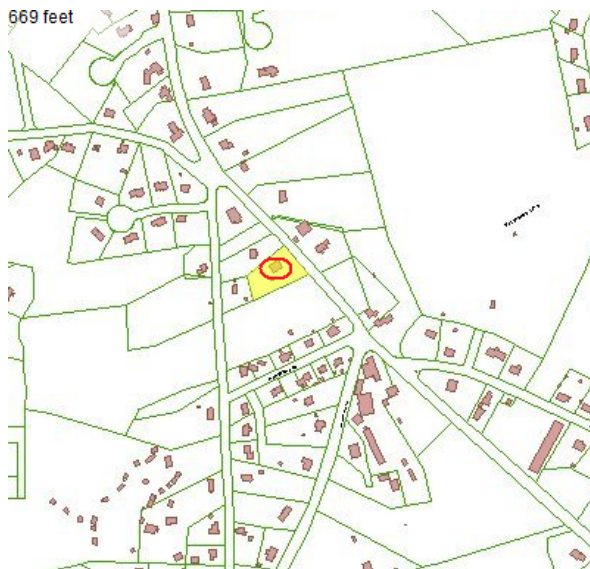


FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD

Photograph

(3" x 3" or 3-1/2" x 5" black and white only) Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on the form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.



Recorded by Linda V. Prescott
Organization Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date January 10, 2010

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

103/417/4///

Billerica

Town Chelmsford

Place South Chelmsford

Address 187-189 Boston Road

Historic Name Adams-Sweetser House

Uses: Present residential

Original residential

Date of Construction before 1821

Source Deeds and taxes

Style/Form

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material: Vinyl siding

Foundation Stone, Dressed Granite Blocks

Wall/Trim Vinyl

Roof Asphalt Shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures None

Major Alterations (with dates)

1977 converted into a two family, side by side.
Vinyl sided and window replacement, date unknown

Condition Good

Moved no yes **Date**

Acreage 30,823 sq ft.

Setting House sits at the top of a rise on a busy road, Rte 4, connecting Billerica and the center of Chelmsford. The semicircular driveway is dirt. The South side of the house is an easement for high tension power lines. The area is semi rural. The neighboring houses are a mix from the early 1800's to very new construction.

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

Research indicates the house was built before 1821 by the prominent Adams family of Chelmsford. It appears to be Adams in style. The side gable house has a stone and granite block foundation, framed bulkhead to the basement on the left side of the house. On the right side of the house towards the rear of the structure is a granite block foundation for a small chimney. The front of the house has five windows across the front and a recessed front door. When the house was vinyl sided, most of the architectural detail was removed. Working from several photographs taken in the 1940's front view only, the house had wooden clapboards, asphalt shingled roof with 2 chimneys on the ridge pole in the center of the house. The picture shows the 6 over 6 windows had been replaced on the first floor with 2 over 1 windows. Today the windows on the first and second floors have been replaced with vinyl windows, it appears the windows in the attic are the older 6 over 9. The windows had simple crown molding. The front door is recessed, with 2 granite steps. The entablature is simple in design with a straight cornice molding, plain frieze board and architrave molding. The door has side lights and the fanlight has been omitted. The large door has 6 panels and may not be the original. The side of the house has a symmetrical window arrangement. The returns and cornices on the house are not visible due to the vinyl siding, although in one current picture, a missing piece of vinyl hints at decorative molding under the eaves. Running the full length of the back of the house is a one story addition with a slanted roof, in keeping with the rest of the house.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

