

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

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**Town/City:** Amherst

**Place:** Amherst

## Photograph



**Address:** 90 Fearing Street

**Historic Name:** Arthur K. and Florence Harrison House

**Uses:** Present: Single-Family Residence

Original: Single-Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** 1926

**Source:** Newspaper article

**Style/Form:** Colonial Revival/Vernacular

**Architect/Builder:** N/A. 1984 alterations Peter Kitchell. 1997 extension William Ausin.

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Clapboard

Roof: Asphalt

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

**Major Alterations (with dates):**

Front vestibule and southeastern extension, 1984;  
southwestern expansions, 1997.

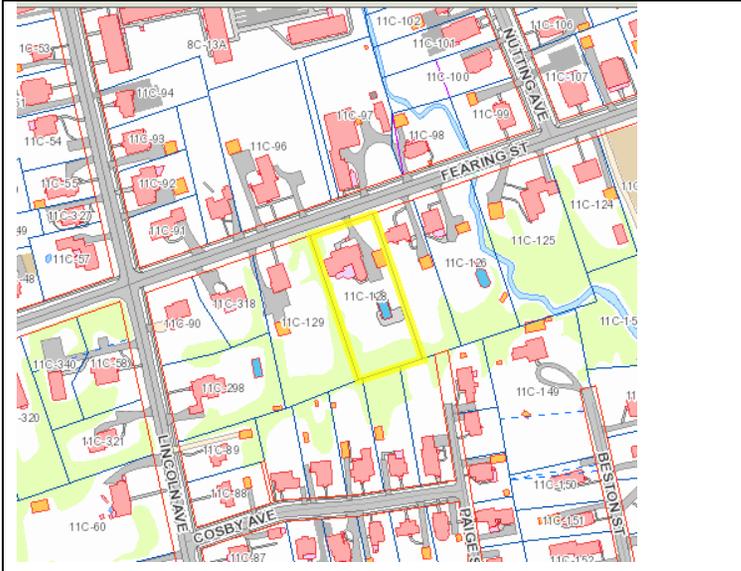
**Condition:** Excellent

**Moved:** no     yes     **Date:**

**Acreage:** .80 acre

**Setting:** Rural college neighborhood.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Gretchen Fox/Suzannah Fabing

**Organization:** LHDSC

**Date (month / year):** December 2015

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

90 FEARING STREET

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.*

Vernacular, Colonial Revival-style, two-and-a-half-story, typical center hall plan but with major additions front and rear. Three chimneys, two enclosed on east side and one exterior on west end. Sets of three sash windows, one 6/6 and two 4/4, along with a 12-paned vestibule storm door and sidelights, and three single windows on the second floor compete the three-bay pattern of the original house. The extra wide (12-foot) pedimented vestibule and additions, all gable-roofed, keep the house from appearing too spare.

Major alterations include a front vestibule and southeastern expansions (1984) as well as southwestern expansions (1997).

On the west side north of the exterior chimney are two identical windows and one two-part attic window marking each floor; south of the chimney an extension, windowless on the façade, runs west for 14 feet and south for 36 feet. Casement windows light that extension on the west side first and second floors; a wooden balcony extends from the second floor. The architect for that 1997 extension was William Austin, former associate of Amherst architect Peter Kitchell. The more visible recessed 12-foot extension on the east side borders the driveway, includes a south facing rear door and glass half vestibule, and keeps the more traditional style of the house. Small windows mark each floor on the northern part of this side while two sets of clerestory windows light the far rear room of that addition, designed by Peter Kitchell (1984). Together, both additions extend to the rear of the house and deck, adding ca. 2400 sq. ft. to the original structure.

A one-and-a-half-story, two-car garage in accommodating style faces the house at the top of the driveway. It mimics a studio or guesthouse, with rear interior chimney and 6/6 windows north and east clearly visible from the street. Built in 1925/26, this house is situated on the highest point of a slight incline west of Tan Brook. It matches nearby houses in general style and age, and like them is sited well back from the street, contributing to the large lot, single-family ambience of the immediate neighborhood. 1984/5 additions described above, including interior fireplace chimney, were designed by Peter Kitchell, Amherst architect, to accommodate original style of the house. West side additions made in 2000 and 2006 by W. T. Austin, Shelburne architect, are more contemporary, but not jarring.

## 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.*

This  $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre parcel, all of Lot 10, the easterly half of Lot 9, and ten feet of Lot 11 of the "Fearing Extension" plan, was deeded in 1925 by Dora Fearing, widow of Henry, to Arthur K. Harrison, one of the first members of the faculty of landscape design at MAC, and his new wife, Florence E. Harrison. AKHs built the house and designed the large rear garden, largely extant. In 1920, he was a widowed tenant living nearby at 8 Allen Street. Moving within this immediate neighborhood close to the University was an established pattern at this time. Without children, the Harrisons lived in this house for 31 years, at first with his mother, as well, later with one or two boarders, an arrangement frequently seen in these multi-bedroom houses close to two campuses. Other University related families who owned and occupied this house: Hans Duus, Distinguished University Professor of Chemical Engineering (whose children named their home with its large garden, "Back Acher"); Deane Lee, professor of agricultural economics; Sandra Lillydahl, W. E. B. DuBois librarian and proprietor of the Sophia Bookstore on Main Street, who lived here with two sons; and Gretchen and John Fox, both with University and Five College connections as student and faculty. They have resided here, with two children, since 1984.

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1926 was a banner year for new house construction in Amherst. Of the 11 new houses built, three of them were on Fearing Street: 38 Fearing Street and 76 Fearing Street, in addition to this one. The initial cost of the Harrison house, \$12,000, was double that of the others.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

HLR

CEN 1920, 1930, 1940.

Amherst Street Directory, various years

Gretchen Fox, personal correspondence, Mrs. Mary Duus; interviews with neighbors, Estelle Dugas, Sydney Treyz.

University of Massachusetts Archives, thanks to Carolyn White, Kenneth Feinberg Archivist.

Personal recollection of Gretchen G. Fox,

"Record Amount of Building in Amherst," unidentified newspaper (*Springfield Republican?*), 15 January 1927. A clipping of this story is pasted into Vol. 2 of the Mrs. C. J. Fawcett scrapbooks, p. 6. They are housed in the Jones Library Special Collections.