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WORCESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE
REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Committee

The Worcester Historic District Study Committee submits herewith its final report to the City Manager, to the Worcester Planning Board, and to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40C of the Acts of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1960 as amended, this Committee was established for the purpose of making an investigation of the desirability of establishing an historic district in the city.

The Committee was established on December 7, 1971. After an organizational meeting on March 7, 1972, the Committee has met bi-weekly for discussion and preparation of this report.

The Committee as appointed by the City Manager consists of Chairman Carl E. Wahlstrom, former Judge of the Worcester Probate Court; Vice Chairman Suzanne O. Carlson, Architect, member of AIA; Secretary Mrs. Frank Callahan, resident of the Massachusetts Avenue District; John Herron, Director of the Worcester Historical Society; Thomas F. Maher, member of the Worcester Board of Realtors;

Sherburne B. Rockwell, Real Estate Manager; and Mrs. John F. Reynders, member of the Worcester Heritage Society.

Gerard F. McNeil, Director of the Office of Planning & Community Development (OPCD), advised the Committee, and Christie I. Baxter, member of the OPCD, acted as liaison between the City Manager's Office and the Study Committee.

B. Worcester's Need

Time was that events in Worcester took place slowly and deliberately. Such is no longer the case. With the completion of Worcester Center, the redevelopment of the downtown area, and the recent construction of numerous housing developments, the city is due for related rapid and somewhat unanticipated changes. The current provision of more and better commercial and office space will generate a need for far greater amounts of living, recreational and service area which the city is presently not equipped to provide. Thus we may see rapid development and redevelopment of the city

in the near future, and the "old" may be indiscriminately replaced by the "new" in this search for services. Lest we lose all remnants of our heritage, and we have already lost a great deal of it, it is necessary to act now to preserve the best and most characteristic remnants of our past.

C. The National Experience

The need for preserving the early structures and areas in this nation, which are indicative of our cultural, social and economic development, has long concerned scholars and historians. This concern has been shared by the Federal Government, which has set aside a variety of national monuments, historic sites and parks for future generations. Related programs have been undertaken by state and local governments to a limited extent. Of importance, also, has been the effort of private associations to preserve early buildings and sites, although the scope of those activities has been restricted by financial limitations. Two such organizations are the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. There are also several large-scale undertakings designed to preserve large areas and to develop typical villages such as Williamsburg, Va.,

Shelburne Village, Vt., Sturbridge Village, Deerfield and Plymouth Plantations, Mass., and Strawberry Banke, N. H.

A comparatively recent approach toward the preservation of the exterior architectural features of buildings, structures and sites of historical value in Massachusetts, while still in private ownership, has been by special acts of the legislature or by the Historic District Act of 1960. Municipalities that have established districts either by the Historic District Act or by special acts include Bedford, Beacon Hill, Cambridge, Chatham, Concord, Falmouth, Groton, Hingham, Holden, Lexington, Marblehead, Nantucket, Northboro, Petersham, Sandwich, Shrewsbury, Southboro, Sudbury, Wayland, and Yarmouth.

D. Legislative Protection

Legislative protection of historic areas and buildings is new to Worcester. Only three sites in Worcester County have been listed in the National Register, two of which, the American Antiquarian Society at 185 Salisbury Street and eleven houses on Massachusetts Avenue, are included in the proposed Massachusetts Avenue - Regent Street Historic District. This designation by the National Parks Service establishes

no legal protective sanctions for these obviously significant structures. For this reason, and to establish a local precedent for preservation legislation, the Historic District Study Committee has elected to propose the establishment of this area as the first Historic District in Worcester.

Legislative protection for an historic district is effected by a locally devised and controlled "Historic District Ordinance." Both the ordinance and the district are creations of the City Council through the due process of the law.

Historic district controls are designed to preserve the historic nature of the district through control of exterior physical aspects of the district only. These controls do not apply to land use, coverage, density, etc., which are the provinces of existing city zoning laws.

Historic District legislation under Chapter 40C applies to structures, walls, fences, steps, paving, signs and lights, as well as to buildings, and requires consideration of texture, material and color as well as other architectural matters and historic significance.

While these controls are more stringent

than any existing public controls over private property in Worcester, it is hoped that they will serve to protect and enhance Worcester's link with its past. The resultant architectural harmony within the historic district, insured for future generations, will have greater long term value for the city than the possible short term gains of incongruous development.

According to the final report of the Cambridge Historic District Study Committee, published in June, 1962:

"More important in the long run than any of the other factors may be the service that historic landmarks, both buildings and sites, can render as tools to build a better understanding of the past, to stir our curiosities, and lead us to avenues of constructive thought that might not otherwise occur. Consciously or unconsciously we build bridges from past to future, and building foundations of clear understanding of the past may be as important as building foundations of clear vision for the future. Historic sites and buildings can enhance and enrich the thoughts and lives of all who live or work or study or visit near them and have the curiosity to pause and look or read." (1)

E. The Massachusetts Avenue District

The Massachusetts Avenue - Regent Street Area was formerly part of the considerable land holdings of Stephen Salisbury. It represents an early attempt at street planning and coordinated residential subdivision. The site is located at the beginning of the prime residential area of the city. Forming sort of a "square", it is representative of the turn of the century affluence of Worcester merchants and professional men.

Worcester today is an unquestioned product of the Industrial Revolution. As the largest manufacturing center in the United States, not on a major waterway, its growth and prosperity depended on the railroad and the wire industry. It had its share of inventors, tradesmen, merchants, and civic leaders. In 1900 it could be said that Worcester and the country was at its height of optimistic prosperity produced by the factories and mills of industry. The builders of the homes were the sons and daughters of these industrial pioneers.

In terms of history, this district is as representative of the fruits of Worcester's prime growth period as the homes built by sea captains along the New England coast.

The boundaries of the proposed Massachusetts Avenue Historic District follow the latest plans of the City of Worcester as filed in the Assessors Office.