At present, the house appears to have been built before 1821 by Sara and Samuel Adams, a very successful farming family and one of the Founding Families of Chelmsford. The house was purchased by Elias Sweetser of Westford in 1821. Elias was a very successful farmer as indicated by his generous church tithes, the largest of the congregation and a prominent member of the South Baptist Church of Chelmsford. Elias had married Mary Adams of Chelmsford. In 1821, Elias Sweetser purchased 84 acres of land in South Chelmsford with the buildings. Census shows Elias and his wife Mary do not live in Chelmsford and raised their family of 7 children in Westford. Charles Sweetser was born on March 23, 1820 in Westford, he married Mary Adams of Chelmsford on June 24, 1843 and settled in South Chelmsford on South Road (Boston Road). Charles and Mary raised 10 children in the house. Edwin born in 1850 worked the farm with his father. Herbert C., born in 1856, became a businessman, a partner in the grain mill Sweetser and Day in Chelmsford Center, partnered with Ralph P. Adams in a laundry business, was a charter member of the Grange, but most importantly was a highly respected member of the Board of Assessors for 30 Years. The youngest brother, Erving W., also farmed the family land and served as the Collector of Taxes and Town Treasurer. Elias sold the 84 acre farm to son Charles in 1865. Over Charles lifetime, he sold or gave to his children most of his land, upon his death in 1901, his Probated Land was 18 acres worth \$2200.00. In 1905, the Sweetser Family sold the house to Martin Robbins, of Chelmsford. The 5.76 acre parcel of land then passed to Ella Parker, first wife of George Parker, a local carpenter. George Parker sold the house to Etta Harvey in 1938. Etta and Claude Harvey farmed the land and lived in the house until about 1941. The 1942 city directory shows Etta Harvey owned the house but rented it to Kenneth Harvey, a diner manager and Iva, a stitcher. Eventually, Muriel Whealan and Claude Harvey took possession of the property. Muriel lived in the near by in 203 Boston Road and rented 187-189 Boston Road. In 1997, Charles Hillman, Jr. purchased the property and has continued to rent the house.

On October 19, 2009, Mr. Hillman applied for a demolition permit for 187-189 Boston Road. The attached demolition request sites a leaky roof causing mold in the house, a lingering lead paint problem, a leaky toilet allowing the floor to sub flooring to decay, a dirt floor in the basement and a stone foundation with a crack as the reasons to demolish the building. In an interview with the Richard Day, the Director of the Department of Health, Mr. Day stated that he did not mandate that the house should be destroyed; it can be repaired and brought back to code.

A note: In researching this house, I found a note from the historian who started the project, Jane Drury. In her notes Jane states, the 1831 Map of Chelmsford, shows a house located across the street from this site. The current house could be the house on the map. According to town records, the road was moved in 1901. This note could explain the discrepancy in style compared to the date. It could make the house a much older Moses Barron House as noted on the back of the mid 20th century photo.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Town of Chelmsford Tax Records, Accessors Data Base, GIS and Cemetery Records

Ancestry .com Census

North Middlesex Registry of Deeds

NewspaperArchive.com

Chelmsford City Directories

Water's History of Chelmsford

Photographs by Fred Merriam

Photographs from the Chelmsford Historical Society's Archives

Maps: 1875 Beer's Map, Charles Sweetser, 1856 Walling's Map E. Sweetser, 1831 map ?, road was moved in 1901.

Local.live.com

Maptech.com

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET CHELMSFORD 187-189 BOSTON ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

