

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

018-0017 Salem WNH.127

Town/City: Wenham

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

Photograph



Address: 8 Cedar Street

Historic Name: George and Martha Parsons House

Uses: Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1875

Source: historic maps; deed

Style/Form: No style

Architect/Builder: Not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Not visible

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles and trim

Roof: Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: garage; multiple storage buildings/sheds

Major Alterations (*with dates*): wood shingles, entrance porch; window openings enlarged and fenestration replaced (20th c); exterior chimney (20th C)

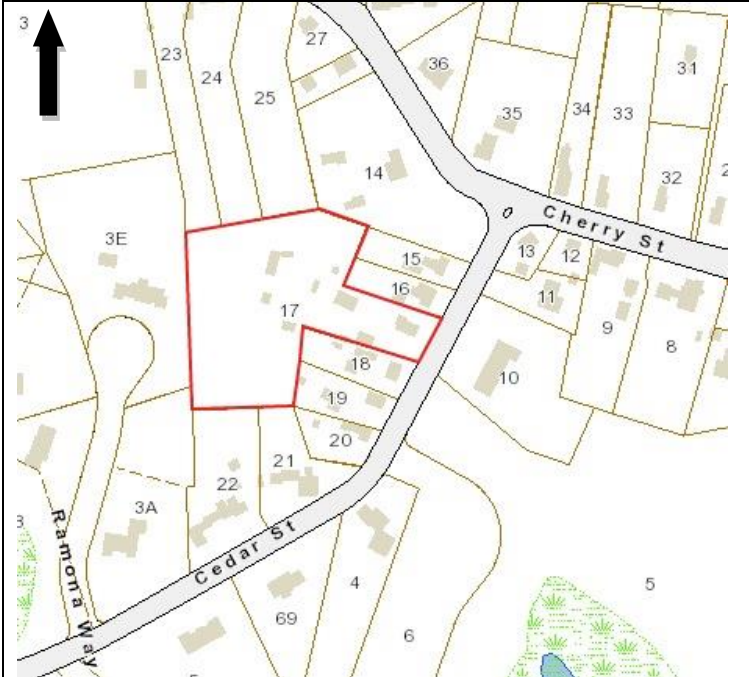
Condition: Poor

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 2.35 acres

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

Locus Map



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

Recorded by: Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Wenham Historical Commission

Date: June 2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WENHAM

8 CEDAR STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

WNH.127

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.

8 Cedar Street occupies an unusually large, arrow-shaped lot on the west side of Cedar Street. The wider rear portion of the parcel extends to each side behind seven of the neighboring properties. Maintained chiefly in turf, the lot slopes very gently up to the west. The house is set close to the street, with a paved driveway running along its south side. Assessor's records show eight outbuildings to the rear of the house; most of these are not visible from the street.

The house consists of a 1½ story, L-shaped main block and a one-story addition across the back. Measuring 20 feet wide at the front by 41 feet deep, the main block rises 1½ stories to a front gable roof with minimal gable returns. An exterior chimney rises up the south wall; another exterior chimney appears to rise up the back wall of the ell. Walls are sheathed with wood shingles; the front gable has a narrow flat raking fascia. Windows are all replacement casement units and appear in singles, pairs, and trios without applied casings.

The façade has a large hip-roofed entrance porch with thin square posts, wrought iron railings, and a single-leaf door with a flat casing. It is flanked by an angled bay window; a pair of casement windows is centered in the half-story. The south elevation has a sizeable shed-roofed dormer towards the back and irregular fenestration, including pairs of long and short casement windows. The one-story rear addition has a door and a pair of casement windows on the south elevation. Not clearly visible from the street, the north elevation also has a large shed roofed dormer, with a trio of casement windows visible in its half-story.

The outbuilding closest to the street is a three-bay Colonial Revival style garage on the south side of the driveway, which it faces. This residential-scale garage has a side gable, saltbox form; it is sheathed with wood clapboards and trimmed with flat corner boards and door and window trim. The façade (north elevation) has three vehicle bays with segmental arch openings. The asymmetrical east elevation (facing the street) has one 6/6 window set slightly off center and an offset door. Directly behind the house is a tall, two-bay, commercial-style garage with a slightly pitched roof, facing south towards the driveway; it appears to be clad with artificial siding. Two other utilitarian sheds/garages with gabled roofs are visible farther west along the driveway.

8 Cedar Street is a modest Victorian cottage that has lost most of its historic integrity. The 1½ story front gable form and bay window are its most distinctive surviving features and still complement the historic streetscape. The front porch has likely been re-built, and all original fenestration appears to be replaced. The early, saltbox garage near the front of the property is a notable site feature; the array of other, more recent outbuildings, while utilitarian, is a rare demonstration of the neighborhood's agricultural/commercial heritage.

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 George and Martha Parsons House was likely constructed ca. 1875, the year in which George and Martha Parsons purchased the land from Francis and Nancy Stanley (Standley). (Essex Deed Book 926, p. 40) George Parsons (1829-1892) worked as a farmer and fish dealer and lived with his wife, Martha (1831-1885), and their children. Photographer Benjamin Conant identified 8 Cedar Street as the house of George Parsons in an 1893 photograph. (Conant Photograph 0682, reproduced in *Wenham Pictures and Prose*, page 118.) (Note: It appears that the 1884 map transposed the identification of the houses belonging to Augustus Standley and George Parsons. Source material corroborates Parsons' residence at 8 Cedar Street and Standley's residence at 10 Cedar Street.)

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By the turn of the 20th century, the property appears to have been occupied by the Roundy (or Roundey) family. According to the city directory, in 1901 John G. Roundy (or Roundey) and his wife, Tabitha, are identified on Cedar Street near Cherry Street. John worked as a railroad crossing gateman at Cabot Street in Beverly. In 1904, John and Tabitha Roundey sold 8 Cedar Street (2.36 acres) to Thomas M. Barnes. (Essex South Deed Book 1755, p. 295)

The 1900 census indicates newlyweds Thomas and Hattie Barns were living on Cedar Street, which is corroborate by the 1910 map. According to the 1910 census, Thomas worked as a "Trader and Laborer – odd jobs" and lived there with Hattie and their two young children. 1920 census data states that Thomas was working as a general contractor. The 1921 city directory indicates that Thomas was working as a horse dealer and as a building contractor. Widow Hattie Barnes sold the property in 1958. (Essex South Deed Book 4437, p. 90. Also see 1955 Plan filed with Book 4215, p. 110)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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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 Tax Assessor records.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGE



Garage. East and north (main) elevations.

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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. 8 Cedar Street is a non-contributing feature of this district due to its extensive alterations.

Cherry Street developed during the 17th 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 18th 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 19th 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 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th century, residents, in addition to shoe workers, included streetcar drivers, laborers, and teamsters.