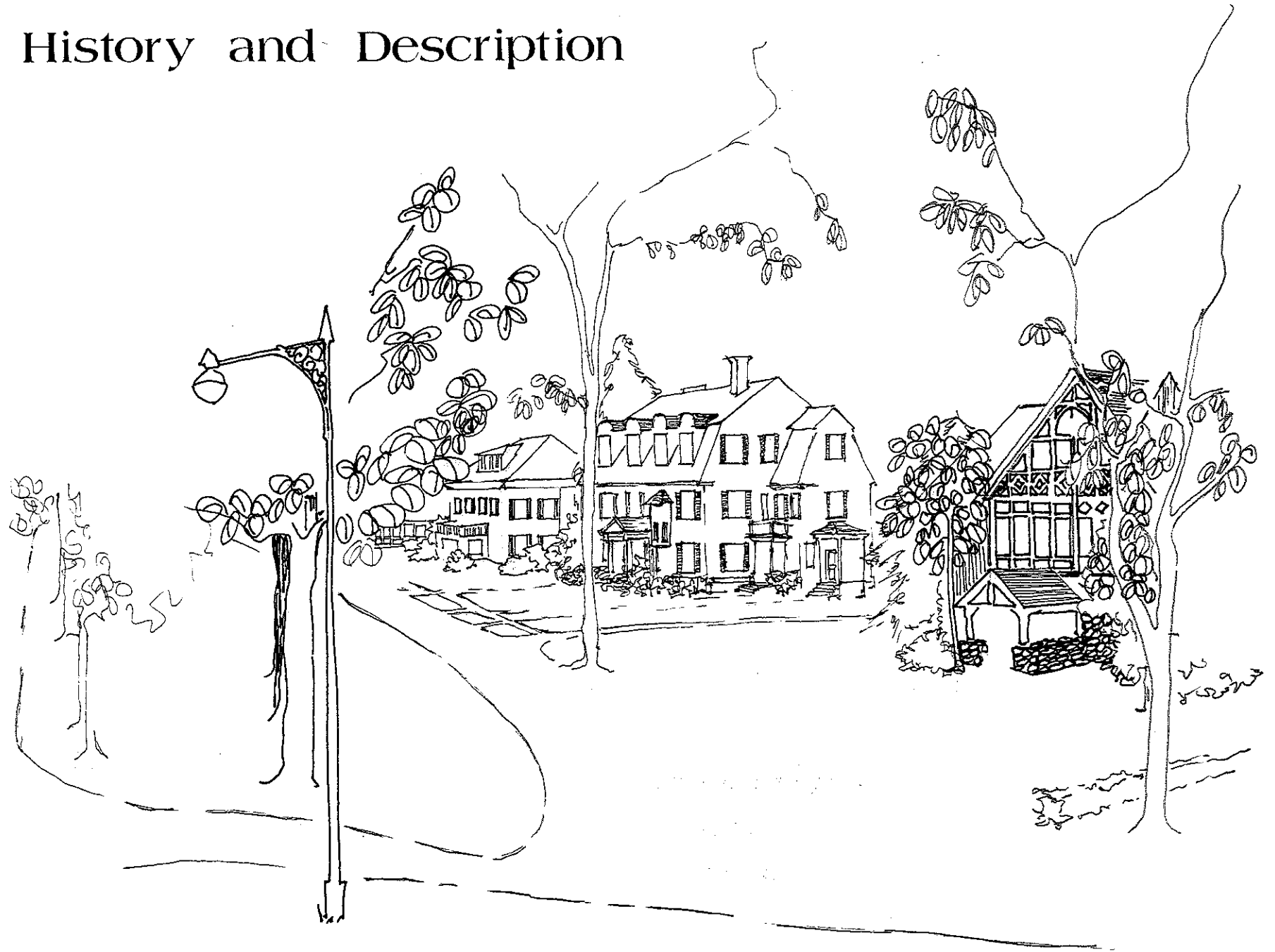
The Committee has evaluated the historical and/or architectural significance of each building in the proposed district. To a great extent, the Committee has relied on the judgements of Suzanne O. Carlson and John Herron for expert assistance in evaluating these structures.

Members of the Committee have been impressed with the high degree of maintenance of the houses in the area. The successful campaign to include the homes on Massachusetts Avenue on the National Register is evidence of the pride displayed by these Worcester homeowners.

There are other equally historic areas and buildings in need of protection and restoration within the city.

It is hoped that the Historic District Commission to be established by the historic district ordinance will carry on the survey functions of this Study Committee and that other historic sites will be studied, specifically Oxford - Crown.

History and Description



II. HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

A. The Atmosphere

The Massachusetts Avenue -Regent Street area has maintained most of its residential atmosphere over the years since its original development. Of the 19 original residential structures, 11 are in private residential use, 3 are institutionally owned but in private residential use, 3 are owned by religious groups and 2 are used for educational dormitories (fraternities). The American Antiquarian Society building has not changed use. However, the Society has expanded and a new basement wing was added in 1972.

Approaching the district from the southeast, along Salisbury Street, one sees the Antiquarian Society building. The structure acts as a cornerstone to the district in several ways. Visually, its mass is balanced along a longitudinal axis which parallels Park Avenue and reinforces this major artery as a boundary. The structure fronts onto Salisbury Street, defining this street as a second boundary. The Society's use of an historical architectural style and its function as an historical reference library add strong psychological emphasis to the structure's position as the district's cornerstone.

The scale and gentle slope of Regent Street with its large deciduous trees complement the functional transition from institutional use to residential use, and a grove of conifers to the west of the AAS building act as a buffer between the two uses. The houses on Regent Street show a range of architectural treatments popular during that pre - W.W.I. period, alternating Jacobethan, Georgian, and Regency with "modern" influences such as the prairie style.

Massachusetts Avenue is laid out with a pleasant center island of grass and trees. As on Regent Street, the homes are uniformly set back from the street and generously landscaped with deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubs. The architectural varieties of 9 of the 11 homes are unified by an interest in colonial architecture and the use of black shutters against a light painted surface. The Two Jacobethan homes are situated at the corners of Massachusetts Avenue and Drury Lane and ease the transition from the formal atmosphere of Massachusetts Avenue to the more informal aspect of Regent Street. "Gracious" would seem to be

an appropriate adjective for both the homes in this district and the turn of the century life-style of their builders.

The area is fortunate in having few "immobile" intrusions. The street hardware consists of inconspicuous early 19th century street lamps set among the trees on Regent Street and in the island on Massachusetts Avenue. The major intrusion on the calm of the district is the presence of automobiles, which often surround the Antiquarian Society and line up in front of the several fraternity houses.

The district is a visual "whole" defined by two major arteries on the south and northeast, set off by open space and parkland to the west, and united by period similarity and the planned continuity of land subdivision.

B. First Owners of Houses on Massachusetts Avenue

No. 1 Massachusetts Avenue was the home of John C. and Elsie M. Stewart who acquired the land April 6, 1906 from Stephen Salisbury.

Mr. Stewart and his brothers, James C. and Charles M., were owners of the Stewart Boiler Works on Albany Street

in Worcester, manufacturers of locomotives and stationery boilers. The company was founded in 1865 by their father, Charles M. Stewart in partnership with David M. Dillon under the original firm name of Stewart & Dillon.

Charles Stewart was a native of Glasgow, Scotland, who learned his trade in Hull, England. He came to this country to first manufacture boilers for Bellows & Whitcomb in Worcester, before entering into a partnership.

