Planning and Regulatory Services Division  
 Survey Consultant: Larson Fisher Associates, Woodstock, New York. [www.larsonfisher.com](http://www.larsonfisher.com)

**Exhibit B:**

**Letter from Francis R. Carroll to  
Thomas Constantine, Chair  
Worcester Historical Commission**

**Dated March 8, 2011, received March 8, 2011.**

FILE



FRANCIS R. CARROLL  
*Chairman & Founder*

March 8, 2011

Mr. Thomas Constantine  
Chairman  
Worcester Historical Commission  
44 Front Street, Suite 510  
Worcester, MA 01608



Re: Crown Hill Historical District

Dear Mr. Constantine,

I respectfully submit my wish to have 40 Irving Street removed from the proposed Crown Hill historical district. As owner of the property at 40 Irving Street, I want to have it permanently free of the design review oversight of the Historical Commission.

My property at 40 Irving Street is a vacant lot and, therefore, there is no historical structure on it that needs to be preserved. Furthermore, it is located at the edge of the boundary established by the Crown Hill Local Historic District Study Report. It is not vital that 40 Irving Street become a part of any historical district because of its location and the absence of any building on this property. I strongly urge you to remove it from the proposed Crown Hill historical district.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Francis R. Carroll".

Francis R. Carroll

*Small Business Service Bureau, Inc.; Small Business Insurance Agency, Inc.  
Group Health & Benefit Administrators, Inc.; Direct Response Marketing, Inc.*

554 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 15014 • WORCESTER, MA 01615-0014  
PHONE (508) 756-3513 • FAX (508) 770-0241

**Exhibit C:**

**43 Austin Street:  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
(Form B Building) – Inventory No. WOR.1060**

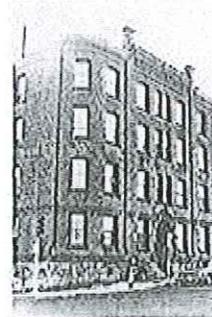
**&**

**45-47 Irving Street:  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
(Form B Building), Inventory No. WOR.1013**

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Inventory No:           | WOR.1758   |
| Historic Name:          | Russell, The   |
| Common Name:            |  |
| Address:                | 49 Austin St   |
| City/Town:              | Worcester  |
| Village/Neighborhood:   | Piedmont   |
| Local No:               | 130-S-4  |
| Year Constructed:       | C 1894   |
| Architect(s):           | Barker and Nourse  |
| Architectural Style(s): | Classical Revival; Romanesque Revival  |
| Use(s):                 | Apartment House  |
| Significance:           | Architecture   |
| Area(s):                | wor.cr: Worcester Multiple Resource Area                                       |
| Designation(s):         | Nat'l Register Individual Property (11/7/1985); Nat'l Register MRA (11/7/1985) |



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

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Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (<http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm>)

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

This file was accessed on:

Friday, October 21, 2011 at 12:24 PM

NR IND 11/7/85  
NR 11/7/85

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

Amendment to the Worcester Multiple  
Resource Area (NR: 1980)

| AREA | FORM NO.                |
|------|-------------------------|
| CR   | 130(S-4) <del>257</del> |

1758

Pl - Piedmont II

Town Worcester

Address 49 Austin Street

Historic Name "The Russell"

Use: Present apartments

Original apartments

DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1894

Source Eng. & Bldg, Record Vol. XXX, p. 11

Style Classical, Romanesque, Utilitarian

Architect Barker & Nourse

Exterior Wall Fabric brick, granite, brown-stone

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) main door

replaced, cement block addition at side rear (late 20th c.)

Condition Fair/Good

Moved no Date NA

Acreage 4,834 sq. ft.

Setting intersection in mixed residential/  
apartment/commercial area, some vacant lots



Building's location  
and/or  
buildings  
rest

See attached maps.

UTM REFERENCE 19/268440/4782330

USGS QUADRANGLE Worcester North Quadrangle

SCALE 1:25000

Recorded by Sarah Zimmerman w/S. Ceccaci

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date August, 1985

Value 100,000

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

"The Russell" is a simple but well-preserved example of Richardsonian Romanesque design by a noted Worcester architectural firm, Barker and Nourse. It is representative of architect-designed apartment buildings built in Worcester during the late 19th century. "The Russell" is also significant as a good example of the apartment blocks built in the Main-Wellington-Chandler area, once Worcester's most extensive area of middle-class apartment block construction. As such, "The Russell" meets criteria A and C of the National Register on the local level.

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

"The Russell" is a four-story brick Richardsonian Romanesque apartment block built ca. 1894. Built to the designs of Barker and Nourse, a noted Worcester architectural firm, "The Russell" is a modest building whose Romanesque styling is most evident in its use of rugged materials and sparse detailing. These give the building a fortress-like appearance. The building is located at the corner of Austin and Irving Streets, just west of Worcester's central business district. It is set directly on the street with no landscaping.

The building is rectangular in plan with a five-bay facade on its north elevation and a curved bay at the northeast corner. On the west elevation to the rear is a concrete block addition added in the late 20th century. The building rises four stories from a raised foundation of rock-faced granite

Continued

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

"The Russell" was originally part of the city's largest district of apartment block construction, which extended along South Main Street, Wellington and Chandler Streets. During the second half of the 19th century, Worcester's industries expanded greatly in size and number. The city's population grew rapidly and swelled through large additions of foreign immigrants. As a result of the growing demand for housing, residential expansion became necessary and occurred in all the central sections of the city. Older neighborhoods became more densely settled, while outlying areas were expanded with new subdivisions. During the late 19th century, three deckers and apartment blocks formed the bulk of the city's multiple family housing.

Located two blocks west of Main Street, "The Russell" was built near the southernmost edge of the central business district. Constructed in an area where apartment blocks began appearing as early as 1879, the building was built on the site of an earlier double house. Typical of apartment blocks in the area, "The Russell" was architect designed and purely residential.

The building was built at a cost of \$25,000 for Abigail Russell Parsons.

Continued

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

atlases, directories  
 Worcester Architects List, Worcester Heritage Preservation Society  
Engineering and Building Record, Vol. XXX, July 14, 1894, p. 115  
Worcester Telegram, January 11, 1938 (Ava G. Hovey) clipping file, Worcester  
 Historical Museum.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Community:<br>Worcester                          | Form No:<br><del>130-5-4</del><br>1758 |
| Property Name: 49 Austin Street<br>"The Russell" |  |

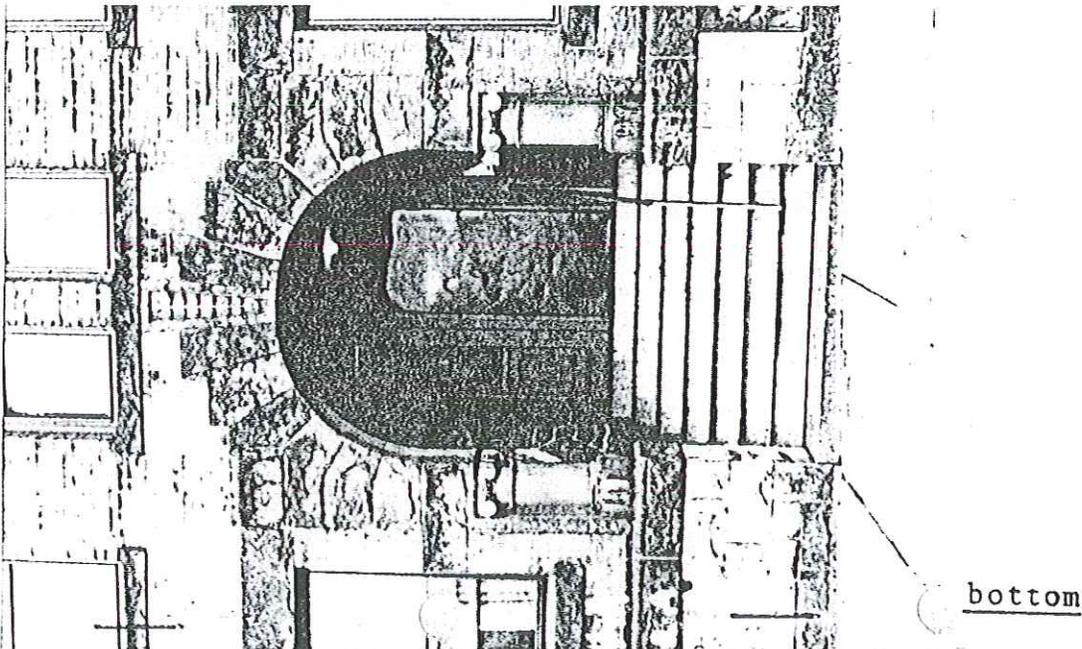
Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE continued

ashlar to a flat roof punctuated with several narrow rectangular chimneys along the outside walls. The main block of the building rests on a rock-faced brownstone water table, a detail repeated as a string course above the first floor windows. Above the first floor, the walls are unadorned with the exception of shallowly projecting chimney stacks with corbelled bases. At the roof line is a shallowly-projecting corbelled frieze culminating in a metal cornice. Windows throughout the building are 1/1 wooden sash set within wooden surrounds. On the principal facades, windows feature brownstone sills and deep relieving arches.

The building's principal ornament is contained within the central three bays of the north facade. The frontispiece is enclosed within a pair of projecting piers which are the stacks for two chimneys at the roof level. The entrance to "The Russell", centered between two flanking window bays and recessed beneath a massive round arch, is reached by a short flight of stairs. The round arched entrance is the building's most outstanding architectural feature. It is composed of rock-faced brownstone and rests on a pair of squat Ionic columns. A carved keystone surmounts the arch. Above the entrance, on the second, third and fourth stories, narrow paired windows, flanked by a pair of full-sized windows, occupy the central bay. Between the second and third stories is a brownstone plaque bearing the name of the building. The frontispiece culminates in a raised brick parapet with a deep course of corbelled brick.

The building's only alterations have been the addition of the concrete block shed to the rear and the replacement of the original front door with a modern metal door. A rehabilitation of "The Russell" in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation will take place in the near future.



