

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

113/431/15

Billerica

CLM.6

Town/City: Chelmsford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Address: 101 Mill Road

Historic Name: Joseph Adams House

Uses: Present: vacant

Original: single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: 1816

Source: *History of Chelmsford*

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood siding/brick

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Overall interior modifications

Ca. 1960 kitchen ell addition

Ca. 1970 chimney stack removal above the roof line

Ca. 1980 bay window additions

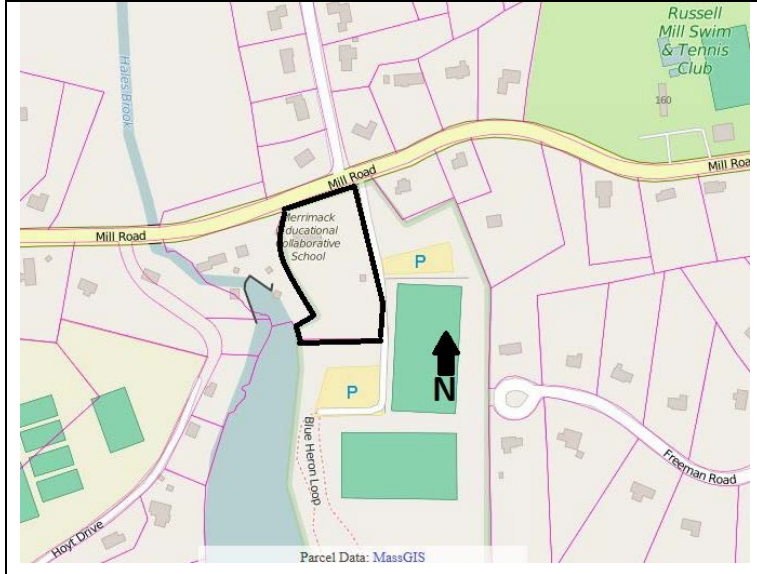
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.77 A

Setting: The house is located on the south side of Mill Rd just west of its intersection with Raymond Rd. The building sets atop a rise and faces the Russell Mill Pond to the west. A paved drive leads from the street to a parking area east of the building. The area includes 20th c. residential development and the Russell Mill Swim & Tennis Club.

Locus Map



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

Organization: Chelmsford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): June 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

CHELMSFORD

101 MILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The 2.5-story building has a stone foundation, walls clad in wood clapboard except for the brick walls on the ends, and has a side gable asphalt-shingled roof. A one-and-a-half-story addition is at the rear of the building. One internal brick chimney is located within the addition; historic chimney stacks on the main mass of the building were previously removed. Fenestration on the main portion of the building consists of replacement bay windows and historic eight-over-eight double-hung windows. Window openings feature decorative shutters. The primary (west) façade faces the Russell Mill Pond rather than Mill Road. The first story of the façade is three bays wide with bay windows in the north and south bays and the main entry in the center. The entry features a replacement door topped with a four-pane transom. The second story of the façade is five bays wide with windows in each bay. The north and south walls are of brick construction, but the gables are clad in wood clapboard. The north wall is two bays wide with windows in the center of the wall and a paired window in the half story. The south wall has two windows on the first story towards the rear of the house; a doorway west of the windows has been infilled with brick. The second story has two windows in the center and a single window in the half story.

The rear addition encompasses the south half of the rear wall. The addition has a rear gable roof with two pediment dormers on the north slope and one on the south slope. The north wall of the addition featured two garage doors until ca. 1980 when they were infilled with small, rectangular windows. A one-story, shed roof addition is on the south side of the addition.

A garden shed is located to the southeast of the building, south of the parking lot.

The building is an altered example of an early nineteenth century residence that retains historic integrity of location and setting.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The original Inventory Form completed for the property in 1974 by Chelmsford Historical Commission members Janet Lombard and Jane Drury provides a history of the building and its owners until that date. The earliest property transfer dates to 1656 when Samuel Adams received 450 acres to erect the town's first sawmill. The Adams family retained the property and operated the mills for five generations. The date of construction for the present house was thought to be 1816 when Joseph Adams (1758-1843), great-great grandson of Samuel, built it to replace a smaller house on the property. The house, however, may have been constructed earlier by Joseph's father or grandfather, who were also both named Joseph. An interior inspection of the house by an architectural historian with expertise on early construction practices might provide additional clues to the construction date of the house.

After the passing of the youngest Joseph Adams, the property was transferred to his son Deacon Otis Adams (1798-1881). Deacon Otis Adams moved to Pine Hill Road after his marriage in 1822, and therefore, did not reside at this house when his father passed. In 1853 he sold the property to Abbott Russell, marking the end of the Adams's family almost 200-year period of ownership. The 1880 US Population Census lists Russell (1810-1892) living in Chelmsford and employed as a miller. Also living with him at this date were his second wife Statira (1823-1895), son Frederick A. (ca. 1859-1934) a milkman, and twin sons Edwin Lincoln (1861-1899) and Edward Hamlin (1861-1933), both farm laborers. Abbott Russell is buried in the Forefathers Burial Ground with a mill stone as his headstone (the names of other family members are included on the stone). The property passed to Edwin Lincoln (noted as E. Lincoln) and remained in the Russell family until his death. His estate sold the property in 1901 to Jennie Schultz from Chelsea, Suffolk County for \$2,237.22 (Deed book and page 328/331). At this date the property contained 90.47 acres, several buildings, and mill and water power privileges. Schultz, and her husband Louis, immediately

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granted the property to Hiram Whitney of Westford for \$3,000. Deed research between 1901 and 1967 when D&B Home Builders sold it to Lloyd Greene was inconclusive. In 1974 Lloyd Greene (1917-2011) then owner of the property rented the house to the Merrimack Valley Education Center. Greene's obituary notes that he was fascinated with dams, water wheels, and mills and searched for a property that sated his interests. When he purchased the property he devoted his life to the restoration of the dam and mill complex and was eventually able to generate electric power commercially. In 2004 the Chelmsford Historical Society presented its Guardian Award to Greene for his preservation efforts. At the date of his death, Greene was Chelmsford's oldest World War II veteran.

In 1978 the Merrimack Valley Education Center purchased the house. In November 2014 the Town of Chelmsford approved \$490,000 in funding to acquire the property. The Town currently has a 101 Mill Road Committee that meets every two weeks to discuss and plan for the building's future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Genealogical research, including U.S. and Massachusetts census records; birth, marriage, and death records; and city directory records from ancestry.com.

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Perham, Henry S. *A Sketch of the History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts*. Philadelphia, PA, J.W. Lewis. 1890.

Waters, Dr. Wilson. *The History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts*. Lowell, Mass., 1917.

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Rear portion of
101 Mill Road,
facing southeast.
May 2016.



101 Mill Road,
facing north. May
2016.