The Stewart Boiler Works subsequently became C. Stewart and Son, Inc., and when their father retired his three sons continued the company until 1906.

John C. was treasurer of the company and also president-treasurer of Eastern Bridge and Structural Company and a trustee for the Worcester County Institution for Savings.

No. 2 Massachusetts Avenue was the lot deeded December 27, 1900 to Charles C. Milton, trial lawyer prominent in legal circles for more than 50 years.

Born April 22, 1872, in Leicester, son of John and Sarah (Pulsifer) Milton, he began the practice of law at the age of 21 after graduating from Boston University.

During his early years at the bar he was associated with Herbert Parker who later became attorney-general of Massachusetts, and Francis A. Gaskill, before the latter rose to the Superior Court bench.

Earning a reputation as a successful trial lawyer while still in his twenties led to Mr. Milton's appointment as counsel for the Worcester Street Railway Company. His career brought fame with a change in the pace of living as the automobile took over the transportation scene, bringing with it new problems in civil tort and accident suits. His ability in dealing with such cases soon attracted the insurance companies whom he represented, becoming well known throughout the East.

Mr. Milton founded the law firm presently headed by his sons, Stanley B. and Robert C. Milton.

No. 5 Massachusetts Avenue was the property of Gertrude L. McKoan who acquired it July 26, 1901. Mrs. McKoan was the wife and mother of two prominent Worcester physicians. Her husband, Dr. John W. McKoan was known as a charitable man with a large practice who devoted much attention to the needs of the poor. Their son is

Dr. John W. McKoan, Jr.

Dr. McKoan, Sr. was born in Lowell, son of Mary J. (Foye) and John P. McKoan, but came to Worcester to live when a child. He was graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1894. His son was also graduated from Harvard Medical School.

Dr. McKoan was the father of ten children. A tribute of great respect was paid him when a large number of dignitaries of the church and community attended his solemn high mass of requiem.

No. 6 Massachusetts Avenue incorporates the historic old courthouse built in 1751. It was saved from destruction by Susan Trumbull, descendant of distinguished pioneers, who had it moved to its present location from Trumbull Square when the new Court House was built. She acquired the property on Massachusetts Avenue July 15, 1899.

The old court house was known as the Trumbull Mansion when it was the home of Susan's grandfather, Joseph Trumbull about 1803.

Joseph Trumbull, born in Suffield, Connecticut, son of Joseph and Obedience (Bolden) Trumbull, whose ancestors were early settlers in Connecticut, came to

Worcester in June 1778 and opened a general store. In 1779 he purchased half of the apothecary shop of Levi Shepard and Ebenezer Hunt. Later, in partnership with Isaiah Thomas, he opened the Old Medical Store, selling in addition to drugs, rum, salt, sugar, coffee, and other goods.

When Mr. Thomas retired in 1781, Mr. Trumbull became sole owner. He later went to Petersham to practice medicine, retaining his interests in Worcester, but returned in 1803 to live in the old courthouse, or Trumbull Mansion.

Susan's father, George Augustus Trumbull, was the only child of Joseph Trumbull and his wife Elizabeth (Paine) Trumbull. They were married February 14, 1786 and George was born January 23, 1792 in Petersham. Educated at Phillips Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1813 he bought the bookstore of Isaiah Thomas, Jr., and in 1819 entered into partnership with William Manning to publish the "Spy" until 1823.

Mr. Trumbull, in 1822, established a brewery with Samuel Ward and during his lifetime held prominent positions in banking. He was described by his contemporaries as "the residuary legatee of all the wits who flourished in the Court House."

On September 20, 1815, George Trumbull married Louisa Clap, daughter of Captain Caleb and Elizabeth (Stone) Clap, of Greenfield. Captain Clap was an aide-de-camp to General Washington during the Revolutionary War from 1775 to 1783.

Susan Trumbull was the ninth of 12 children. She was born on March 20, 1832. Known as a warm-hearted individual, she established the custom of giving Christmas trees to poor children, eventually taken over by public organizations.

For saving the old courthouse from destruction she was made an honorary member of the Colonel Timothy Bigelow Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. On June 25, 1902, she married Henry Price.

No. 7 Massachusetts Avenue was the home of Frederick W. Blackmer, prominent Worcester lawyer whose ancestors were among the early settlers.

Patriotic pioneers, the Blackmers were farmers. The first of the family here was Frederick William Blackmer, or Blackmore as it was sometimes spelled, who emigrated from England in 1665 to live in Scituate.

His son, William, who received farmland laid out by the freemen, was killed by Indians April 21, 1676 in King Philip's War. One of his sons (William's), Peter Blackmer, born May 25, 1667 at Scituate, was one of the first settlers of Rochester, Massachusetts.

Another ancestor, Peter Blackmer, of Palmer, was in Captain Buckminster's Company at Fort Drummer, August, 1748 during the French and Indian Wars, and John Blackmer fought against the Indians in 1758. A Rolan or Roland engaged in Shay's Rebellion, settled in Pelham, and was treasurer and selectman of that town.

Frederick W. Blackmer who made his home at Massachusetts Avenue was the son of William Mack and Harriet Newell (Howe) Blackmer. He was born April 10, 1858 at Hardwick, Massachusetts. He studied at Barre Academy and the Hitchcock High School at Brimfield.

Mr. Blackmer came to Worcester in 1880 to study law while working in the law office of his brother Francis T. Blackmer. Before his education was completed, his brother died and Frederick had to give up the idea of schooling and take over his brother's business, learning the law through actual practice.

In 1883 he was admitted to the bar at Fitchburg and in 1884 formed a partnership with Ernest H. Vaughan, opening offices in the old post office building on Pearl Street in Worcester.

The law firm was catapulted into the limelight through the famous Kettle Brook litigation in which the City of Worcester was sued for taking water for city uses. Blackmer's firm represented the city winning some 120 suits for damages against Worcester which amounted to some \$680,000 in this highly publicized case.

Mr. Blackmer was married in 1883 to Maggie Osgood Whitney, daughter of Lovell and Hannah (Moore) Whitney, of Boylston, and a descendent of John Whitney who came to Watertown in April, 1635. They had four children: Ralph Fred, Albert Whitney, Waldo Harvey, and Bernice.

No. 8 Massachusetts Avenue. This house was built on the second property purchased by Mayor Rufus B. Dodge, Jr. on December 8, 1902. Mayor and Mrs. Dodge lived in the house next door. See below.

No. 10 Massachusetts Avenue was the first house on the street. It was the home of Rufus Brown Dodge, a prominent

attorney and Mayor of Worcester from 1898 to 1901. He purchased the first property in this area from Stephen Salisbury on April 20, 1899.

Mr. Dodge, who held a number of public posts in his lifetime, was a descendent of one of the early settlers, Richard Dodge, who came from England to Salem in 1638.