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

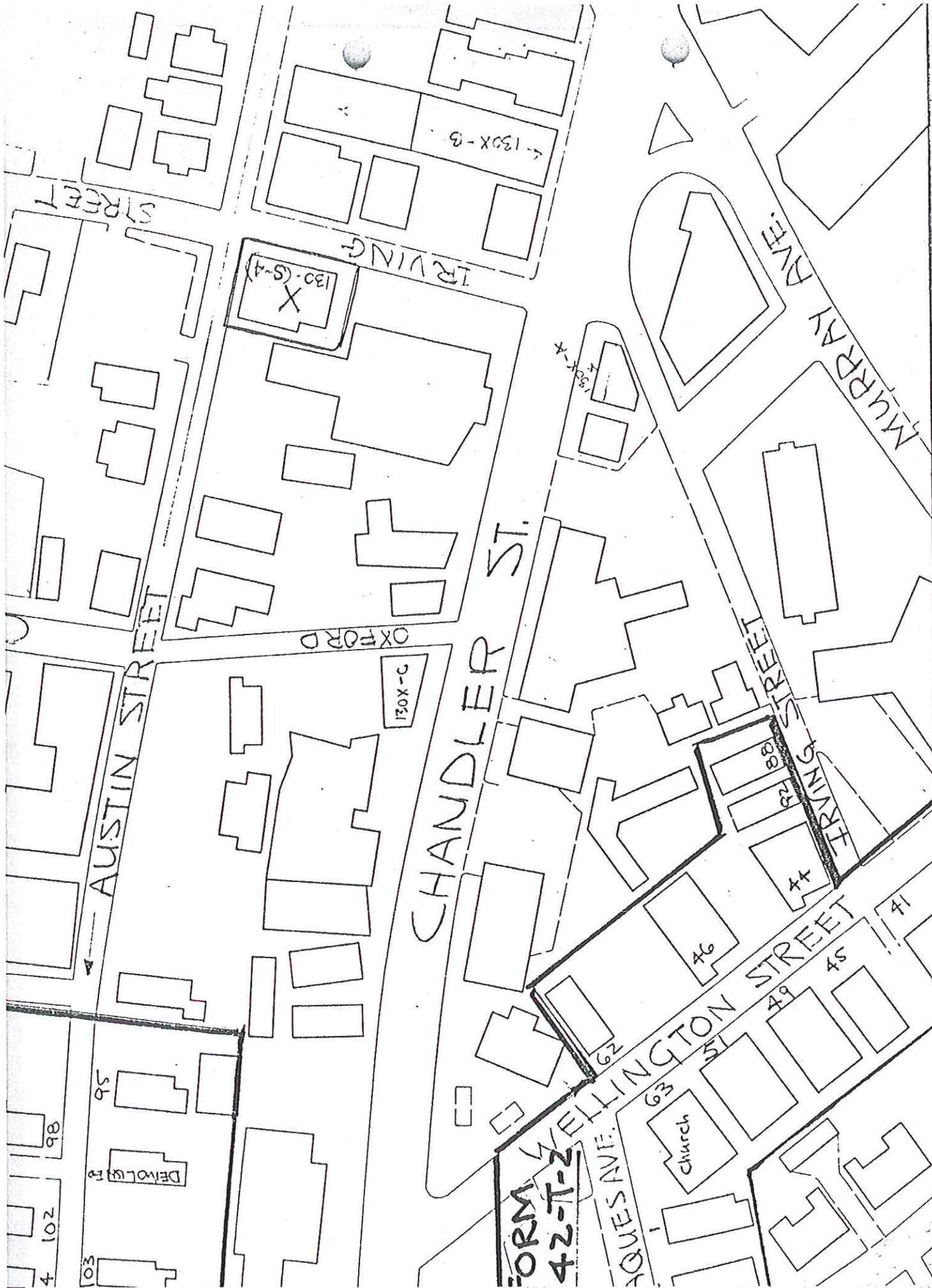
|  |  |
|--|--|
| Community:<br>Worcester                          | Form No:<br>1758<br><del>130 (S-4)</del> |
| Property Name: 49 Austin Street<br>"The Russell" |  |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.  
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE continued

Although many speculative apartment blocks were being built by developers in the 1890s, "The Russell" was owner-occupied as most earlier Worcester apartment buildings had been. In this case, Mrs. Parsons' daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Hovey, lived on the first floor while the owner herself lived next door at 55 Austin Street. Mrs. Parsons also owned houses south of "The Russell" on Irving Street. Her grandsons, founders of one of Worcester's largest laundry (the Hovey Laundry), also built and owned property in the neighborhood. The majority of "The Russell's" tenants were of the middle class.

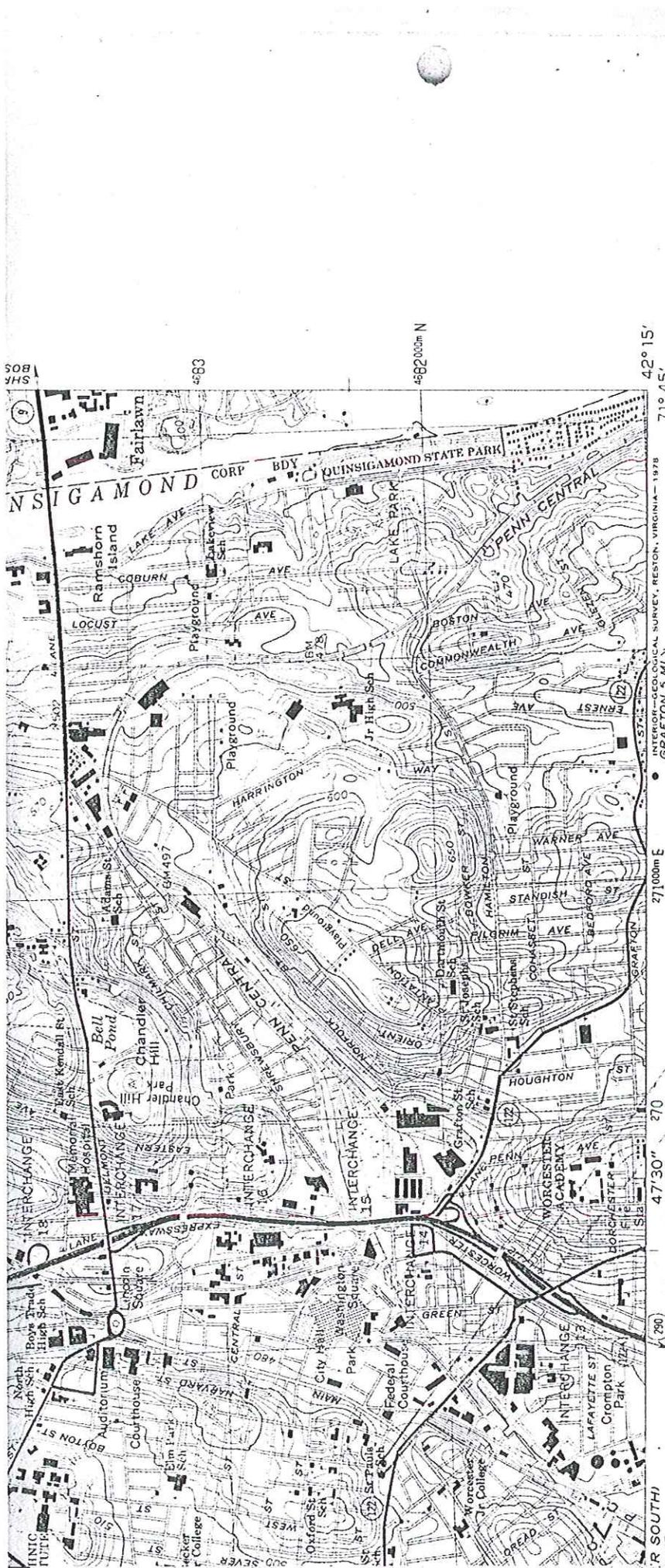
Architecturally, "The Russell" is comparable to other well-built, architect-designed Worcester apartment blocks of the late 19th century. With the demolition of many of these, especially in the Main-Wellington-Chandler area, in the late 20th century, "The Russell" is now one of the few apartment blocks in the area. As a representative of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, it is a simple but effective design. The rounded northeast corner, extensive use of rock-faced granite and brownstone trim, repeated rhythm of chimney stack "piers" and roofline chimneys, heavy, carved Romanesque arched main entrance and deep corbelled roof parapet are all notable features of the design.

The architect of the structure was the firm of Barker and Nourse of Worcester. The partnership of Albert A. Barker (1853-1905) and Walter B. Nourse (1854-1906) was active from 1880-1902. Barker and Nourse designed many important Worcester buildings including a number of apartment buildings. They appear to have been the major designers of Worcester apartment blocks at the end of the 19th century. Some notable Barker and Nourse apartment blocks in the general area are "The Boynton" (1887) and "The Vendome" (1898).



ASSESSOR'S MAP, CITY OF WORCESTER MOORE SURVEY & MAPPING CO., 1975  
 SHEET # 130 SCALE 1" = 100'

SEE MAP SHEET



(GRAFTON)  
6668 II MW

INTERIOR-GEODISICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 1978  
GRAFTON 5 MI.  
271000m E  
47'30" N  
71° 45'

Willard Richmond Block

MASS. TURNPIKE 4.5 MI.  
270

25 000  
0 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET  
1 MILE  
0 1 KILOMETRE

Amendments to the Worcester  
Multiple Resource Area (NR:1980);

WORCESTER NORTH, MAS  
N4215—W7145/7.5  
1974  
AMS 6668 IV SE—SERIES V814  
UTM: 19/268490/4782530  
UTM: 19/268440/4782530

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway, hard surface  
Secondary highway, hard surface  
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface  
Unimproved road

Interstate Route  
U. S. Route  
State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION  
MASS.

WOR.  
1758

FEDERAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

|      |                                  |
|------|----------------------------------|
| AREA | FORM NO.                         |
|      | 130(S-4) <del>1001</del><br>1758 |

NR 11-7-85  
MRA 110

*R.D. Piedmont II*

Town Worcester

Address 49 Austin Street

Historic Name "The Russell"

PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)  
staple to left side of form

Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

Use: Present apartments

Original apartments

DESCRIPTION:

Date ca. 1894

Source Eng. & Bldg, Record, Vol. XXX, p.115

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

Style Classical, Romanesque, Utilitarian

Architect Barker & Nourse

Exterior wall fabric brick, granite, brown-stone

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates) main door replaced, cement block addition at side rear (late 20th c.)

Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage 4,834 sq. ft.

Setting intersection in mixed residential/apartment/commercial area, some vacant lots

Recorded by S. Ceccacci

Organization James Soffan

Date February 1985

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

This property meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level.

A simple but well-preserved example of Richardsonian Romanesque design by a noted Worcester architectural firm, "The Russell" is representative of architect-designed apartment buildings built here during the late 19th century. Both its brick and stone construction and its general exterior appearance relate it to other apartment blocks of its era. Its four story height, central entrance set in a shallow central facade pavilion and the use of decorative brick work and a parapet at the roofline are all characteristic of the type.

(See Continuation Sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

"The Russell" was originally part of the city's most extensive early apartment district (ca. 1885-ca. 1900) which extended along South Main Street, Wellington Street (see form #NR142-T-1 and Chandler Street, becoming less dense along Irving Street between Chandler and Pleasant Streets. Late 20th century demolition has left only a few early apartment blocks on Irving Street. During the late 19th century, concentrations of apartment buildings also appeared in the Pleasant Street area, around Lincoln Square and in the vicinity of Millbury Street and Quinsigamond Avenue.

During the second half of the 19th century as Worcester's industries were increasing in number and prospering, the city's population grew rapidly. Large numbers of foreign immigrants contributed to the swelling population during this period. As a result of the growing demand for housing, residential expansion occurred in all the central sections of the city. Older neighborhoods became more densely populated, while outlying areas were expanded by new subdivisions. During the late 19th century multiple-family housing, in the form of three-deckers and apartment blocks, made up the bulk of the city's residential construction. (see MRA Overview item 8, pp. 7,8,10,11,17,18,25,26,27).

Located two blocks west of Main Street, this structure was built near the southernmost edge of the central business district. In a residential area where apartment blocks had begun appearing as early as 1879-1884 (see forms #NR 130-E and 130-(S-2)), "The Russell" was built on the site of an earlier double house. Typical of many apartment buildings in the area, it was architect-designed and purely residential (no stores on the ground floor). The building was built at a cost of \$25,000 for Abigail Russell Parsons (Mrs. George Parsons).

(See Continuation Sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

atlases, directories

Worcester Architects List, Worcester Heritage Preservation Society

Engineering and Building Record, Vol. XXX, July 14, 1894, p. 115.

Worcester Telegram, January 11, 1938 (Ava G. Hovey) clipping file, Worcester

Historical Museum.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester                          | Form No:<br>1758<br>130(S-4) |
| Property Name: "The Russell"<br>49 Austin Street |                              |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

"The Russell" is comparable to numerous other well built, architect-designed Worcester apartment blocks of the late 19th century. Four stories in height on Austin Street and five as the land falls off on Irving Street, this brick structure has a rounded northeast corner. Resting on a granite foundation, it has brownstone trim and copper moulding at the eaves. Major decorative elements consist of a heavy carved Romanesque arched main entrance of brownstone and a corbelled central roof parapet on Austin Street. Repeated pilasters, corresponding to the numerous chimneys which break the roofline of the building on the front and sides, also serve as a decorative element.

The architect of this structure was the firm of Barker and Nourse of Worcester. The partnership of Albert A. Barker (1853-1905) and Walter B. Nourse (1854-1906), this firm was active from 1880-1902. Barker and Nourse designed many important Worcester buildings including numerous apartment houses. They appear to have been the major designers of Worcester apartment blocks during the late 19th century. Some notable Barker and Nourse apartment blocks located in this general neighborhood are The Boynton (1887) 718 Main Street (form #142-T-3) and The Vendome (1898) 17-19 Chandler Street (form #130-R).