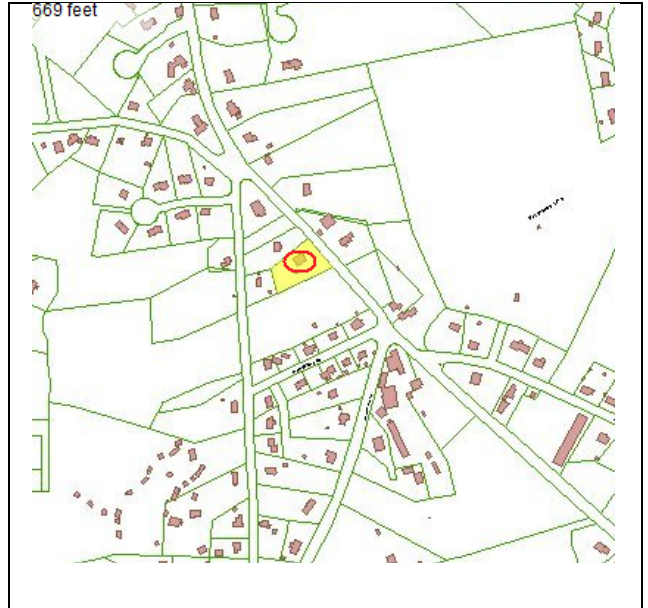


MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Locational Information



1187-9 Boston Road www.local.live.com



187-9 Boston Rd.
host.appgeo.com/chelmsfordMA/Map.aspx



Maptech excerpt from Billerica USGS quadrangle.

Decimal coordinates as provided by Maptech 42°34'53"N 71°20'39"W

187-189 Boston Road Deeds

Northern Middlesex Registry of Deeds

Book 8765, pg. 345 Aug. 7, 1997	Whealan Trust to Hillman	Whealan trust to Charles R. Hillman, Chelmsford. Lots 1&2 on Plan Bk 195 pg 38
Book 924, pg. 101 Dec. 13, 1938	Harvey to Parker	Etta M. Harvey from George W. Parker (title from will of first wife Ella M. Parker)
Book 385, pg. 302 Sept. 12, 1905	Sweetse Estate to Robbins	Martin Robbins from the heirs of Charles Sweetser 18 acres
Book 384, pg. 169 Nov. 20, 1905	Perham to Robbins	Martin Robbins from Edwin C. Perham (guardian of the children of Ella Parker)
Book 385, pg. 306 Sept. 12, 1905	Robbins to Parker	Ella M. Parker from Martin M. Robbins 5 76/100 acres
Book 44, pg. 408 April 14, 1865	Sweetser to Sweetser	Charles Sweetser from Elias Sweetser 84 acres, with buildings
Book 11, pg. 26 March 12, 1821	Adams to Sweetser	Elias Sweetser, Westford, from Sara Adams 84 acres with buildings
Book 9, pg. 392 Mar. 28, 1793	Foster to Adams	Samuel Adams (husband of Sara) from Joseph Foster. 10 acres
Book 9, pg. 394 March 28, 1796	Foster to Adams	Samuel Adams from Joseph Foster

187-189 Boston Road**Taxes**

1999 Whealen, Muriel B. 203 Boston Road c/o Claudia Zaher 19 Locke Road C	D/D 3/10/1978 land 78000.00 residence 144300.00	Total taxes 4025.85
1989 Whealen, Muriel B. 203 Boston Road C	187-189 Boston Road	
1987 Whealan, Muriel B. 203 Boston Rd. C	187-189 Boston Road Map 146 lot 34 pt 7929	Land value 11100.00 Bldg. Value 949.00 Total value 2059.00 Total taxes 2203.13
1984 Whealan, Muriel B. 203 Boston Rd. C	187-189 Boston Road Map 146 lot 34 pt 7929	Land Value 25600.00 Total Taxes 1963.00
1982 Whealen, Muriel B. 203 Boston Road C	187-189 Boston Road 46, 155 sq. ft. D/D 3/10/78 PC P508248	Land \$ 7250.00 House 25300.00 Total Taxes 1712.13
1978 Whelan, Robert J. Muriel B. 325 North Road	187-189 Boston Road 46, 155 sq. ft. D/D 3/10/78 PC P508248 Bk 1172/ pg 299	Land \$ 7250.00 House 25300.00 Total Taxes 1712.13 House value 5950.00
1977 Whelan, Robert J. Muriel B. 325 North Road	Boston Road 46, 155 sq. ft. D/D 3/10/78 PC P508248 Bk 1172/ pg 299	Land \$ 7250.00 House 25300.00 Total Taxes 1712.13
1976 Whealan, Robert J. Muriel J. 325 North Rd., C pg. 1196	#185 Boston Rd. Bk 1172, pg. 299, July, 11, 1951 Map 146 lot 0013 C 29,680 sq.ft.	House value 5950.00 Land value 11700.00 Total taxes 379.48
1974 Whealan, Robert J. Muriel J. 325 North Rd., C pg. 1193	#185 Boston Rd. Bk 1172, pg. 299, July, 11, 1951 Map 146 lot 0013 C 29,680 sq.ft.	House value 5950.00 Land value 11700.00 Total taxes 379.48