Born in Charlton, son of Rufus Brown Dodge, Sr., and Augusta (Morse) Dodge, on November 24, 1861, Mr. Dodge was precocious to political life. At the age of 20 he was elected to his first public post as a member of the School Committee of Charlton.

Commitment to public life was characteristic of the family, his father having served in many local posts and as a representative to the General Court in 1857, and state senator in 1862. His grandfather, Gibbs Dodge, a farmer, was a selectman of Charlton; his great-grandfather, Moses Dodge, a soldier in the Revolutionary War.

Mr. Dodge attended Nichols Academy in Dudley and the Law School of Boston University from which he was graduated cum laude in 1885. Admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 1885, he located in Worcester and practiced law, mostly

in partnership with William J. Taft, at an office in the State Mutual Building.

He entered Worcester public life to serve on the Board of Aldermen between 1893 and 1895, the last year as its president. At the time, he was the youngest man (age 32) ever to serve as a Worcester alderman.

Mr. Dodge was elected mayor in December 1893 and served three terms. During his administration Worcester celebrated the semi-centennial of its government and Mayor Dodge presided at the dedication ceremonies of the present city hall.

According to a newspaper account, Mayor Dodge "was best known for his undying enmity to centralization of government-----he was admired and respected for his forceful judgement by both parties."

Prominent in law circles, he served for 30 years as counsel to the county commissioners. On July 7, 1887, Mr. Dodge was married to Mary C. Perry, daughter of Henry and Mary A. (Cofren) Perry, of Millbury. They had no children.

No. 11 Massachusetts Avenue was built by William Henry Crawford, a director

of the Citizens National Bank, who purchased a portion of the land July 26, 1901; the rest, October 8, 1903.

Mr. Crawford, who was active in city government, was a descendent of the pioneer Aaron Crawford and traces his ancestry to before the 13th century in Scotland.

The Crawford family, well established in Scotland before 1200, is of Anglo-Norman origin some two centuries earlier. The Crawfords of Scotland trace their ancestry to a Norman noble of the days of William the Conqueror, the name sometimes spelled Crawfutt in early Scotch records, later Crawford. This family held many titles of nobility and a number of Crawfords were among the Scotch Given grants of land in Ireland in 1610 by King James I.

The American Crawfords are descended from George Crawford who was given land in the precinct of Mountjoy, County Tyrone.

Aaron Crawford, the pioneer ancestor in America of William H. Crawford of Worcester, was born in county Tyrone in 1677. He came to New England with his family in 1713, some five years before the first extensive emigration of the Scotch-Irish began. Aaron and

his family were among the first settlers of Rutland in 1719.

In America, the Crawfords were pioneer farmers and tradesmen, including expert clockmakers, gunsmiths, wheelwrights, and later, educators and manufacturers. There also were two captains who served in the Revolutionary War and a lieutenant in the Civil War, and a representative to the General Court.

William Henry Crawford was born at Oxford, son of Elias Butler and Jane Thankful (Taft) Crawford. His father was a manufacturer of thread in Oxford, later of cotton goods in Putnam, Connecticut; then, woolen goods at Stafford, Connecticut. He came to Wilkinsonville to manufacture woolen goods at what was known as Woodbury Village and in 1888 retired to make his home with a daughter in Worcester. In politics he held the office of assessor in Oxford in 1855, and at one time was highway commissioner.

William Crawford came to Worcester in 1860 as an employee of Sumner Pratt, a prominent dealer in mill supplies, and worked his way up through the business into a partnership in 1870 when the firm was known as Sumner Pratt & Company. The name of the store, which was then at 22 Front Street, was changed

to Crawford & Company in 1896 when Mr. Crawford became the senior partner. The firm later was moved to 663-665 Main Street.

Mr. Crawford was active in politics serving several times as delegate at Republican conventions. A member of the Worcester Common Council in 1884 and 1885, he also served three years on the school board.

He was married June 8, 1865, at Palmer, to Mary Ann Moore, daughter of Henry A. and Elmire (Ruggles) Moore of Palmer. They had four children: Lilliam Moore, born May 4, 1868, a teacher; Mabel Jane, born October 17, 1870, married to Dr. Frank H. Howland, a dentist; Anna Cutler, born June 3, 1873, and Harry Colvin, with the firm of Crawford and Company.

No. 12 Massachusetts Avenue was deeded April 6, 1906 to Dr. Ernest L. Parker, only child of Edmund Lawrence Parker and Eva Sarah (Jones) Parker, daughter of William and Rachel Jones of Lynn. Born February 13, 1878, Dr. Parker was graduated from Philips Academy at Andover in 1898 and from Harvard Medical School in 1903 and practiced medicine at 11 Elm Street.

Dr. Parker was married October 8, 1906

to Sally Leeds (Bufford) of Dorchester, Mass. His parents lived across the street at No. 15 Massachusetts Avenue. See below.

No. 15 Massachusetts Avenue is the house built on land conveyed May 29, 1903 to Eva S. Parker, wife of Edmund Lawrence Parker, president of John L. Parker and Company, manufacturer of pressed metal goods, and descendent of an old English family.

Mr. Parker, born at Cohasset February 8, 1847, was the 11th of the twelve children of John Parker and Mary Oakes (Lawrence) Parker, daughter of Deacon Thaddeus and Joa Lawrence of Pepperell. He was a descendent of Thomas Parker who sailed on the ship "Susan and Ellen" from London and settled at Lynn. Between 1638 and 1640 Thomas moved to Reading where he founded and served as deacon of the church there.

Edmund Parker's father, John, who was a neighbor and friend of Daniel Webster, was engaged in the shipping business at Cohasset in partnership with Laban Souther under the firm name of Souther & Parker. During the War of 1812 he served as an officer in the Lancaster Company. The family lived for a time in Cohasset then moved to Pepperell.

Edmund Parker, educated at Wilbraham Academy, was a member of the firm of Calvary, Parker and Young of Lynn. In 1876 he came to Worcester to join in partnership with his brother in the firm of John L. Parker & Company, manufacturers of pressed metal goods. After his brother's death he carried on the business under the same name until his retirement in 1905 when he built the residence at 15 Massachusetts Avenue and lived there.

Prominent in city affairs, Mr. Parker served in the Common Council from 1887 to 1890 and was an alderman in 1891-92. He was one of the organizers of the Hancock Club, an active Mason and a member of the Worcester Board of Trade. He served as director for Eastern Bridge Construction Company of Worcester; the Equity Corporation Bank of Worcester; the Worcester Real Estate Company; the Toadvine Lumber Company, of Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

On October 6, 1869 he married Eva Sara Jones, daughter of William and Rachel Jones of Lynn. Their only child was Dr. Ernest L. Parker.

