

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

146; 57; 11C-24	Mt. Toby	E	AMH. 143
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Town/City: Amherst

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Lincoln-Sunset National Register District

Address: 43 Sunset Avenue

Historic Name: Henry H. Goodell/ Robert Frost House

Uses: Present: Single-Family Residence

Original: Single-Family Residence

Date of Construction: 1875

Source: Rand, The Village Of Amherst

Style/Form: Stick Style

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard; Wood

Roof: Tin/ Asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

There is an attached two-bay garage at the northeast corner, entered from the north façade. Pool.

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Addition 1980

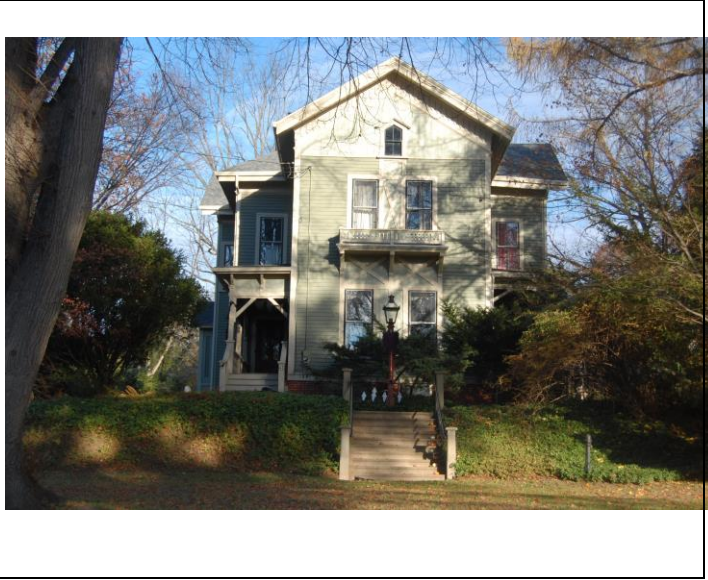
Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

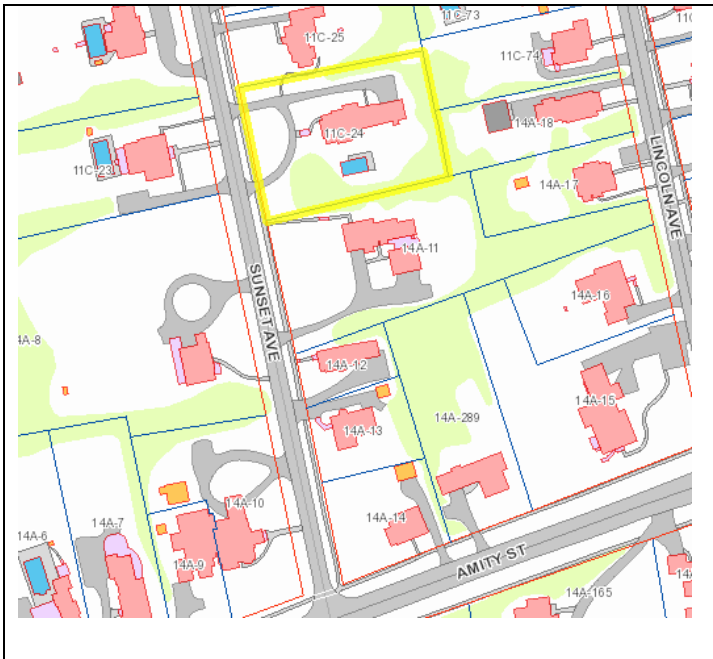
Acreage: .87 acres

Setting: Located in a residential neighborhood, this house sits farther back from the street than most of the other houses. It is elevated on a terrace that emphasizes its verticality.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: S. Bloom/S. Fabing/P. Stacey

Organization: LHDSC

Date (*month / year*): April 2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

43 Sunset Avenue

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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.

This is one of the best of about a dozen Stick Style houses in Amherst. The steeply pitched roof with cross gables, decorative stick work at the windows and porches, and decorative brackets create a picturesque façade. A bay on the north side of the house sports a gable roof and stands on decorative brackets. Siting is noteworthy here. This house has a greater setback than most on Sunset, emphasizing the distinction between public and private space and also emphasizing its integration into the landscape. This is a good example of the Stick Style, emerging from the cottage designs of A.J. Downing.

Set on a terrace like its neighbor to the south, the Dr. Leach/Nelligan House (33 Sunset), this house rises with an emphatic vertical emphasis. The cross-gabled roofline provides a façade that projects beyond asymmetrical side wings. The façade gable has a lancet window and decorative vertical siding. Stick-Style ornament exists between and below the paired windows on the façade. A second-story balcony is supported by large brackets. The flanking wings both have a complex system of trusses and brackets along their porches. The red tin roof, the only such roof in the district, was a charming and colorful feature but has now been covered with asphalt shingle.

****SELECTED TO NATIONAL REGISTER (2/22/1993)**

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.

Although this house first appeared on the 1916 map, it was built in 1875 for Henry H. Goodell. Goodell purchased the land from Stockbridge and Westcott in 1874, at which time it had an unobstructed view of the fields and hills to the west. Goodell (1839-1905) graduated from Amherst College in 1862. He served the Union during the Civil War. When the Massachusetts Agricultural College opened in 1867, he joined the faculty as teacher of Modern Languages and English Literature, but he soon taught sciences as well. He served as librarian from 1885 to 1899 and was voted the eighth president of the MAC, a post he held from 1886 until his death in 1905. He also served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1885 and 1886. Being an agriculturalist, Goodell was undoubtedly familiar with Andrew Jackson Downing's *Cottage Residences* and sympathetic to the Romantic aesthetic of the period. Goodell's income reflects the status of his position at the college. According to records, the average Agricultural College salary in 1890 was \$500. Goodell earned \$1250 that year, and his house reflects his social and economic position.

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Goodell's widow and sons remained at the house until 1931, when the poet Robert Frost bought the house, when he moved from South Shaftesbury, Vermont, to take up a teaching post at Amherst College 1931-38. His friend Warren Brown (of 2990 Lincoln Avenue) served as realtor and Frost wrote to Brown on November 7, 1931, that "We think Dr Goodell [the owner of 43 Sunset] is giving in and you are getting us a house cheap and we are much pleased by our bargain" (letter in the Jones Special Collections). Frost won the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 1924, 1931 and 1937. Amherst College acquired the property when Frost left Amherst, but sold it to private owners in 1961.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Rand, F.P, *The Village of Amherst, A Landmark of Light*. Amherst: Amherst Historical Society, 1958.

Norton, Paul F. *Amherst: A Guide to its Architecture*. Amherst: Amherst Historical Society, 1975, p. 67.

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form, Lincoln-Sunset Historic District, Amherst, section 7, p. 6.

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Form B (1988), online in the MACRIS database.

Stebbins, Calvin. *Henry Hill Goodell: The Story of His Life With Letters and a Few Addresses*. Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside, 1911.



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*Duque (New York, N.Y.). Henry Hill Goodell working at home, ca. 1890. University Photograph Collection (RG 110_1).
Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries*