

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

018-0016

Salem

WNH.126

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

**Town/City:** Wenham

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Wenham Village

## Photograph



Façade (east) and north elevations.

**Address:** 6 Cedar Street

**Historic Name:** Benjamin and Elvira Putnam House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1856

**Source:** Deed

**Style/Form:** Victorian Eclectic

**Architect/Builder:** not known

**Exterior Material:**

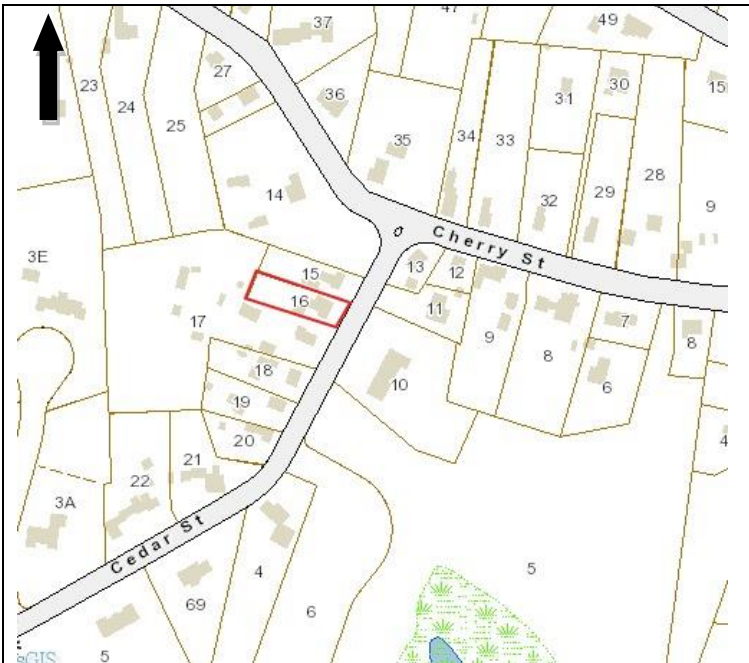
Foundation: Parged stone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards and trim

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** garage

**Locus Map** Map #s are last two digits of Assessor's #, not street address.



**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Center cross-dormer and bay windows (L 19th C); rear ell (?) and additions, exterior chimney (L 20<sup>th</sup> c?) – replacement windows (L 20<sup>th</sup> – E 21<sup>st</sup> c)

**Condition:** Very Good

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.26 acre

**Setting:** Densely built residential streetscape, principally constructed in the 19th c. Located at northern end of a main thoroughfare between Wenham village and the southwestern part of town.

**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:** Wenham Historical Commission

**Date:** July 2017

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WENHAM

6 CEDAR STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

WNH.126

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.*

6 Cedar Street occupies a small, narrow, trapezoidal lot on the west side of Cedar Street, near its intersection with Cherry Street. Maintained chiefly in lawn, with a picket fence around the front yard, the lot slopes up gently to the north. The house is set close to the street, with a driveway along its south side that leads to a small garage set to the southwest of the house. The house consists of a main block with several rear additions. Measuring 34 feet long by 16 feet deep, the main block rises 1 ½ stories to a side gable roof with modest cornice returns, a small chimney set slightly off-center in the front slope, and a small cross-gabled dormer in the center of the façade. The large, perpendicular rear ell has a gable roof and also appears to be 1 ½ stories high. A small rear addition at the west end of the main block appears to have a hip roof. Walls are sheathed with clapboards and trimmed with narrow corner boards and a wider flat fascia board with narrow bed molding. Windows typically have double-hung replacement sash; façade openings have molded casings, while the side elevations have flat casings. The symmetrical, three-bay façade (east elevation) features a center entrance with a single leaf door and hip-roofed hood with elaborately carved brackets. The outer bays each contain an angled bay window with a hip roof. A single window is centered in the cross-gabled dormer above the entrance.

The symmetrical south elevation has one window on the first floor and two in the half-story. The irregularly composed north elevation has large modern exterior chimney rising up the center, one window in the half story of the main block, and two smaller windows in the rear ell. According to the assessor's records, the garage at the back of the house was built in 1998.