201 Salisbury Street, Corner of Massachusetts Avenue was land sold to Jessie W. Moore, wife of George D. Moore, manufacturer from "the south" on July 3, 1889.

C. The Trumbull Mansion

No. 6 Massachusetts Avenue, known as the "Trumbull Mansion" was Worcester's second County Court House, built in 1751. Its special significance makes it worthy of mention apart from the other structures in the district. Its transient past (it was moved twice) also serves to remind us that the current interest in historic preservation is not new, that if such an interest were not present at the turn of the century, this relic of our past would be long since gone.

For years, with the Meeting House on the Common, this Court House was the center of Worcester's administrative life. Set quite alone at the Northerly end of Court Hill, it was the scene of civil arbitration along with more heinous judgments - the last hanging for burglary was in 1786 - but, too small to hold those interested in Bathsheba Spooner's trial which was held in the Meeting House. During Shay's Revellion it was the backdrop for Artemus Ward's courageous, though futile, stand at bayonet point against those trying to close the courts. From 1785 to 1792 services for the Second Parish (Arminian Church) were held here.

By 1801 it had outgrown its usefulness,

² Information on first owners from "Worcester Heritage Society Report of February 6, 1971, on Massachusetts Avenue."

and, about to be replaced by the Bulfinch-designed third Court House, it was moved to what became Trumbull Square (Franklin at Green), on property owned by Mrs. James Sarah (Paine) Perkins. Occupied by her sister and brother-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Trumbull who moved here from Petersham in 1808, it was then the residence of their son, George A. Trumbull, and remained in the family until 1885 when it was sold to Dr. William J. Delahanty and Dr. Joseph Kelly. In 1899, again about to be torn down, Miss Susan Trumbull, daughter of George A. Trumbull, bought and moved it to Massachusetts Avenue. Miss Trumbull made a considerable restoration - replacing the roof railing, the attic screen, removing the partition dividing the Court

Room, replacing lost trim and hardware: a latch from the Bancroft House, two from the Rebecca Nourse house of Salem (Witchcraft?), east parlor mantle from Pawtucket, hall wainscoating from the first parsonage in Rutland.

Miss Trumbull's niece, Mrs. Maria Louisa Trumbull Cogswell Roberts, lived there until 1959 when it was bought by George Butler and considerably renovated. The present owners, Dr. and Mrs. Jarrel G. Burrow, have lived there since 1963.

Having remained on one site for 50 years, on the next for 100 years, let us hope it will remain on Massachusetts Avenue, in happy repair, for at least 200 more. (3)

(3) From meeting notice, Worcester Historical Society, January 12, 1971.



Conditions of Sale

III. CONDITIONS OF SALE

A. Massachusetts Avenue (4)

The 1896 Atlas shows no sign of Massachusetts Avenue or Regent Street. Stephen Salisbury appears as owner of a large tract of land bounded on the east by Park Avenue, on the north by Salisbury Street, on the west by "Herbert Hall"*, and on the south by lots facing Homer Street and Institute Road. The area would include the Antiquarian Society, Bancroft Tower Park, and other reminders of Salisbury's public spirit. It is to be regretted that Massachusetts Avenue is his only attempt at grand-scale street planning, and it would be interesting to know what prompted it.

The atlas shows a large wooden house, just about where the Catholic property sometimes known as "Newman House" now stands. It is close to the street, with several outbuildings, and looks like a farm-house. I believe that Salisbury in fact did maintain a rather elaborate farm.

Unlike the typical real estate developer, Salisbury did not record a plan of lots for sale, and the history of the Massachusetts Avenue - Regent Street area only may be traced by the deeds from Salisbury, and the Worcester Art

Museum, heir to this property. It may be noted that every deed indicates that at every angle point there is a granite marker sunk in the ground. By comparison, a recorded plan is only worth its weight in paper. I may add that it was Salisbury's practice whenever he subdivided his enormous holdings to sink these markers into the ground, and his name is accordingly held blessed in surveying circles.

These markers must have been expensive even in 1899 when the first deed mentioning Massachusetts Avenue was given. Building restrictions were imposed in all of the deeds, but they were not burdensome, and were to expire in twenty years. When one considers that the district in the charmed area between Salisbury Street and Drury Lane is pretty unique, one would anticipate and pardon some of the grandiose language that other developers have used when asking the public to buy of their wares. There is only one restriction that is at all unusual: the deeds were given upon condition that a house be erected within one year; the lots were not sold to speculators. The eleven lots having frontage on Massachusetts Avenue were in fact all sold and apparently built on in the years 1899 to 1907. The eight lots having frontage on Regent

* Herbert Hall was a private asylum

Street and the one on Drury Lane were sold and built on in the years 1902 to 1919.

There are federal excise stamps attached to the earlier deeds. The rates changed in 1901 and excise stamps themselves were abolished in 1902. If I read the old Treasury regulations correctly and if the deeds were stamped in the correct amounts, the following sums were paid:

Dodge 1	\$3,000.00
Moore	11,000.00
Trumbull	6,500.00
Milton	4,500.00
Crawford	4,000.00
McKoan	4,000.00

The prices seem high, and show that both Salisbury and his purchasers knew that the new street was something special. The particularly high price for the Moore lot may be accounted for by the fact that it is a very large lot, extending to Rutland Terrace, and actually fronts on Salisbury Street.

The deeds from Salisbury give the purchasers no interest in the "fee" in the new street. They do not state its width (it is just one-hundred feet) or indicate that there is a parkway in the center. The City made the street public in 1901 and recorded a plan. This also fails to show the center lawn. Who maintains this strip? Has it been accepted as a park? A later plan of the Moore property indicates that the strip

of lawn is thirty feet wide.

B. Regent Street (5)

The eleven properties on Massachusetts Avenue were all purchased from Stephen Salisbury, as were two properties on Regent Street (numbers 10 and 12). His heir to this property, the Worcester Art Museum, continued his practices of land subdivision, and it imposed the same condition that houses be erected within one year of purchase. The land sold to the American Antiquarian Society was the only exception in that the Society was given five years to erect its building.

The museum sold its first parcel (number 2 Regent Street) in 1908. The purchaser was allowed to construct a stable so long as it was beyond a specified distance from the street. The advent of the automobile is recorded in subsequent deeds given by the museum.

In a deed granted in the same year (1908), the museum specified that no stable be allowed on the property at 9 Regent Street; no mention was made of a garage. By 1911, the museum had recognized the automobile and the 1911 deed to 6 Regent Street permitted a garage for not more than two cars; no mention was made of a stable. The 1912 deed for 1 Drury Lane allowed both a garage and a stable for not more than three horses, but subsequent deeds excluded any provision for stables.