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

Although many speculative apartment blocks were being built by developers in the 1890's, "The Russell" was owner-occupied as most earlier Worcester apartment buildings had been. In this case, the owner's daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Hovey, lived on the first floor while the owner herself lived next door at 55 Austin Street. Mrs. Parsons also owned houses south of "The Russell" on Irving Street. Her grandsons founded the Hovey Laundry in 1900 and built buildings for it nearby at 41 Austin Street (ca. 1905) and 27-29 Chandler Street (1928-1932) (see form #130X-B).

Like most Worcester apartment blocks of the period, its occupants were mostly of the middle class. Many were boarders. Despite the fact that a large proportion of the city's increase in population during this period was due to foreign immigration, the occupants of "The Russell" and other comparable apartment buildings were rarely newly-arrived immigrants. Although there was a high proportion of Irish living in this section along Austin and Chandler Streets, the 1896 directory shows that most of the occupants of this building were not Irish.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

DATE: 1/14/85 Worcester  
 PROPERTY: 8-16 Austin; 43 Austin; 1060 17-19 Chandler; 1055 1056 21-23 Chandler; 49 Austin; 45-47 Austin  
 STAFF IN CHARGE OF REVIEW: S2 27-29 1758  
 ACTION: NR/ITZ 1062 AGENCY:

Does this property meet the NR criteria?

|           |           |   |       |   |          |                  |
|-----------|-----------|---|-------|---|----------|------------------|
| Opinion:  | See Below |   |       |   | No       | More information |
| Criteria: | A         | B | C     | D |          |                  |
| Level:    | Local     |   | State |   | National |                  |

Statement of Significance by Zimmerman  
(staff)

43 Austin - YES A and C; local; well detailed late Itel; relatively early example of multi story apt construction; notable for prox to central business

49 Austin - YES A and C; local; ~~not~~ massive Rich Rom apt block by noted Worcester archts. Notable for its "single" use (residential w/ no comm); importance in expansion of CBD; alternative housing for middle class workers

Information required to form opinion: class workers

1055 1056 17-19/21-23 Chandler - OK as per CS letter

1062 27-29 Chandler - YES; as per 20c Survey A; C local all rest NO; typical and/or altered, unexceptional mid to late 19c

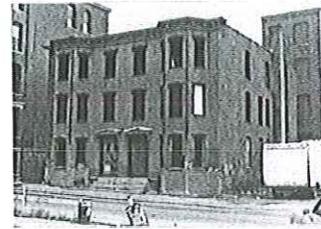
Result:

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Agreed Eligible:         | Date: |
| DOE by SOI:              | Date: |
| Determined Not Eligible: | Date: |

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Inventory No:           | WOR.1013  |
| Historic Name:          | Richmond, Willard Row House                         |
| Common Name:            |   |
| Address:                | 45-47 Irving St                                     |
| City/Town:              | Worcester   |
| Village/Neighborhood:   | Downtown  |
| Local No:               | 130-K   |
| Year Constructed:       | R 1880  |
| Architect(s):           |   |
| Architectural Style(s): | Italianate; Row House                               |
| Use(s):                 | Abandoned or Vacant; Multiple Family Dwelling House |
| Significance:           | Architecture  |
| Area(s):                |   |
| Designation(s):         |   |



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

This file was accessed on:

Friday, October 21, 2011 at 12:14 PM

FORM B - BUILDING

AREA

1013  
FORM NO.  
8-3

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

Town Worcester  
Address 45-47 Irving Street  
Willard Richmond Row  
Historic Name House Block



Present vacant  
Original apartments  
DESCRIPTION 1879  
Source water dept. records, maps & atlases  
Title Renaissance Revival  
Architect unknown  
Exterior Wall Fabric brick  
Adjacent Buildings none

WEST AND SOUTH FACADES

Major Alterations (with dates) roofline chimnies removed (mid 20th c.?) damage to facade (1980's)  
Condition fair

Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Acreage 3,300 sq. ft.  
Setting mixed apartment/commercial area

UTM REFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_  
USGS QUADRANGLE \_\_\_\_\_  
SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

Recorded by S. Ceccacci  
J. Soffan  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Revised June 1989

**NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

This property meets National Register Criteria A and C at the local level. It possesses integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location and historical associations with the development of the surrounding area as a largely multifamily residential area and with Worcester's growth as a large industrial city.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.**

The Willard Richmond Row House is significant as a relatively well preserved example of a double row house, or duplex town house, type exterior. It also appears to be a rare surviving example of a transitional multifamily housing type that evolved as the row house form was adapted to apartment house use. Like the early form of the three-decker, which has the exterior appearance of a single family house, the Richmond Row House looks like a two unit row house while, it seems, in fact, to have been built as a six-family apartment block.

Worcester's first three-deckers seem to have taken the form of a two story single-family house with a third story hidden in a mansard roof. These structures contained an apartment on each of three levels. The earliest (see Continuation Sheet)

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.**

The Willard Richmond Row House is historically significant as an important early remnant of the late 19th century transformation of the area around Main, Irving, Chandler and Wellington streets from a residential neighborhood of low-rise woodframe houses to an multistory apartment district.

The 1870 Worcester atlas shows single family houses and numerous double houses on Austin, Irving, and Chandler streets. The construction of the Willard Richmond Row House, apparently as a small apartment house about 1879, was one of the first steps toward the creation of a district of structures specifically designed as multifamily housing. The Willard Richmond Apartment Block was built in 1885 next door on the site of a former boarding house. In 1894, "The Russell" apartment block was built across the street at 49 Austin Street. As land of the former Ethan Allen estate on Main Street was sold off in the 1880's and 1890's, numerous apartment blocks began to be built on Main Street, Wellington Street and vicinity. That area became the nucleus of a concentrated district of largely brick and brownstone apartments, built between the 1880's and about 1900. Ultimately, this apartment district extended, in the vicinity of Main Street, south of Pleasant Street approximately to Piedmont Street.

(see Continuation Sheet)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

maps, atlases, Worcester House Directories  
Water Department Records, City of Worcester  
clipping file, (Willard Richmond), Worcester Historical Museum  
Taylor, Anthony R. Worcester's Architectural Neighborhoods. Worcester:  
Worcester Historical Museum, 1984.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

WOR 1013

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester          | Form No:<br>S-3 |
| Property Name Richmond Row House |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

remaining well preserved three-deckers in the city, 84 Elm Street and 15 Larch Street (both 1870), are both of this type. Another early form of the three-decker was a three story Italianate style structure with a flat roof and a single ground floor porch. This early three-decker is somewhat comparable to the Richmond Row House. It is the first unequivocal three-decker type. The remaining examples of this early three decker type date from the late 1880's. The construction of the Richmond Row House could be seen as a part of the evolution of the three-decker and possibly related to versions of early apartment houses.

Further study will be necessary in order to determine more precisely any relationship between the Richmond Row House apartment block type and the development of three-decker and apartment house plans. Nonetheless, this type seems to be clearly related to the search in the second half of the 19th century for a housing type best suited to a rapidly growing industrial city.

DESCRIPTION

The exterior appearance of the Willard Richmond Row House is that of two three-story units of a typical row house. It has two separate entrances at the center of the block and at either end a three-sided bay window rises the full three-story height of the building. Unlike most other surviving Worcester rowhouses, it has a flat, rather than mansard roof, and no high raised basement. Another unusual feature is the use here of pressed metal for all the trim, including roof cornice, frieze and brackets, window caps and water table. Distinguished by Renaissance Revival details, this ornament is of the same type often seen in stone on other buildings of the period.

MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN WORCESTER

During the late 19th century, multifamily housing made up the bulk of Worcester's residential construction. At this time in Boston and in other northeastern cities, row houses were a common solution to the problem of providing multiple dwellings on a diminishing amount of developable urban land. A number of rowhouses were built in Worcester between the 1830's and 1880's; yet, the popularity of the row house never caught on here.

Another type of multifamily housing was being built in Worcester at the same time the earliest row houses were built. Most typically this type took the form of rectangular, gable-roofed, two-story apartment buildings of wood or brick. Looking on the exterior something like elongated single-family houses, these structures seem typically to have contained four apartments. Possibly the earliest sizeable complex of multifamily housing in the city was a cluster of twenty-four four-family houses constructed in the 1830's. Built by builder Tobias Boland for Irish immigrant workers, they stood between Winter, Beech, Pond, and Grace Streets until the 1940's. Probably the earliest existing  
(continued)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

WOR. 1913

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester           | Form No:<br>S-3 |
| Property Name: Richmond Row House |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

examples of multifamily houses in Worcester are two brick buildings at 50-56 Canterbury Street built by Eli Thayer in the 1850's, apparently to house workers in nearby factories. Another version of this basic multifamily house type in wood (built around 1870?), still survives in the Cherry Valley section of the city near the Ashworth & Jones Mill (1870).

The three-decker and the multi-story apartment block became the city's most popular forms of multifamily housing from the 1880's through the early years of the 20th century.

THE ROW HOUSE

The term "row houses" is typically used to mean a group of uniform attached townhouses, usually of masonry construction, built in densely populated urban areas. Row houses became popular in larger American cities at the end of the 18th century and retained wide popularity well into the late 19th century. Reliable public transportation at the end of the 19th century and the ever-increasing use of the automobile in the early 20th century made outlying suburban residential developments both feasible and stylish. At this time the row house gradually lost favor.

WORCESTER ROW HOUSES

Among the city's earliest rowhouse blocks was a brick Federal style block of four three-and-a-half story units with a dormered gable roof. Built on north Main Street near Lincoln Square in the 1830's, they were designed by Isaiah Rogers and built for Stephen Salisbury II. This block is no longer standing.

The city's largest concentration of row houses was built about 1873 by Larkin N. Gates just off south Main Street on Castle, Alden and Valley Streets. This complex originally consisted of eight blocks containing forty-eight rowhouses. Like most existing Worcester rowhouse blocks, these blocks were two and two-and-a-half stories in height with raised basement, bay window, and mansard roof. Part of that development still exists on Castle Street (see form #NR 141-D-1). Other Worcester row houses remain on Piedmont Street, Austin Street, and Pleasant Street.

Many of the two-and-a-half story, raised basement, mansard roofed, Castle Street row houses, originally intended as single family attached units, were converted to multifamily units soon after their construction in 1873. Such conversion of existing single family row house units may have led to the construction of rowhouse-type structures to be used intentionally as apartment blocks, not as attached single-family townhouses. Similar conversions of single-family freestanding houses to three-family apartments may also have led to the development of the three-decker at a slightly earlier date. (continued)

Stable to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

WOR 1013

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester           | Form No:<br>S-3 |
| Property Name: Richmond Row House |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

TRANSITIONAL FORM

Study of the earliest available Worcester House Directories suggests that the Richmond Row House may have been built as a six-apartment building in row house guise. The 1888 Worcester House Directory shows that, less than ten years after its construction, the block served as a five family tenement, rather than as the two-single-family unit that it appears to be. Because the 1888 directory did not indicate the floor occupied by a particular family, it is not clear whether in that year there was one family per floor with possibly one vacant apartment. The 1890 House Directory shows six families living here, one per floor per unit (floors were indicated in this directory). For this reason, it seems quite feasible that this block may represent a transitional form of multifamily housing as the row house type was adapted to apartment use.

At least one other rowhouse block, similar to the Richmond Row House, but containing more units, is known to have existed in Worcester. Demolished in 1977, 128-134 Piedmont Street (ca. 1879-1886) also featured all metal trim of the same style, the same side-hall plan, bay windows, and flat roof with bracketed cornice. This block, however, featured a high raised basement not seen at 45-47 Irving Street. Another block built at the same time by the same owner stood next to it on Pleasant Street. It is assumed that it was of the same design, although it was demolished many years ago and no visual documentation as to its appearance has been found.