Well preserved and well maintained, 6 Cedar Street is representative of vernacular Victorian architecture in Wenham. The modest cottage is notable for its conservative center-entrance plan, uncommon cross-gabled dormer, double bay windows on the façade, and stylish door hood.

## 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.*

In 1855, John A. Corbett sold Benjamin C. Putnam (1820-1888) a piece of land on Cedar Street with an agreement to build a well on the property that would be shared between them. (Essex South Deed Book 521, p. 268) Trader Benjamin C. Putnam, age 35, appears in the 1855 Massachusetts census with his wife, Elvira, and their two young children. It appears that Putnam constructed the house before he sold the property to Michael Sullivan in 1860. (Essex South Deed Book 600, p. 214)

Paul Mansfield Barnes (ca. 1826-1901) married Lydia M. Dodge in 1856. Lydia Barnes (b. 1835- ) purchased the house and land at 6 Cedar Street in 1878. (Essex South Deed Book 999, p. 231) The 1880 census includes the Barnes family: Paul, a laborer; Lydia; and their six children.

In 1892, Lydia and Paul Barnes passed the property on to daughter Abbie Barnes. (Essex South Deed Book 1369, p. 176) Abbie married Fred A. Roundy in 1893. Abbie died in 1899 and in 1901, Fred Roundy sold the property to Susie M. Casson. (Essex South Deed Book 1639, p. 406) Susie Mira Casson married motorman Samuel Pike Currier in 1903.

Susan and Samuel Currier owned the property for just a few years and sold it in 1905 to Michael Byrnes. (Essex South Deed Book 1768, p. 461) Byrnes worked as a farm hand and lived here with his wife Margaret. Margaret and their son Michael sold the property in 1933. (Essex South Deed Book 2953, p. 350)

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WENHAM

6 CEDAR STREET

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Benjamin Conant photographed the Paul Barnes house in 1893. At that time, the house had not yet been altered with the cross-gabled dormer, the bay windows, or the rear ell. (Photograph No. 0682, included in *Wenham Pictures and Prose*, page 118)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

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Janes, Annette V. with the Wenham Museum. *Images of America: Wenham*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

Massachusetts Census. 1855. Ancestry.com.

Massachusetts birth indices. Ancestry.com.

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Walling, Henry Francis. *A Topographical Map of Essex County, Massachusetts...* Smith & Worley, 1856.

Walker, George H. & Co., *Atlas of Essex County*. Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1884.

Walker Lithography and Publishing Company. *Atlas of the Towns of Topsfield, Ipswich, Essex, Hamilton and Wenham, Essex County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Walker Lithography & Co., 1910.

Wenham Historical Association & Museum, Inc. *Wenham in Pictures and Prose*. Wenham: Wenham Historical Association & Museum. 1992.

Wenham Tax Assessor records.

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible  Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district  Potential historic district

Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Statement of Significance by Stacy Spies  
*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The neighborhood located at the intersection of Cherry Street and Cedar Street is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. The district retains integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association. Consisting of well-preserved houses dating from ca. 1790 through ca. 1915, the Cherry Street-Cedar Street district meets Criterion A for its association with the development as a neighborhood of farmers and tradespeople. Houses are typically well-preserved one and two-story frame dwellings on stone foundations. The majority of houses in the district feature vernacular Greek Revival, gable-front forms. Several of these houses retain Greek Revival details such as door surrounds. Vernacular forms of Federal, Georgian, and Colonial Revival styles are also represented. 6 Cedar Street is a contributing property to this district, retaining a high level of architectural integrity.

Cherry Street developed during the 17<sup>th</sup> century as an east-west connector between two major north/south roadways: Main Street and present-day Topsfield Road. Eighteenth and nineteenth-century deeds refer to Cherry Street as "the road to Topsfield." With the growth of Wenham village during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the village expanded westward along the "the road to Topsfield" between Main Street and present-day Monument Street. Cedar Street was laid out ca. 1825 and was known as "the road to North Beverly." The earliest residents were farmers. However, by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, residents were more typically tradespeople, especially cordwainers, and, without a need for agricultural land, constructed their houses on small lots near the village center. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, residents, in addition to shoe workers, included streetcar drivers, laborers, and teamsters.