(4) Information on Massachusetts Avenue contained in a report by L.P.O'Connell, Esq., January, 1971.

(5) Information on Regent Street properties from a report by C.I.Baxter, July, 1972 to Study Committee.



Limits of the District

IV. LIMITS OF THE DISTRICT

A. Bounds

The boundary of the proposed historic district begins at the intersection of the center lines of Salisbury Street and Rutland Terrace, southwest along the center line of Rutland Terrace to its intersection with the rear property line of property at 201 Salisbury Street southeast along the rear property line of property at 201 Salisbury Street to its intersection with the rear property line of properties on the northwest side of Massachusetts Avenue, southwest along the rear property line of properties on the northwest side of Massachusetts Avenue, across Metcalf Street, to Drury Lane, southeast along Drury Lane to the intersection of Regent Street extension and Drury Lane, southwest along Regent Street extension to the southwest corner of the property at 1 Drury Lane, southeast along the lot line of the property at 1 Drury Lane to Park Avenue, northeast on Park Avenue to a point 100' northeast of the corner of Salisbury Street and Park Avenue, northwest along a line parallel to Salisbury Street at a constant 100' depth to the intersection of this line with the rear property line of properties on the South side of Montvale Road, south along the rear property line of properties on Montvale Road to a point 50' northeast of the corner of Salisbury Street, northwest along a line

parallel to Salisbury Street at a constant 50' depth to the intersection of this line with the rear property line of properties on the South side of Whitman Road, west along the rear property line of properties on the south side of Whitman Road to the Center line of Salisbury Street, and southeast along the center-line of Salisbury Street to the beginning point.*

B. Justification and Opinion

Factors influencing the boundary choice for this district included the architectural and historical continuity of the included structures, the presence of natural boundaries, and a desire to preserve the major approach to the district along Salisbury Street. The boundary follows existing property and street lines except that the north boundary parallels Salisbury Street at a 50' depth. The feeling of the Committee was that such a buffer was necessary to insure the protection of the residential integrity of the district. This 50' depth was extended to 100' for the property at 190 Salisbury Street at the request of its present owner, Mrs. Harold F. Daniels.

This setback does not affect existing structures, nor would it affect the lawful use of the remaining sections

*See attached map.

of the three parcels involved. In addition, all three parcels have primary frontage which is not on Salisbury Street (one fronts on Park Avenue and the other two on Montvale Road).

The Committee feels that neighborhood support was essential to the successful establishment of the district. On July 24, 1972, a gathering of residents was convened at the home of Mrs. Charles Allen (8 Massachusetts Avenue). The discussion centered around the intent of the historic district legislation and its effect on the area.

The most cautious support was registered by the American Antiquarian Society. Its feelings are expressed in the attached letter from the AAS Director to the Study Committee Chairman.

The Study Committee recognizes the special needs of the AAS as expressed in this letter and has included this recognition in its recommendations.

Inventory of Buildings

185 SALISBURY STREET - AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY



185 Sals/1

DEED: 1908 Book 2013, pg. 89. Purchased by the American Antiquarian Society from the Worcester Art Museum, building to be built within five years.

1912 additional lot 90 feet wide purchased.

JEFFERSONIAN CLASSIC REVIVAL 1910: The two story octagonal mass with three projected bays and a low foundation, culminates in a dome set on an octagonal base. To the rear are a stack and office ell and an unrelated chimney. A contemporary (1972) concrete basement wing is to the west. The main structure is red brick with white marble trim. A marble cornice and frieze is continuous around the building and is repeated

on the dome. There are plain marble quoins at the outside corners. The columned Roman Doric portico has a pediment with full entablature and triglyphs and echoes at a heavier scale the design of the society's first building. The entrance doorway has a marble pediment and pilasters. The walls of the octagon are treated with keystone lintel windows on the first floor. "Free" garlanded marble panels appear above.

ARCHITECTS: R. Clipson Sturgis, and Windlow, Bigelow and Wadsworth

2 REGENT STREET



2 RegS/1

DEED: 1908 Book 1871, pg. 2 Purchased by Josephine Jones from the Worcester Art Museum, House to be built within one year.
1914 sold to Harry W. and Grace Goddard
1915 sold to Eleanor G. Daniels
1953 sold to John R. Nissen
1964 sold to J. J. Massarelli, present owner

PRAIRIE DERIVATIVE 1909: This two story stucco and shingle house is capped by a hipped roof with a deep bracketed overhang. The simple shingled 2nd story emerges from shaped stucco arches, on the north enclosing grouped windows, and on the south forming a porch roof with deep, heavily bracketed eaves. The porch is enclosed by a stucco rail. The first floor supporting arches, and horizontal lines are reminiscent of the prairie style, but the overall proportions, reasonably balanced double hung windows, and small center dormer suggest an overgrown "bungalowoid" influence.

4 REGENT STREET



4 RegS/1

DEED: 1915, Book 2076, pg. 23. Purchased by Earl Francis Thayer from the Worcester Art Museum, house to be built within one year, plans to be approved by Worcester Art Museum. 1966 sold by Rosa F. Thayer to Worcester Polytechnic Institute, present owner.

GEORGIAN BUNGALOID 1916: The plan of this 2½ story stucco, hip roof structure retains the traditional symmetrical New England room arrangement, to which current styles were applied. The entrance with its segmented porch with Roman-Doric columns and pilasters suggest Renaissance Revival. The first floor windows suggest a palladian motif and the heavy roof is emphasized by a pedimented dormer. Mission influence shows above the first floor in the triple double-hung windows, deep roof eaves with exposed outriggers. A sunporch to the north, panelled and mullioned with shaped outriggers continues to echo mission styling.



6 RegS/1



10 RegS/1

6 REGENT STREET

DEED: 1911 Book 1966, pg. 434 Purchased by Josephine McGillicuddy from the Worcester Art Museum, house to be built within one year, plans to be approved by Worcester Art Museum.

1918 sold to Mary E. M. Kabley
 1954 sold to C. Raymond Peterson
 1962 sold to Florence Manasas
 1962 sold to Marie Peterson, present owner

GEORGIAN BUNGALOID 1912: Again typical of the period and area, current styles have been applied to a Georgian form in this 2½ story, hipped roof house. New England tradition is displayed in clapboard sheathing and segmental dormers. Limited fenestration recalls a mediterranean spirit. The recessed entrance with Doric columns, supporting a bracketed cornice, combine classic revival with an echo of bungalowoid.

10 REGENT STREET

DEED: 1903 book 1770, pg. 55 Purchased by Anjeanette Kenney Smith from Stephen Salisbury, house to be built within one year. Land added in 1903, 1904, 1910.