A check of the 1888 Worcester House Directory shows that the Piedmont Street block was devoted to four apartments per unit, one per floor. One of the four apartments was listed as being in the rear, apparently in the raised basement. The early date at which this block was entirely devoted to apartments supports the theory that both it and the Richmond Row House were built specifically to house apartments. Other row house blocks, such as Salisbury's Main Street block, row houses on Pleasant Street, on Chatham Street, and others on Castle Street were still largely single family townhouses in 1888. It appears that, although row houses built to contain single family units had sometimes been converted to apartments by 1888, those that contained no single family units at all only a few years after their construction had very likely been built as apartments.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

WOR 1013

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester           | Form No:<br>S-3 |
| Property Name: Richmond Row House |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

WORCESTER DEVELOPMENT AND MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

Until after the 1830's, Worcester was not densely built up, even along Main Street. The 1829 map of Worcester shows that almost all the buildings lining Main Street were freestanding and most were not large enough to have been row houses. The city's population grew rapidly during 1830's and 1840's as industrial prosperity was fed by the opening of the Blackstone Canal in 1828 and by the opening of railroads in the 1830's and 1840's. Gradually this led to a more urban appearance along Main Street.

As early as the 1830's Stephen Salisbury II built a rowhouse near Lincoln Square, contributing to the increased urban appearance of Main Street. As the city became more densely built up by the 1850's and 1860's, a number of other row houses were built in areas peripheral to the growing Main Street business district. A few buildings which can be identified as rowhouses on the 1870 atlas were located on south Main Street, Pleasant Street, and Chatham Street. Larkin N. Gates is known to have opened his real estate office in 1868 in a rowhouse he had built at 800-806 Main Street. During the 1870's and 1880's a few other rowhouse blocks were built, mostly around Pleasant, Main, and Piedmont streets. Although it was an early multi-family housing solution in Worcester, the rowhouse never became a popular housing type here.

The city's population continued to increase rapidly in the 1880's and 1890's. The census count soared from 58,291 in 1880 to 118,421 in 1900. As the need to provide housing grew more acute, multiple housing became the norm. Three-deckers and apartment blocks became the major housing types built in Worcester during that period.

Both apartment houses and three deckers offered the fashionable French flat style of accommodation, a single ample apartment all on one level. The three-decker seems to have taken the lead over other multifamily housing types because it accommodated "a middle class vision of an independent suburban residence to the realities of a pedestrian and streetcar industrial city." Unlike a multi-story rowhouse dwelling, with no windows on the sides, each three-decker apartment occupied one level only (an entire floor) and offered windows on all four sides and porches both front and back. In addition, the three-decker was surrounded by a yard with the opportunity for trees, shrubbery, and grass.

(continued)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

WWR 1913

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester           | Form No:<br>S-3 |
| Property Name: Richmond Row House |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

THREE DECKERS

The earliest three-decker construction in Worcester seems to have been concentrated at the edge of the mid-19th century city core, beginning sometime before 1870. Before the Citizen's Street Railway started operation in 1888, urban transit consisted of nothing more than a horsecar line on Main Street and a narrow gauge railroad from the city center to Lake Quinsigamond. Until that date, Worcester was essentially a pedestrian city. Industrial prosperity and a fast growing population during the 1870's and 1880's created a pressing need for centrally located housing in the pre-streetcar city. The row house was one solution to that need. The three-decker was another.

As early as the 1870's, the rowhouse was beginning to find competition in the emerging three-decker. The earliest well preserved three-deckers that are still known to exist date from 1870 and are located within a few blocks of the Richmond Row House. According to a Clark University inventory of three-deckers in Worcester, the larger area around the Richmond Row House appears to have been "an important site for the early growth" of the three-decker house type. An early concentration of three-deckers in the area seems to have already existed by 1888 on Austin, Chatham and Merrick streets. In the same area, slightly later than the appearance of the early three-deckers, the "apartment house" version of the row house seems to have been built on Irving and Piedmont streets.

By 1890, according to the Clark inventory, "three-deckers were scattered across the western slope of Crown Hill and had spread across Chandler Street, particularly along Jaques Avenue." Also by this date, this same area, between Pleasant, Main and Piedmont streets, had also begun to be built up with apartment buildings.

APARTMENT BLOCKS

The first apartment block in the United States is believed to have been the "Hotel Pelham", built at the corner of Boylston and Tremont streets in Boston in 1857. This landmark building was derived from the French or European multifamily housing practice of providing each apartment with ample living space on only one floor, not on several floors as was the tradition in the United States. The popularity of the new type did not begin to catch on in Boston until the early 1870's; yet, during the 1880's and 1890's, apartment living became stylish and quite common.  
(continued)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Wor 1013

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester           | Form No:<br>S-3 |
| Property Name: Richmond Row House |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

In Worcester the apartment block appeared relatively early. The city's first apartment building, an "adaptation of the European system of flats", was built on Lincoln Square in 1877 by Stephen Salisbury II on a design by Worcester architect, Stephen Earle. A second Earle-designed apartment block was built in 1880, also by Salisbury, at Lincoln Square. Willard Richmond, who built the Willard Richmond Row House, also built one of the city's earliest existing apartment blocks next door at the corner of Austin and Irving Streets in 1885 (see form #NR 130-S-2). Large four and five story apartment blocks gained popularity in Worcester during the 1890's, a period during which concentrations of brick apartment blocks were constructed in the Main South area and near Lincoln Square.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

- \_\_\_\_\_. Worcester Illustrated Business Guide. Worcester: Snow, Woodman & Co., 1881.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worcester Three-Decker Survey". Clark University Graduate School of Geography, Worcester, February, 1981.

PROPERTY BOUNDARIES

Property boundaries for the Richmond Row House Block are defined by property lines, as this is an individual property rather than a historic district. Property lines are shown on the attached Assessor's Map. Property area is 3,300 square feet.

OWNER

James Soffan  
28 Southbridge Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

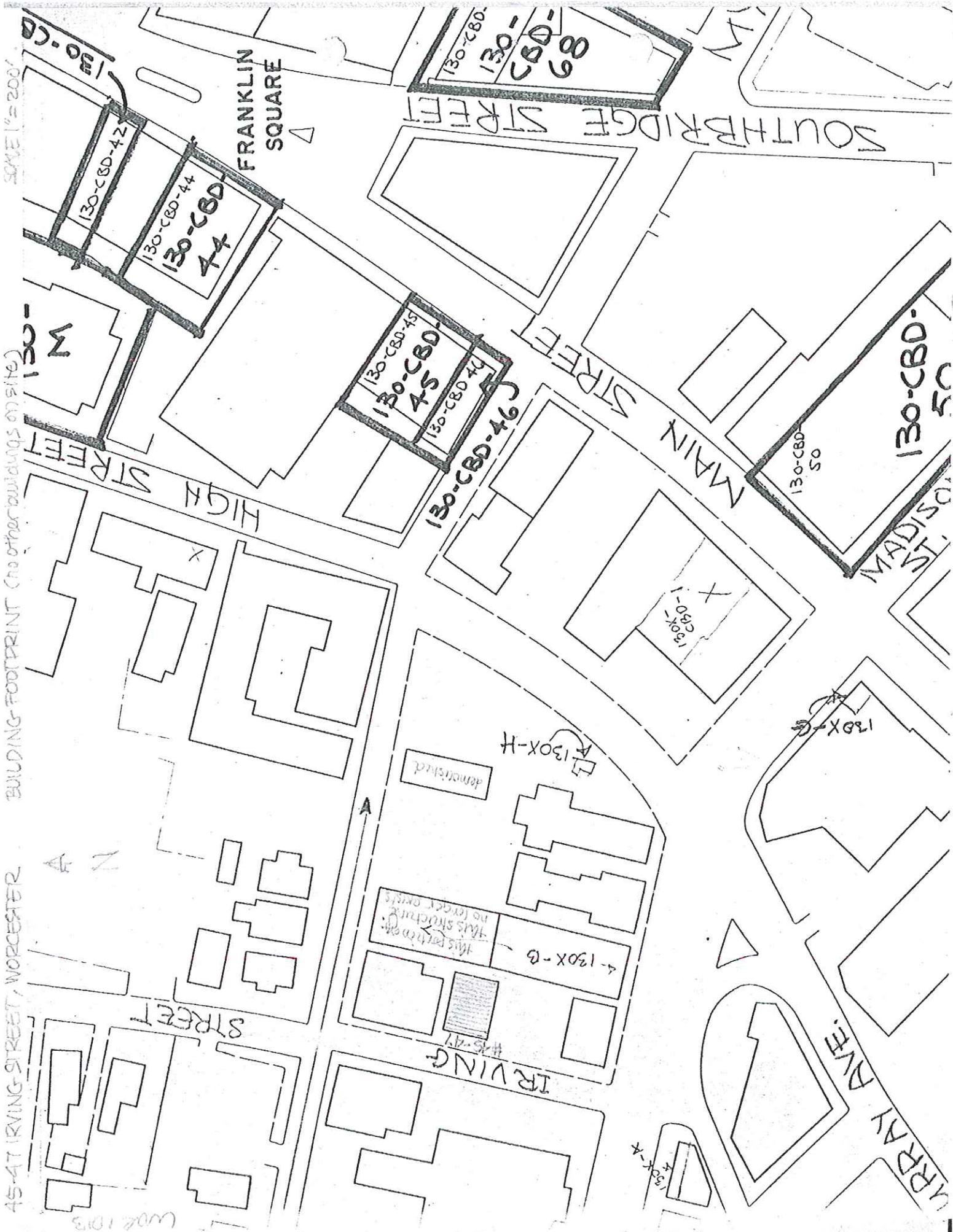
telephone: (508) 799-4977

CONTACT PERSON:

Susan McDaniel Ceccacci  
360 Causeway Street  
Jefferson, Massachusetts 01522

telephone: (508) 829-6640

Staple to Inventory form at bottom



SCALE 1" = 200'

BUILDING FOOTPRINT (no other buildings on site)

45-47 IRVING STREET, WORCESTER

N

FRANKLIN SQUARE

SOUTHBRIDGE STREET

HIGH STREET

MAIN STREET

MADISON STREET

IRVING STREET

MURRAY AVE.