1955 Harvey, Etta 203 Boston Rd., C pg. 135, line 10	187-189 Boston Rd. Pl 146 Bl 38 Lot 13B + 13D House Boston Rd. 2000.00 House Concord Rd. 1000.00	1.42 Acres 600.00 Total value 3600.00 Total taxes 208.80
1950 Harvey, Etta 203 Boston rd., C pg. 113, line 5	177-179 Boston Rd. Pl 146 Bl 38 Lot 13 House #187-189 2000.00 House #185 1500.00 Barn/Shed #187 150.00	2.42 Acres Total value 4050.00 Total taxes 214.65
1945 Harvey, Etta 203 Boston Rd, C pg 70, line 16	177-179 Boston Rd. Pl 146 Bl 38 Lot 13 House #187-189 2000.00 House #185 1500.00 4 other Bldgs. 150.00 #177 Roadside Stand and Garage, unf. 200.00 2 Gas Pumps 100.00	2.99 Acres 400.00 Total value 4350.00 Total taxes 152.25
1939 Harvey, Etta Boston Road, C Harvey, Etta pg. 70, line 4 Harvey, Etta pg. 70, line 5	Boston Road 15 acres 1350.00 House 1000.00 Barn 450.00 Garage @ Rd. 50.00 Garage and Store/Shed 150.00 Hen House and other Bldgs. 125.00 off Concord and Boston Rds. 80 Acres no bldgs. Boston Rd. 10.5 Acres 700.00 House 1700.00 Incubator 150.00 Other Bldgs. 150.00 Roadside Stand 150.00	Total value 3125.00 Total taxes 102.00 Total value 2500.00 Total taxes 82.00 Total value 2850.00 Total taxes 93.48
Hatch, Mabel pg. 70, line 10	Boston Rd. 1.14 Acres 100.00 House 750.00 Barn 150.00 Garage 150.00	Total value 1150.00 Total taxes 37.72
1938 Harvey, Etta Pg. 63, line 10	Boston Rd., Chelms. 94.7 acres House 850.00 Barn 450.00 3 Hen houses 400.00 Store and Roadside Stand 100.00 Cider Mill 200.00	Total Taxes 195.00