1910 sold to James E. Wesson
 1919 sold to Anna E. Wesson
 1929 sold to Richard K. Hutchins
 1960 sold to Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity, present owner

POT POURRI OF 1903: As with the other houses in the area, this Jacobethan shingle house disguises a traditional symmetrical New England plan. The steeply pitched roof with intersecting gables, heavy eutablature, bracketed gables, and grouped windows show Jacobethan intention. A hint of Queen Ann is found in small north wing with a gambrel roof and paneled chimney with molded brick. Classic elements are found in the one story porch running the full length of the front of the house. The roof with its modified pediment is supported by grouped roman columns. The sun porch with a sleeping porch above is roughly classic in intent. A large separate garage retains the same flavor in design.



9 RegS/1

9 REGENT STREET

DEED: 1908 Book 1884, pg. 386 Purchased by Edith K. Richey from Worcester Art Museum, house to be built within one year.

1927 sold to Marion C. Thulin
 1940 sold to Hester C. Dignan
 1944 sold to Linda S. Brockelman
 1953 sold to Edmond J. Croce, present owner

JACOBETHAN 1909: Jacobethan features have been applied to a basically symmetrical Georgian plan. In this 2½ story shingle house stylistic features have been extended to include larger elements such as the steeply pitched roofs, heavy barge boards. An apparent assymetry is achieved by the use of varied bays and grouped windows under symmetrical gables. The gabled entrance porch includes a segmental arch, shingle rail, side windows and heavy shingled piers. The second floor line is expressed through curved shingles with a molded cornice.



12 RegS/1

12 REGENT STREET

DEED: 1902 Book 1736 pg. 504 Purchased by Theodore P. Brown from Stephen Salisbury, house to be built within one year.

1942 sold to John E. Rice, present owner.

JACOBETHAN 1903: Continuing the Jacobethan idiom, this 2½ story stucco house features steeply pitched roofs with intersecting gables. The recessed front entrance is emphasized by an overhanging second story on bracketed supports with the gable overhanging and supported by a central bay window below. The right wing gable overhangs and is supported by heavy brackets and a bay window below. The left wing provides a subtle balance with its small dormer window above paired lower windows. A shaped sunporch extends to the south. The heavy central chimney, modified "half timbering", undercorated barge boards, moldings and trim are indicative of the Jacobethan style.



15 RegS/1

15 REGENT STREET

DEED: 1917 Book 2125, pg. 588 Purchased by Batchelder from the Worcester Art Museum.

1922 sold to John F. and Helen M. Tinsley

1954 sold to Earl C. Hughes

1958 sold to Worcester Polytechnic Inst., present owner

REGENCY REVIVAL 1919: The latest house in the area reflects an academic approach newly in vogue. The two story brick house with its hipped roof, balanced chimneys, central symmetrical section, slightly projecting pediment, small balastraded portico supported by Ionic columns, and the delicately dentilled cornice contains typical elements of regency revival. Large first floor windows and the assymetrical kitchen wing (use indicated by paired windows) are also typical of the style.

1 DRURY LANE

DEED: 1912 Book 1988, pg. 541 Purchased by Frank O. Woodland from Worcester Art Museum.

1916 sold to Julia C. Brown

1918 sold to Thilda A. Jeppson

1941 sold to Worcester Polytechnic Inst., present owner

GEORGIAN REVIVAL: Two story, stuccoed wood frame with slate roof. A strong interest in utility is evident in the plan and the rather cluttered West facade. This is the entrance facade; but it is evident that this area was designed from the "inside out". The broad porte cochere has been balanced by an attached wing to the South, planes are generally symmetrical; but, on three elevations, there is considerable freedom in fenestration. The East facade is somewhat more pretentious, completely symmetrical, with balconies and tall arched windows. Outside of the grouped Roman Doric columns and piers of the porte cochere, this facade shows the only "decoration", the balcony bracketing, which is more characteristic of the other houses of the area than of Georgian. Effort has been made to make the entrance more orderly through the use of stuccoed walls, and to tie in a simple garage (with gable-on-hip roof).



1 DruL/1

Architects: Frost, Briggs, & Chamberlain



201 Sals/1

201 SALISBURY STREET

DEED: 1899 Book 1616, pg. 354 Purchased by Jessie W. Moore (George E.) from Stephen Salisbury

1942 sold to Marie McPherson Campbell

1948 sold to Roman Catholic Church

GEORGIAN REVIVAL 1900: 2½ story hipped roof with dormers and gabled two-story bays, asymmetric chimneys, clapboarded wood frame with heavy Roman Ionic pilaster/piers at bay corners, piazza across North and East sides (passing under bays), curving out at Massachusetts Avenue and with squared projection at Salisbury Street (North) entrance, unornamented North side (except Palladian windowed broken-pedimented dormer), highly ornamented Massachusetts Avenue (East) facade with projecting bracketed cornice (continuing around building), patterned muntins in upper window sash, bracketed window ledges, railings, oval windows (4 keys). This lot, facing 3 streets, is considerably larger than others.

1 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

DEED: 1906 Book 1842, pg. 572 Purchased by Elsie M. Stewart (John C.) from Stephen Salisbury

1952 sold to C. Lindale Davies

1954 sold to Gordan A. Noyes

1961 sold to Zeta Mo Corporation

GEORGIAN REVIVAL 1907: 2½ story, clapboarded wood frame with corner boards: hipped roof with hipped dormers, except one on main facade pedimented; main facade symmetrical in effect with central entrance porch, but freedom of romantic revivals (or Worcester's pragmatic approach to design) reflected by bay window on one side of porch, and use of coupled windows on one side of porch "balancing" single on opposite; rather large double hung windows with single paned lower sash; classic cornice but with "dentils" heavy and widely spaced, repeated on porch and bay window; dormers heavy, center one pedimented, others hipped.