130-CBD-42  
130-CBD-44  
130-CBD-44  
44

130-CBD-45  
130-CBD-46  
130-CBD-46  
45  
46

130-CBD-48  
130-CBD-49  
130-CBD-48  
48  
49

130-CBD-50  
130-CBD-50

demolished  
130X-H

this structure no longer exists  
this structure no longer exists  
4-130X-B

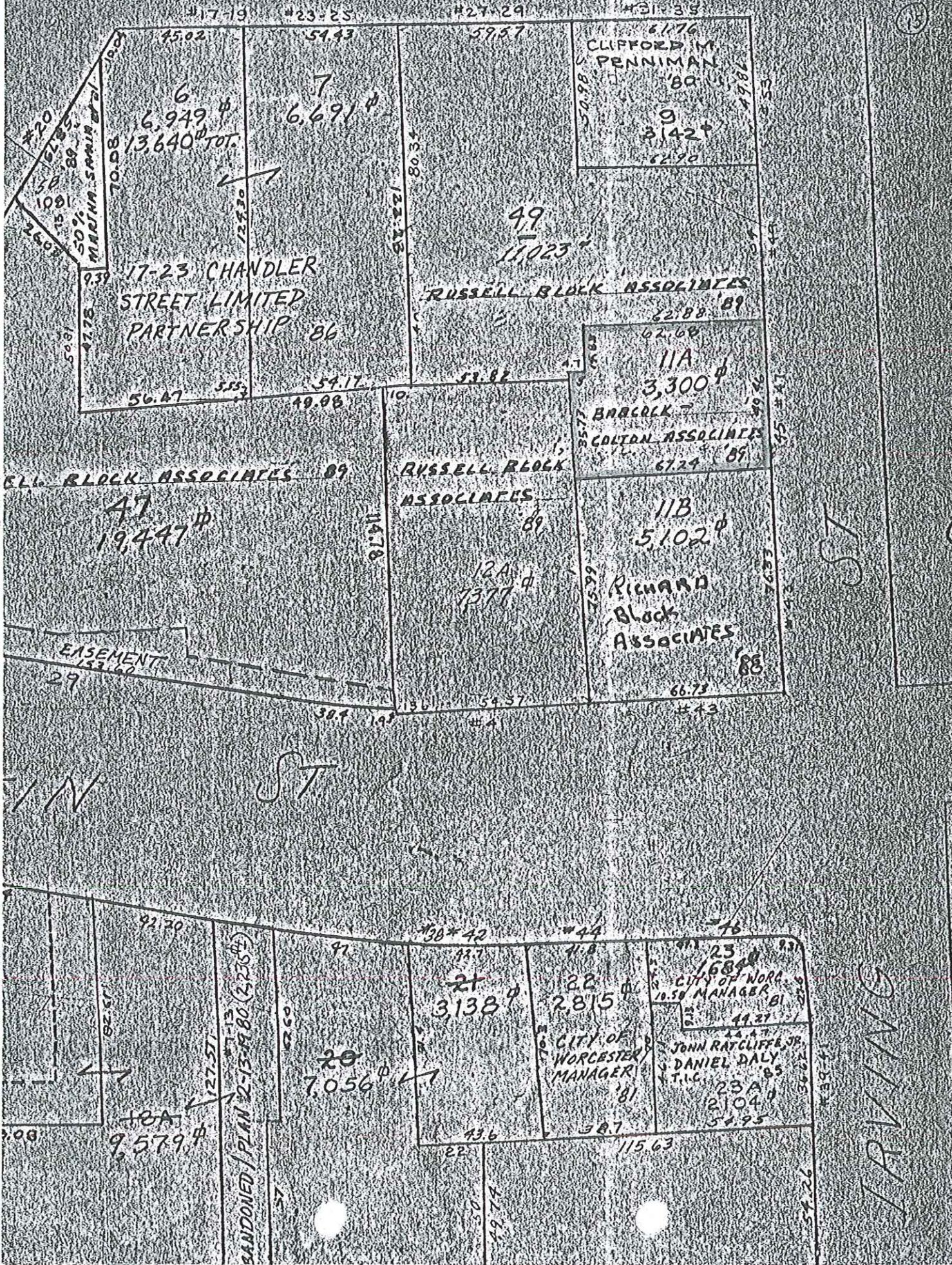
130X-A  
4  
4

130X-G

130X-1  
X

W02 1013

CITY OF WORCESTER, ASSESSOR'S MAP SALE 1948  
45-47 IRVING STREET  
RICHMOND ROW HOUSE



6  
6,949 φ  
13,640 φ TOT.

7  
6,691 φ

9  
3,142 φ  
6,290

17-23 CHANDLER STREET LIMITED PARTNERSHIP '86

49  
11,023 φ  
RUSSELL BLOCK ASSOCIATES

11A  
3,300 φ  
BARCOK  
COLTON ASSOCIATES

47  
19,447 φ  
ELLI BLOCK ASSOCIATES '89

RUSSELL BLOCK ASSOCIATES '89

11B  
5,102 φ  
RICHARD BLOCK ASSOCIATES '88

EASEMENT  
153.60  
29

IRVING ST

18A  
9,579 φ

ABANDONED PLAN 2-15-1980 (2,235 φ)

20  
7,056 φ

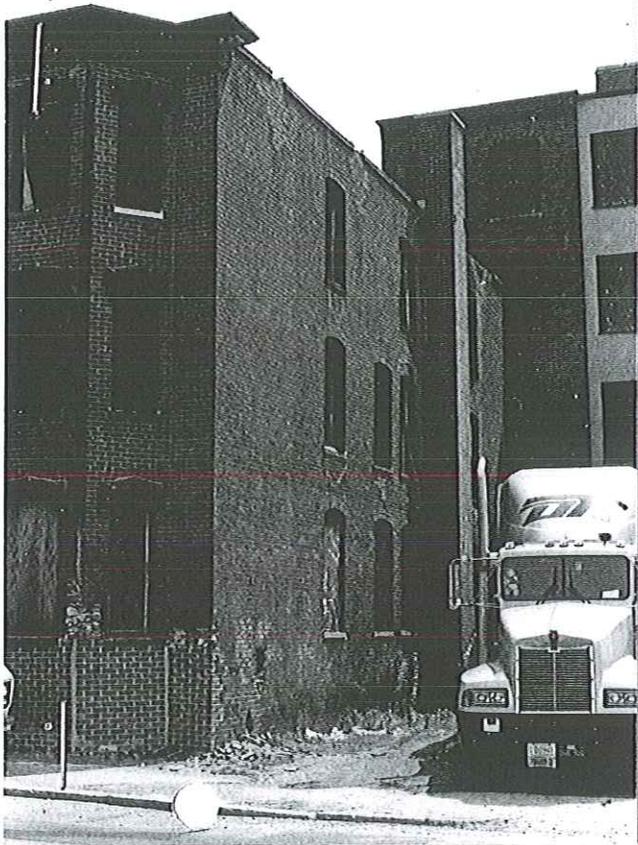
21  
3,138 φ

22  
2,815 φ  
CITY OF WORCESTER MANAGER '81

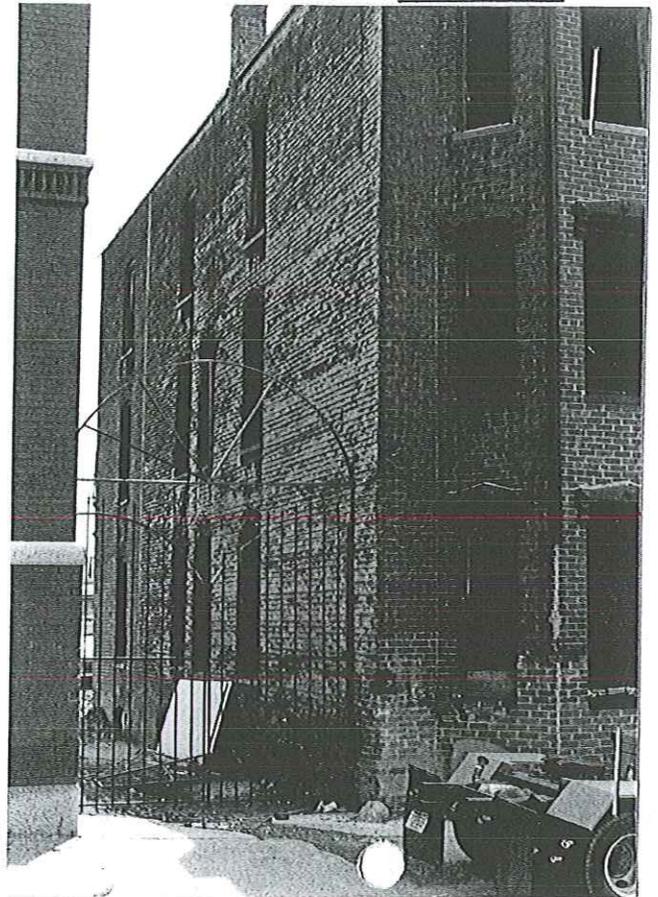
23  
1,684 φ  
CITY OF WORCESTER MANAGER '81

23A  
2,104 φ  
JOHN RATCLIFFE, JR.  
DANIEL DALY  
T.I.C. '85

IRVING



WEST AND SOUTH FACADES



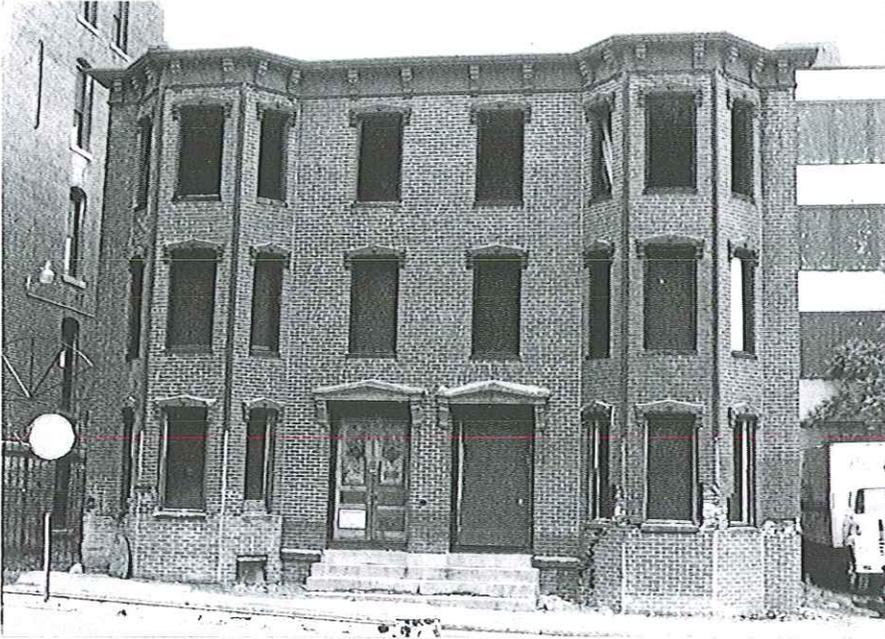
NORTH AND WEST FACADES LOOKING EAST



LOOKING SOUTH ON IRVING STREET



WEST FACADE LOOKING SOUTH ON IRVING ST



MAIN FACADE LOOKING EAST



EAST AND NORTH FACADE'S  
LOOKING WEST

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

*Pl - Downtown*

|      |                          |
|------|--------------------------|
| AREA | FORM NO.<br>1013<br>-S-3 |
|------|--------------------------|

~~130410~~  
(130410)



Worcester

Address 45-47 Irving Street

Historic Name Willard Richmond Row House

Present vacant

Original apartments

DESCRIPTION:

1879-1886 (see reverse)

Source maps & atlases

Style Renaissance Revival Rowhouse

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

roofline chimnies removed (mid 20th c.?)

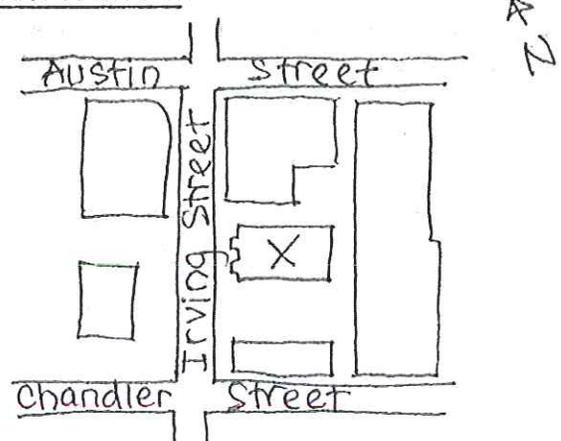
Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage \_\_\_\_\_

Setting mixed apartment/commercial area

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.



Recorded by S. Ceccacci

Organization J. Soffan

Date November 1984

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

Built on a typical rowhouse plan, this brick block has a central double entrance flanked on either side by a three-sided bay window which rises the full two-story height of the building. Unlike most other surviving Worcester rowhouses, it has a flat rather than mansard roof. Another distinguishing feature is the use here of pressed metal for all the trim, including roof cornice, frieze and brackets, window caps, and water table. Similar in style and motifs to Renaissance Revival furniture, this ornament is of the same type seen in stone on 1860's and 1870's Boston rowhouses.

(See Continuation Sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

A brick building of similar but not identical plan appeared on the 1886 atlas on this site where an earlier structure had previously stood. What appears to be the present structure was first shown on the 1896 atlas. Compared to the 1886 representation, it is shown as greater in depth with a different shape for the two facade bay windows. It is not clear whether these differences are due to inaccuracies in the 1886 map or to an actual alteration to the building. However, similarities in style and design between this structure and the previously mentioned rowhouse block at 128-134 Piedmont Street suggest that it was probably built about the same time (1879-1886).

Willard Richmond (1823-1916), a real estate dealer, who also owned the adjacent apartment building at 43 Irving Street (form #S-2), was shown as owner on both the 1886 and 1896 atlases. Responsible for the construction of numerous Worcester buildings during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Richmond was active in the real estate business in the city for over sixty years. He is best known as the developer of suburban land near his home at 835 Pleasant Street as "Richmond Heights" during the late 19th and early 20th century.