1937 Harvey, Etta pg. 62, line 18	Boston Rd. 94 7/10 Acres 4.500.00 Dwelling 850.00 Barn 450.00 3 Henhouses 400.00 Store and Roadside Stand 100.00 Cider Mill 200.00	Total Value 4500.00 Total taxes 199.55
1905 Sweetser, Charles Estate of pg. 84, line 3 Dist 4, Prec 1	Set to Morse and Parker 1906 (Dwelling and other bldg + 18 A of land set to Morse and Parker) Dwelling 650.00 Barn 500.00 Carriage House and Shed 100.00 Windmill 120.00 Laws Sprout & Pasture 2A 30.00 Home Sprout & Pasture 20.A 250.00 River Meadow Sprout 15 A 250.00	Home Imp. Land 46 ½ A 1500.00 Swamp Sprout & Pasture 20 A 260.00 Sheep Sprout & Pasture 5A 75.00 Mill Sprout & Pasture 7A 65.00 Land value 3800.00 Total taxes 56.62
1905 Sweetser, Mrs. Charles pg. 84, line 11	Estate of Set H.C. Sweetser Rocky Hill Sprout 24 A 400.00	Total taxes 5.96
1906 Morse, C.F. and Parker, Geo W. pg. 59, line 5, Dist. 4, Prec. 1	(This Property is to be set to Geo. W. Paker and C.F. Morse, Dist 4) Dwelling 650.00 [Barn 500.00 Carriage House 100.00] Windmill 125.00 6 Hen houses 200.00	Sweetser Imp. Land 18A 700.00 lent to Bernard Down Total value 2275.00 total taxes 31.85
1865 Sweetser, Charles Dist 4, line 2	1 Dwelling House 580.00 Barn 350.00	Imp. Land 56A 1725.00 Unimp. Land 39A 700.00 Wood land 37A 1585.00 Total value 5410.00 Total taxes 68.86
1864 Sweetser, Charles Dist 4, line 23	1 Dwelling House 580.00 Barn 325.00	Imp. Land 56A 1715.00 Unimp. Land 39A 700.00 Wood land 37A 1585.00 Total value 4780.00 Total taxes 60.17
1858 Sweetser, Charles pg.57	House & Barn 60 acres Improved Land 30 acres Wood Land 35 acres Unimproved Land 7 acres Winning Lot 19.5 acres N. Spaulding Land Total Taxes	900.00 2085.00 300.00 1155.00 40.00 300.00 30.11

1855 Sweetser, Charles	House & 2 Barns	900.00
	60 acres Improved Land	2085.00
	30 acres Wood Land	300.00
	35 acres Unimproved Land	1155.00
	7 acres Winning Lot	40.00
	Total Taxes	23.66
1847 Sweetser, Charles	House & 2 Barns	1200.00
	52 acres Improved Land	1635.00
	7A Wood Land	400.00
	17 acres Unimproved Land	255.00
	Total Taxes	14.66
1846 Sweetser, Charles	House & 2 Barns	1200.00
	52 acres Improved Land	1635.00
	7A Wood Land	400.00
	17 acres Unimproved Land	255.00
	Total Taxes	14.66
1842 Sweetser, Elias	page 1193	
Westford	House & 2 Barns	800.00
	52 acres Improved land	1815.00
	7 acres Wood Land	430.00
	17 acres Unimproved Land	280.00
Sweetser, Charles	poll tax	
1838 Sweetser, Elias (Westford)	2 Houses and Barn	350.00
	40A Imp. Land	800.00
	36 A Unimp. Land	1100.00
	Total value	2250.00
	Total taxes	17.83
1837 Sweetser, Elias (Westford)	2 Houses and Barn	450.00
	40A Imp. Land	960.00
	36 A Unimp. Land	1320.00
	Total value	2320.00
	Total taxes	18.61
1828 Sweetser, Elias	House and Barn	400.00
	26 A Imp. Land	634.00
	50 A Unimp. Land	500.00

Total Taxes 11.98

1827 Sweetser, Elias

1 House and Barn 400.00

26 a Imp. Land 634.00

50 A Unimp. Land 500.00

Total Taxes 11.66

1824 Sweetser, Elias (Westford)

1 House and Barn 400.00

26 a Imp. Land 634.00

50 A Unimp. Land 500.00

Total Taxes 11.66

187-189 Boston Road

Interview with Richard Day, Board of Health on October 26, 2009

Board of Health did an inspection of the house on 187-189 Boston Road. Tenant complained of lead paint because tenant's child had a marginal amount of lead in its system. Mr. Day sited the building for leaking roof, mold, lead paint, insect infestation, rotted flooring in the bathroom, from a leaky toilet, and rodent droppings. Mr. Day said it was typical of an older structure that had not been maintained. Mr. Day also said he did not mandate the building should be demolished but could be repaired and brought to code. Lead paint was in the structure, and upon further testing, it was a minimal amount. Most of the lead painted surfaces had been replaced during past renovations. Mr. Day said the house of its age, does not earn as much rent as a new building.

Report by Linda Prescott





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