1 Masa/1



2 MassA/1

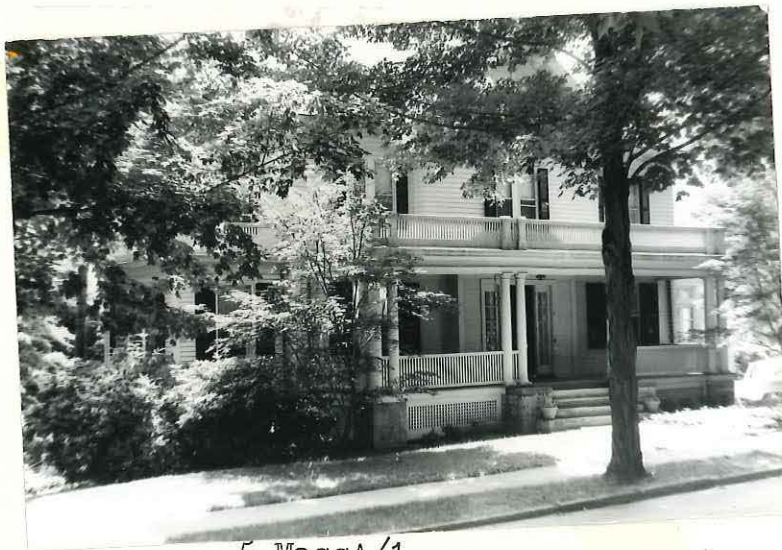
2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

DEED: 1900 Book 1681, pg. 445 Purchased by Charles C. Milton, Attorney, from Stephen Salisbury

1948 sold to Ralph Duffy

1970 sold to Robert R. Jay

GEORGIAN REVIVAL 1901: 2½ story, clapboarded wood frame with Ionic pilasters, front hip roof with 3 pedimented dormers, bow front either side of porch (balustraded and with finials at roof); triple double hung windows across bows at 1st floor; conservatory wing with Palladian type detail; pedimented, Ionic columned carriage porch with Palladian window over; main entrance with fan and side lights.



5 MassA/1

5 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

DEED: 1901 Book 1699, pg. 478, 1905 Book 1766, pg. 265, 1902, Purchased by Gertrude L. McKoan from Stephen Salisbury

1914 sold to Willard E. Swift

1932 sold to Alice M. Swift

1947 sold to Judge Carl E. Wahlstrom

1951 sold to Pamela Moore

1960 sold to Mrs. Frank Callahan

GEORGIAN REVIVAL 1903: 2½ story, symmetrical, clapboarded wood frame, hip roof; piazza across front ballustraded 1st floor and roof (piazza), coupled Doric (Roman) columns and with moulded piers at roof; large double hung windows at 1st floor, paired windows at 2nd, single paned sash; room extensions either side, ca 1920; side lighted front door; little ornament except classic type cornice projecting with shaped brackets.



6 Massa/1

GEORGIAN COLONIAL: Symmetrical (large wing to rear), 2 story, clapboarded wood frame with corner boards, hip roof, simple moulded cornice and window caps. The building has been considerably altered through the years. Print 6 Mass/2 is from print of unknown date and authority; shows a cupola, attic "screens", and mid-18th C doorway trim.

Print 6 Mass A/3, from a photograph ca. 1880, its siting on Trumbull Square (Franklin Street @ Green Street) where it had been moved in 1801, remodelled as a residence, losing its "possible" cupola (replaced by a railed deck, adding a side, Doric Columned & roof-railed piazza, and awkward bay window over entrance, but retaining the old Attic "screen" which seems to have disappeared in the 90's.

"TRUMBULL MANSION"

6 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

DEED: 1899 Book 1622, pg. 90 Land purchased by Susan Trumbull from Stephen Salisbury, 1899. House purchased from Drs. Wm. J. Delahanty and Joseph Kelly and house moved to site.

1957 sold to George A. Butler
1963 sold to Jarrell Burrow, DDS

Print 6 Massa/4 shows it shortly after its move (1899) to Massachusetts Avenue, and restoration. A pedimented, coupled, Doric columned entrance porch has appeared, Attic "screen" has been restored on a smaller scale, a center "side lighted" window installed on 2nd floor, and the roof deck seems to have been lowered (becoming larger) and rerailed.

The above photograph shows its current appearance: roof deck has been removed (1957) with roof continuing to ridge; Federal fan-lighted doorway (1957) replacing whatever may have remained of the earlier one; attic screens have gone again (before 1957) along with a couple of chimneys. A considerable exterior and interior renovation and alteration (shame on Royal Barry Wills Office) was done in 1957.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. It is recommended that the survey and analysis functions of this Study Committee relative to the remaining historical sites within the city be assumed by the proposed Historic District Commission, and that this Study Committee shall cease to exist upon final adoption of the proposed Massachusetts Avenue Historic District Ordinance by the City Council.
- B. It is recommended that a five-man Historic District Commission would be sufficient to carry out both the administrative responsibilities for the proposed Massachusetts Avenue Historic District and the survey and analysis of remaining historic sites within the city. It is recognized that as additional historic districts are established, the membership of the Commission may need to increase from 5 to 7 members, and that staff services may need to be added. These considerations are reflected in the proposed Historic District Ordinance.
- C. It is recommended that the proposed Historic Districts Commission be given sufficient authority to review external changes in the proposed Massachusetts Avenue Historic District, both for the preservation of a compatible neighborhoods and for service to the residents of the district with professional assistance in external architectural and landscaping problems. The Study Committee proposed that none of the categories listed in Section 8 of Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws be exempted from review by the proposed Historic District Commission.
- D. It is recommended that the proposed Historic District Commission recognize the institutional nature of the American Antiquarian Society, that the Commission recognize the special nature of the Society's activities, and that the Commission take these factors into consideration in evaluating possible changes in the physical plant facilities of the Society.



FOUNDED 1812

American Antiquarian Society

185 SALISBURY STREET

WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, 01609, U. S. A.

25 July 1972

Dear Carl:

Last evening's meeting on the Massachusetts Avenue-Regent Street Historic District was helpful to me. I was pleased with the clarification of the intent of the proposed Districting, particularly as it applies to the American Antiquarian Society property. I was glad to be reassured that the regulations of such a District are not intended to stifle growth and change, but to insure that future changes in the District will not violate the nature of the area.

The major factor in my concern is that although many of the domiciles in the District and adjacent neighborhoods are institutionally owned, the Society's building is the only non-domestic building within the District. As the chief executive of the Society I am concerned that the Society, which has been located at the corner of Park, Salisbury, and Regent Streets since 1909, not be unduly inhibited in its growth. To remain a viable institution we must change and grow, or we shall stagnate.

I do not think that the Committee's preliminary report which was distributed last evening sufficiently recognizes the above concern. For example, the major structure in the District is not specifically considered in the report, despite the fact that I was told last evening that the AAS building is considered the anchor of the District. Because the District is primarily residential in appearance, the Committee has properly been concerned with the architecture of that sort. Nearly all references are to "homes." I request that the Committee specifically recognize the institutional existence of AAS in its report. Will the Committee please put in writing, for the instruction of the yet unformed Commission, its recognition of the need of AAS to alter its facilities in an appropriate architectural manner during the generations ahead, as was so well expressed verbally last evening?

Let me reiterate my support of the District. My concern is only

that the Commission in years ahead will be as flexible as the Planning Committee has been in dealing with AAS needs as an on-going library.

With best wishes for the success of the committee's work,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. McCorison', written over a horizontal line.

Marcus A. McCorison

The Honorable Carl E. Wahlstrom, Chairman
Worcester Historical District Study Committee
City Hall, Room 209
Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

M:A

cc: Gerard F. McNeil

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