Worcester's earliest rowhouses appear to have been built in the late 1860's. A few buildings which can be identified as rowhouses on the 1870 atlas were located on south Main Street, Pleasant Street, and Chatham Street. Larkin N. Gates is known to have opened his real estate office in 1868 in a rowhouse he had built at 800-806 Main Street. During the 1870's and 1880's a few other rowhouse blocks were built, mostly in the area between Pleasant and Main Streets, and in the vicinity of Piedmont Street. However, the rowhouse never became a popular housing type here.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

- atlases, maps, directories
- clipping file (Willard Richmond), WHM
- Taylor, Anthony R., Worcester's Architectural Neighborhoods, Worcester: Worcester Historical Museum, 1984, pp. 46-52

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

WOR 1013

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester   | Form No:<br>8-3 |
| Property Name: Willard Richmond Row<br>House, 45-47 Irving Street |                 |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd):

At least one other similar rowhouse block is known to have existed in Worcester. Demolished in 1977, 128-134 Piedmont Street (ca. 1879-1886) also featured all metal trim of the same style, the same double entry, side-hall plan, and flat roof with bracketed cornice.

Because relatively few rowhouses were ever built in the city and because many have since been demolished, this block is representative of a rare Worcester type. Although it is in need of repair, the building is unaltered. Its metal trim, 2/2 window sash, entrance overdoors on brackets, and double front doors are all still intact.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd):

The city's largest concentration of rowhouses was just off South Main Street on Castle, Alden and Valley Streets. Originally consisting of eight blocks containing forty-eight rowhouses, this group was built about 1873 by Larkin N. Gates. Like most existing Worcester rowhouse blocks, these blocks were two or two-and-a-half stories in height with mansard roofs. Part of that development still exists on Castle Street (see form #NR 141-D-1).

Because the rowhouse never became popular in Worcester, other forms of multiple housing became dominant in the 1880's and 1890's as the city's population grew rapidly. Three-deckers and apartment blocks, such as that next door at 43 Irving Street and that across the street at 49 Austin Street became the major housing types built during that period.

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

*PD - Downtown*

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| In Area no. | Form no. |
|             | 1-30-K   |
|             | 1013.    |



Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.

*see attached eliq. opinion*

Town Worcester  
 Address 45-47 Irving Street  
 Name W. Richmond Building  
 Present use residential  
 Present owner \_\_\_\_\_  
 Description:  
 Date ca. 1878-1886  
 Source city atlases & directories  
 Style Victorian  
 Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric brick  
 Outbuildings (describe) none  
 Other features paired central entries, three-storey bay windows, pedimented window trim, bracketed cornice, flat roof  
 Altered no Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_

5. Lot size:  
 One acre or less X Over one acre \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approximate frontage 60'  
 Approximate distance of building from street 10'

6. Recorded by D. Latino, ed. B. R. Pfeiffer  
 Organization Worc. Heritage Pres. Soc.  
 Date January 1978

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) W. Richmond  
 Original use residential apartments  
 Subsequent uses (if any) and dates same

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

|                       |          |                            |       |                         |       |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Aboriginal            | _____    | Conservation               | _____ | Recreation              | _____ |
| Agricultural          | _____    | Education                  | _____ | Religion                | _____ |
| Architectural         | <u>X</u> | Exploration/<br>settlement | _____ | Science/<br>invention   | _____ |
| The Arts              | _____    | Industry                   | _____ | Social/<br>humanitarian | _____ |
| Commerce              | _____    | Military                   | _____ | Transportation          | _____ |
| Communication         | _____    | Political                  | _____ |                         |       |
| Community development | _____    |                            |       |                         |       |

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

Built between 1878 and 1886, the Richmond Building seems likely to be (locally) an early apartment house. In form, the building resembles row-house and double-house construction with its paired entries, bay windows, and brick party wall. However, its three-storey height, flat-roof and window placement separate it from more usual local house-types. As with the Prentiss "Tenement" House on Old Lincoln Street, 45-47 Irving Street may represent early attempts to give multiple-family houses the appearance of individual residences.

Occupants of the building in 1888 were 45 A. I. Thompson, electrician; O. I. Howe, boot-tree maker; and boarders James Blaine, moulder; G. Wesley Gray, driver; and John Cahill, baker; in 47 Charles Vokes; Mary Lawrence, widow; Martha Gerelds, midwife; and boarders, Adeliza Perry, teacher; Lincoln H. Stowe, plumber.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)  
 city atlases & directories.

Ask ST re. WAC.

Community: WORCESTER

MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received: 7/16/86

Date Reviewed: 7/30/86 RLV  
AT

Type: Individual District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: W. Richmond Row House

Inventory Form: 130 K

Address: 45-47 Irving Street, Worcester

Requested by: James Soffan, developer

computer #  
WOR. 1013

Action: Honor ITC Grant R & C Other:

Agency: Staff in charge of Review: Kim Lovejoy

JO + KL request re evaluation - previously requested by Soffan + failed. Considered notably

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DISTRICTS

- Eligible
- Eligible, also in district
- Eligible only in district
- Ineligible
- More information needed

- Eligible
- Ineligible
- More information needed

CRITERIA:

A

B

C

D

LEVEL:

Local

State

National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by Zimmerman

(Re-evaluation of prop as result of field visit by KL/JO which revealed that bldg had originally had rendered finish of applied mortar to imitate stone.)

Eligible on local level under Criterion A as one of the first buildings constructed by Wore. RE developer Willard Richmond, who later constructed the Willard Bldg immediately adjacent. <sup>(and numerous other late 19th/early 20th bldgs)</sup> Primarily significant <sup>as a well preserved</sup> as a well preserved well detailed late 19th century rowhouse in the Renaissance Revival style and exhibiting cast iron detailing. With original stucco rendering (traces of which are apparently still evident in field), buildings <sup>appear to have</sup> reflected the developer's <sup>efforts to use the</sup> desire to market stylish-ness of the detailing to attract tenants to a form of housing

LWR 1913

which never became popular in Worcester  
and which was soon superseded by larger  
French flat type apartment buildings of the  
character of the <sup>nearby</sup> Willard, built by Richmond  
shortly thereafter.

Town File  
2215 RM

# WORCESTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION

JIS  
AT



## RECEIVED

JUL 28 1989

City of Worcester  
Worcester Historical Commission **MASS. HIST. COMM.**

Date Received:

Date Reviewed:

Type: Individual District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Willard Richmond Row House

WOR 1013

Address: 45-47 Irving Street - Worcester, MA

Locus: \_\_\_\_\_ Map \_\_\_\_\_ Plot Plan

### INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

### DISTRICTS

- Eligible
- Eligible, also in district
- Eligible only in district
- Ineligible
- More information needed

- Eligible
- Ineligible
- More information needed

CRITERIA (Attachment I)      A                      B                      C                      D

Level:                              Local                      State                      National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE An Inventory Form Attached  
(Refer to Attachment II/Statement of Significance. If more information is needed, use space to describe what is needed to finish eligibility opinion.)

~~Massachusetts~~  
Worcester Historical Commission Opinion

Date Received:

Date Reviewed: ~~8/18/89~~ 8/15/89

Opinion: Concur

~~Disagree~~

More information needed

↓ see reverse

NO LONGER ELIGIBLE DUE TO CHANGES SINCE  
LAST MHC STAFF REVIEW - LOSS OF WATER  
TABLE MOLDING; MAJOR INSENSITIVE BRICK  
REPLACEMENT; REPOINTING ALL HAVE  
COMPROMISED BUILDING'S INTEGRITY —

RESTORATION OF LOST COMPONENTS + REVERSAL  
OF CHANGES MAY ~~WARRANT~~ BE CAUSE  
FOR RECONSIDERATION, BUT NOT THE  
WAY IT IS NOW

See correspondence in  
team file, particularly  
AJ letter of 4/5/90

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Inventory No:           | WOR.1060   |
| Historic Name:          | Richmond, Willard Apartment Block  |
| Common Name:            |  |
| Address:                | 43 Austin St   |
| City/Town:              | Worcester  |
| Village/Neighborhood:   | Piedmont   |
| Local No:               | 130 S-2  |
| Year Constructed:       | C 1880   |
| Architect(s):           |  |
| Architectural Style(s): | Italianate; Queen Anne   |
| Use(s):                 | Abandoned or Vacant; Apartment House   |
| Significance:           | Architecture   |
| Area(s):                | wor.cr: Worcester Multiple Resource Area                                       |
| Designation(s):         | Nat'l Register Individual Property (11/7/1985); Nat'l Register MRA (11/7/1985) |



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

This file was accessed on:

Friday, October 21, 2011 at 12:23 PM

NR 11/7/85

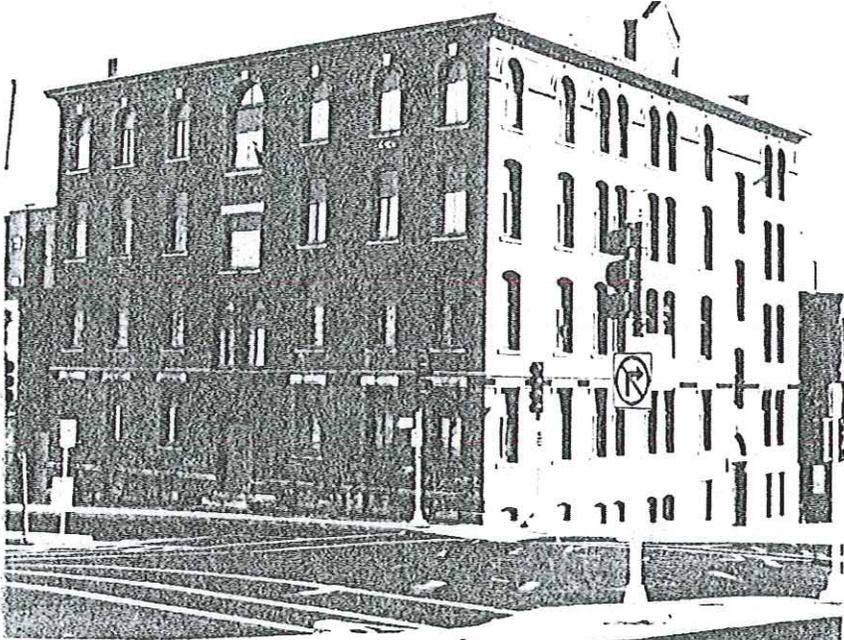
Amendment to the Worcester Multiple Resource Area (NR: 1980)

FORM B - BUILDING

AREA CR FORM NO. 130-(S-2)

1060

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116



Town Worcester

Address 43 Austin Street

Historic Name Willard Richmond Apartment Block

Use: Present vacant

Original apartments

DESCRIPTION

Date 1879-1886

Source atlases

Style Italianate/Eclectic

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric brick, granite trim

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

doors replaced; windows replaced (1980s)

Condition Fair/Good

Moved no Date NA

Acreage less than one acre

Setting at intersection in mixed residential/apartment/commercial area, some vacant lots.

Recorded by Sarah Zimmerman w/S. Ceccaci

Organization Mass. Historical Commission

Date Oct, 1985

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).  
Indicate north

See attached map.

UTM REFERENCE 19/268490/4682320

USGS QUADRANGLE Worcester North Quadrangle

SCALE 1: 25000

Willard Richmond Apartment Block

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The "Willard Richmond" apartment block was one of the earliest apartment houses built in the Main-Wellington-Chandler Street area, which, by 1900, was Worcester's largest apartment district. A modest expression of the transition from Italianate to Panel Brick styling, the building is a well-preserved and early example of apartment block construction in Worcester. As such, the "Willard Richmond" apartment block meets criteria A and C of the National Register on the local level.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE** Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Willard Richmond Apartment Block is a modest four-story brick apartment block built between 1879 and 1886. The building, which is square in plan with a small inset jog in the southwest corner, is located at the corner of Austin and Irving Streets just west of Worcester's central business district.

The building rises from a granite raised basement with segmental arched windows to a granite water table. It presents two facades, both of seven bays' width. On the north elevation, ornamental detail is focused in the central bay. Above a shed-roofed entrance hood on the first floor are a pair of round-arched windows surmounted by a two-story window bay with a rectangular base, terra-cotta tile spandrel and round-arched upper section. The west elevation is more irregular in appearance. It consists of seven bays

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE** Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community. Continued

Apartment construction in the Main-Wellington-Chandler Street area began in the early to mid-1880s and continued into the early 20th century. During the 19th century, smaller concentrations of apartment buildings also appeared in the Pleasant Street area to the north, around Lincoln Square to the northeast and in the vicinity of Millbury Street and Quinsigamond Avenue to the east. Extensive late 20th century demolition in the Chandler Street area has left only a few early apartment blocks standing in the Main-Wellington-Chandler Street area. The "Willard Richmond" and "The Russell" across the street at 49 Austin Street, both highly visible, are important reminders of the earlier days of the neighborhood.

Like most Worcester apartment blocks of the period, its occupants were mostly of the middle class. Many were boarders. Despite the fact that a large proportion of the city's increase in population during this period was due to foreign immigration, the occupants of apartment blocks in this area were rarely newly-arrived immigrants. Although there was a high proportion of Irish living in this section of Austin Street, the 1896 directory shows that most of the building's occupants were not Irish.

Continued

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

atlases, maps, directories  
clipping file (Willard Richmond) WHM

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Community: <u>W21060</u><br>Worcester                    | Form No:<br>130-(S-2) |
| Property Name: 43 Austin Street<br>Willard Richmond Apt. |                       |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE continued

of irregularly spaced fenestration. From north to south these are arranged with two bays containing single windows, followed by two bays of paired windows, a fifth bay of single windows, a stairhall bay whose windows are set lower and a final bay of paired windows. The entrance on the west elevation is contained within the stairhall bay and features a round-arched transom. A triangular brick parapet on a rectangular base is centered on the roofline above the central bay.

Windows on the first floor are rectangular in configuration with granite sills and lintels. Soldier courses of brick are set between the windows and support a granite string course. Second and third floor windows are segmental arched and rest on granite sills. Round-arched windows on the fourth floor define a deep cornice of ornamental brickwork. The round arches are set within double bands of brick and accented with granite keystones. The spring of the arch rises from a soldier course of brick circling the building. Above the windows is a dentillated frieze surmounted by a metal boxed cornice.

In the 1980s, original wooden sash was removed and replaced with inappropriate aluminum sliding sash. At the same time, the doors were replaced. There have been no other alterations to the building, although a rehabilitation in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is going to take place.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Community: WOR 1060<br>Worcester                         | Form No:<br>130-(S-2) |
| Property Name: 43 Austin Street<br>Willard Richmond Apt. |                       |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

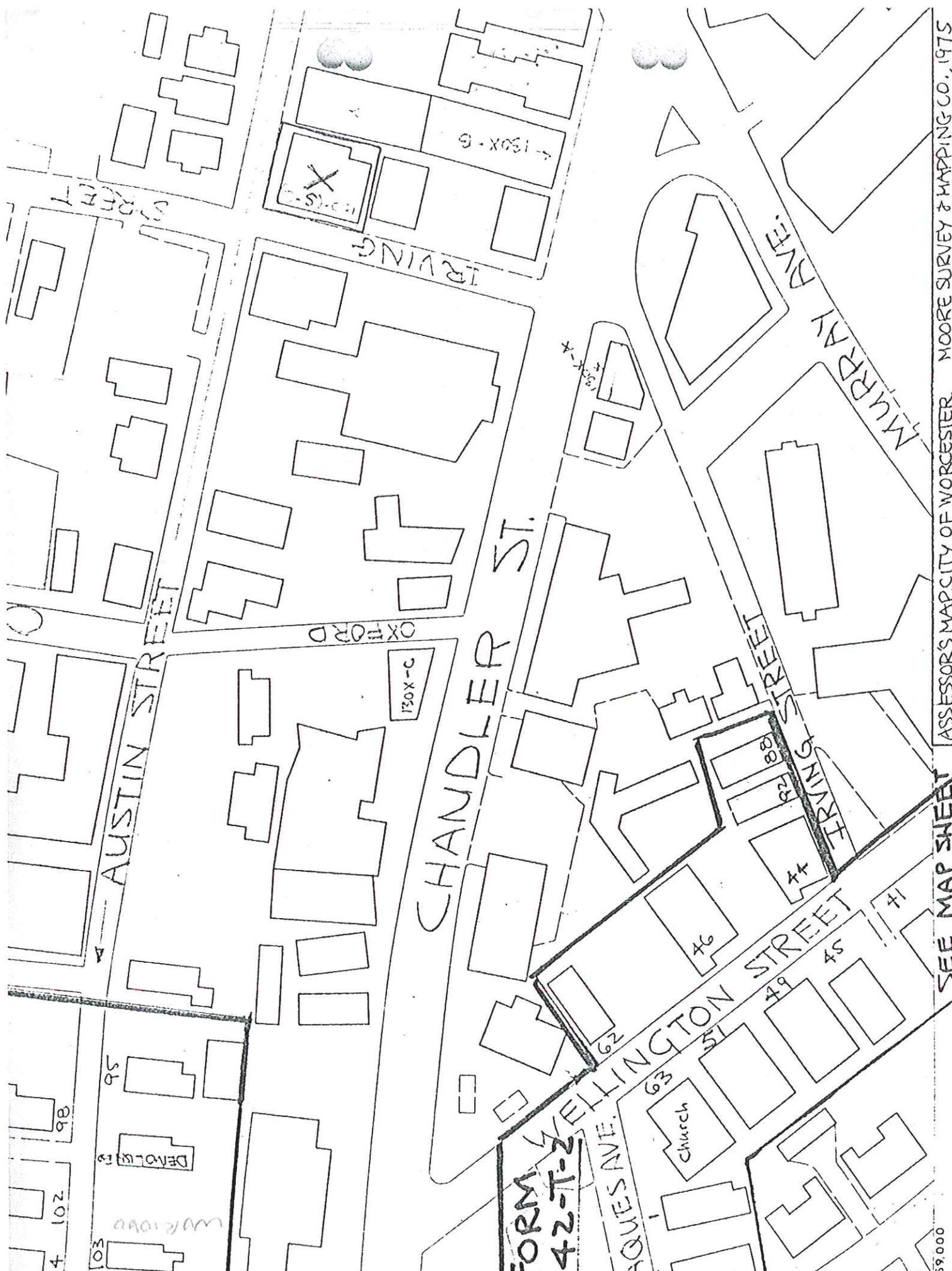
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE continued

The "Willard Richmond" first appeared on the 1886 Worcester atlas as the property of Willard Richmond, a dealer in real estate. Richmond (1823-1916) came to Worcester from Rhode Island as a young man. After a number of years in the tailoring business, he turned his interest to real estate. To his credit is the construction of numerous Worcester buildings, including some of the city's first "skyscrapers." He is best known as the developer of land near his home at 835 Pleasant Street as "Richmond Heights" at the turn of the century.

Architecturally, the "Willard Richmond" is a modest but well-preserved example of transitional Italianate/Panel Brick styling and a good example of the type of apartment block construction that first began to appear in Worcester in the early 1880s. While the actual date of construction of the building is unknown, stylistic evidence, primarily the use of terra-cotta tile, suggests a date in the early 1880s. Noteworthy features of the building are its use of Italianate elements, such as its boxy shape, round-arched windows and projecting cornice, in combination with Panel Brick enrichments and eclectic fenestration. In addition, it should be noted that the lack of ground floor storefronts indicates the exclusively residential nature of the "Willard Richmond."

Built before 1886, the "Willard Richmond" is among the earliest identified apartment blocks in Worcester. Other recorded early apartment blocks include the Robinson and Swan Block (1884-85), the Hall Building (1887), the Boynton (1887) and the Windsor (1887-88). Like the "Willard Richmond", all of these are brick buildings in late Victorian styles.

Staple to Inventory form bottom



AUSTIN STREET

IRVING

CHANDLER ST.

MURRAY AVE.

OXFORD

WELLINGTON STREET

SQUIRES AVE.

SEE MAP SHEET

ASSESSOR'S MAP, CITY OF WORCESTER

MOORE SURVEY & MAPPING CO., 1975

50,000

FORM 42-T-2

130X-C

130X-G

130X-A

DEVOLVED

Church

56

102

103

WARRIOR

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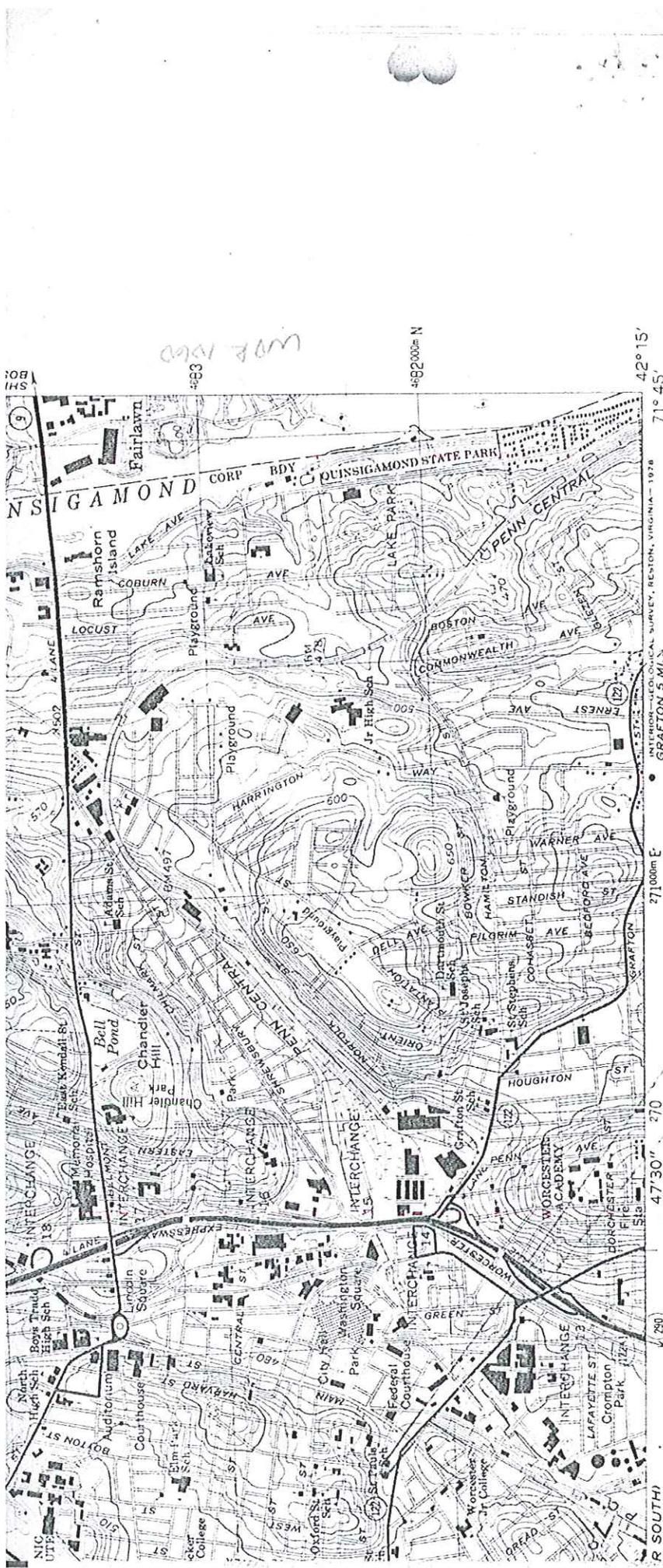
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GRAFTON 6668 IV NW

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
 Light-duty road, hard or improved surface  
 Secondary highway, hard surface  
 Unimproved road

U. S. Route  
 Interstate Route  
 State Route

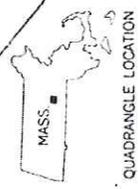
Amendments to the Worcester Multiple Resource Area (NR:1980)

WORCESTER NORTH, MAS  
 N4215-W7145/7.5

The Willard Richmond Apartment Block; 45 Austin Street  
 UTM: 19/268490/4682320  
 The Russell; 49 Austin Street  
 UTM: 19/268440/4782530

1974  
 AMS 6668 IV SE-SERIES V814

Willard Richmond Block



SCALE 10 FEET  
 TICAL DATUM OF 1929

FEDERAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
 AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

|                   |                              |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| AREA<br><u>CR</u> | FORM NO.<br>130(S-2)<br>1060 |
|-------------------|------------------------------|

NR 11-7-85  
MRA 100

*P. P. ...*

Town Worcester  
Address 43 Austin Street  
Historic Name Willard Richmond Apartment Blo

PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)  
staple to left side of form

Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

Use: Present vacant  
Original apartments

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1879-1886

Source atlases

Style Italianate/Eclectic

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric brick, granite trim

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates) doors  
replaced; windows replaced (1980's)

Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage 4,500 sq. ft.

Setting at intersection in mixed residential  
apartment/commercial area, some vacant lots.

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation  
to nearest cross streets and/or  
geographical features. Indicate  
all buildings between inventoried  
property and nearest intersection.  
Indicate north.

Recorded by S. Ceccacci

Organization James Soffan

Date February 1985

(Staple additional sheets here)

WDR 1260

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

This property meets National Register criteria A and C at the local level.

A modest expression of the Italianate style, this well-preserved building is an early example of apartment block construction in Worcester. Built before 1886, it is among the earliest identified apartment buildings in the city. Other recorded early apartment blocks include the nearby Robinson and Swan Block (1884-1885) (form NR130-E), the Hall Building (1887) (23 Wellington Street) (form # NR142-T-2), the Boynton (1887) and the Windsor (1887-1888) (form # NR142-T-3), all in brick and sandstone Victorian styles.

(See Continuation Sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

The Willard Richmond Apartment Block was one of the earliest apartment houses built in the Main-Wellington-Chandler Street area, which by 1900 was the city's most extensive early apartment district (see form #NR 142-T-2). This area which extended along south Main Street Wellington Street and Chandler Street became less dense as it continued up Irving Street to Pleasant Street. Apartment construction in this residential area began in the early-to-mid 1880's and continued into the early 20th century. During the late 19th century, concentrations of apartment buildings also appeared in the Pleasant Street area, around Lincoln Square and in the vicinity of Millbury Street and Quinsigamond Avenue. Late 20th century demolitions have left only a few early apartment blocks standing on or near the section of Irving Street between Chandler and Pleasant Streets. This building and "The Russell" (form #130 (S-4)) across the street, both highly visible, are important reminders of the earlier days of the neighborhood.

Like most Worcester apartment blocks of the period, its occupants were mostly of the middle class. Many were boarders. Despite the fact that a large proportion of the city's increase in population during this period was due to foreign immigration, the occupants of "The Russell" and other comparable apartment buildings were rarely newly-arrived immigrants. Although there was a high proportion of Irish living in this section along Austin and Chandler Streets, the 1896 directory shows that most of the occupants of this building were not Irish.

Located two blocks west of Main Street, this structure was built near the southern-most edge of the central business district on the site of a wood frame residence. This was a residential (See Continuation Sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

atlases, maps, directories  
clipping file (Willard Richmond) WHM

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Community: <i>wor</i><br>Worcester <i>1060</i>                   | Form No:<br>130 (S-2) |
| Property Name: Willard Richmond Apartment Block 43 Austin Street |                       |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

The Italianate Style with Panel Brick Motifs seen in the design of this building suggest a late 1870's date of construction. However, the use of Queen Anne Style terracotta tiles on the Austin Street facade make an 1880's date more probable.

Italianate characteristics seen here include the building's boxy shape, roof cornice and arched fourth floor windows. The ornamental brick work and pressed brick are typical of the Panel Brick Style. The foundation is of hammered granite. Granite window sills and other granite trim are significant design elements. Except for recent changes to its window sash and doors, the building is unaltered.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

neighborhood of both single and multifamily houses at the time of construction of this block. During the 1880's and 1890's other apartment buildings appeared in the area. Despite the construction of commercial buildings east of this block by the Hovey Laundry (41 Austin Street and 27-29 Chandler Street) in 1905 and 1928, the area in general maintained its apartment-residential character until after the mid 20th century.

Like most Worcester apartment buildings of the late 19th century, this block was occupied mostly by middle class tenants - many of whom were boarders. Typical of most of the city's apartment buildings located outside a commercial area, it has no stores on the ground floor. Unlike most Worcester apartments of its period, it was not owner-occupied.

This building first appeared on the 1886 Worcester atlas as the property of Willard Richmond, a dealer in real estate. Richmond also owned the adjacent row house style building at 45-47 Irving Street (form #130-(S-3)). That building appears to have been built at the same time as this.

Willard Richmond (1823-1916) came to Worcester from Rhode Island as a young man. After a number of years in the tailoring business, he turned his interest to real estate. To his credit is the construction of numerous Worcester buildings including one of the first of Worcester's "big buildings" at 411-413 Main Street. He also built a number of apartment houses and the Richmond Block at 233 Main Street. He is best known as the developer of land near his home at 835 Pleasant Street as "Richmond Heights" during the late 19th and early 20th century.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

~~1731~~  
WOR. 1060

DATE: 1/14/82  
 PROPERTY: 8-16 Austin; 43 Austin; 1060 Austin; 1055 1056 Chandler; 49 Austin; 47 Austin  
 STAFF IN CHARGE OF REVIEW: S2  
 ACTION: NR/ITC  
 DATE REVIEW DUE: 17-19 21-23  
 AGENCY: 1758 1062

Does this property meet the NR criteria?

Opinion: See Below Yes No More information  
 Criteria: A B C D  
 Level: Local State National

Statement of Significance by Zimmerman  
 (staff)

43 Austin - YES A and C; local; well detailed late 19c; relatively early example of multi-story apt construction; notable for prox to central bus dist  
 1060

49 Austin - YES A and C; local; ~~massive~~ massive Rich Rom apt block by noted Worcester architects. Notable for its "single" use (residential w/ no comm); importance in expansion of CBD; alternative housing for middle class boarders  
 1758  
 Information required to form opinion: class boarders

1055 / 1056 17-19 / 21-23 Chandler - OK as per CS letter  
 1062 27-29 Chandler - YES; as per 20c survey. A; C local all rest NO; typical and/or altered, unexceptional mid to late 19c 1731

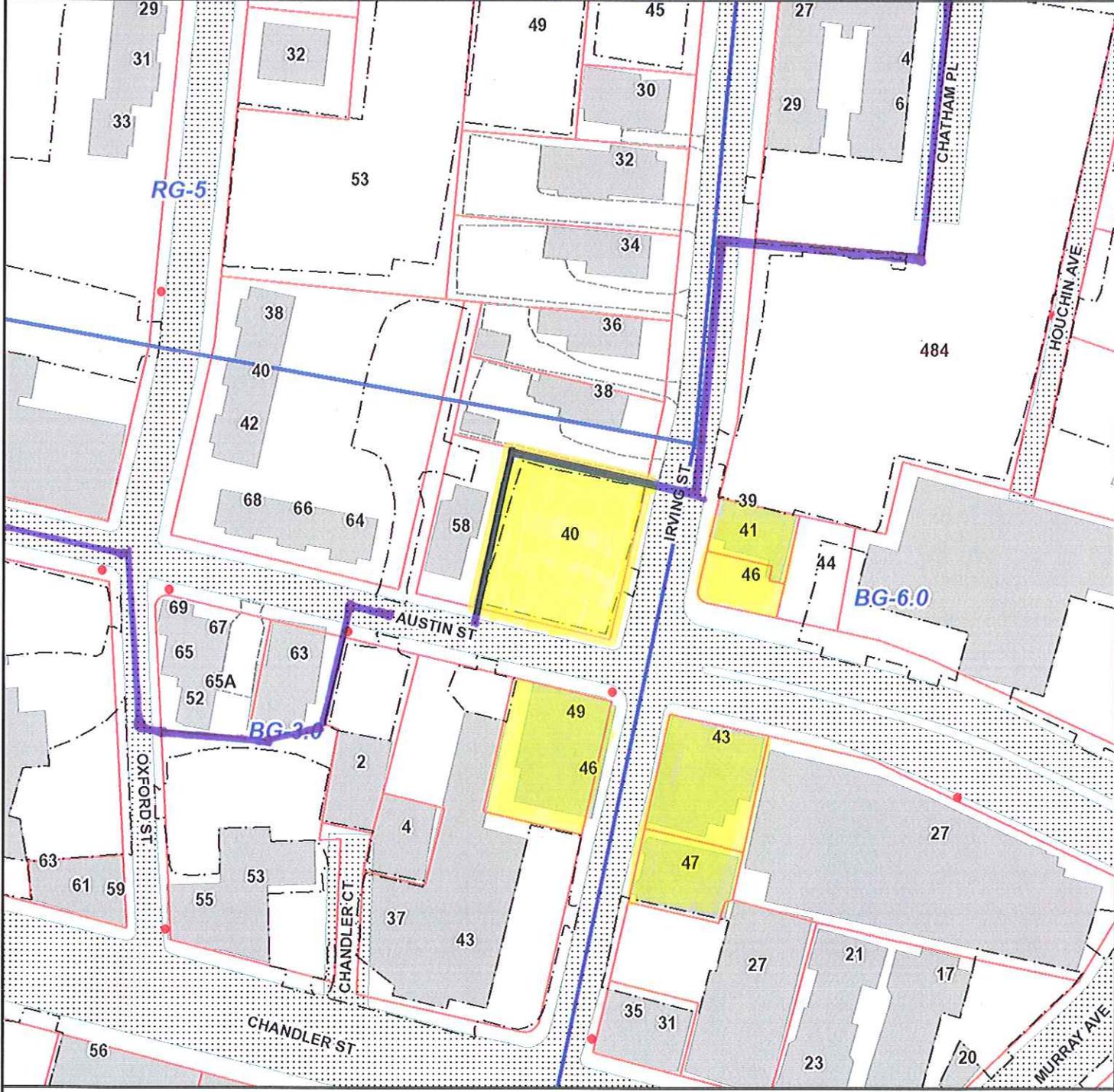
Result:  
 Agreed Eligible: Date:  
 DOE by SOI: Date:  
 Determined Not Eligible: Date:

## **Exhibit D:**

### **GIS Map:**

**Parcels at the intersection of Irving Street and Austin Streets, showing a hand-drawn blue line which depicts the new boundaries lines approved by the Worcester Historical Commission on March 10, 2011. The parcels highlighted in yellow are excluded from further study and consideration for the proposed Crown Hill Local Historic District. The blue line was hand-drawn by DPRS staff.**

GIS MAP: IRVING & AUSTIN STREETS. PARCELS EXCLUDED FROM THE PROPOSED DISTRICT ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW.



- LEGEND**
- Hydrants
  - Zoning
  - Driveways
  - Parking Lots
  - Parcels
  - Streams
  - Ponds
  - Parks
  - Buildings
  - Building
  - Deck/Patio
  - City



City of Worcester  
Geographic Information System  
Technical Services Division  
Worcester, Massachusetts

Map Date:  
October 28, 2011

Map Scale:  
1" = 94 ft

**DATA SOURCES:**  
Basemap data: City of Worcester Geographic Information System  
Original Data - Digitized at 1:480 scale (Data true resolution: 1 inch = 40 feet).  
Updated Using Spring 2003 Photography at 1 inch = 100 feet  
Further Updates Using City of Worcester Information

**COORDINATE SYSTEM:**  
All map data is in the Massachusetts State Plane Coordinate system,  
North American Datum of 1983, Massachusetts Mainland Zone (4151).

