

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

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Town/City: Amherst

Place: Amherst

Photograph



Address: 133 Fearing Street

Historic Name: Henry A. Hollis House

Uses: Present: Single-Family Residence

Original: Single-Family Residence

Date of Construction: c. 1916-17

Source: Amherst tax records

Style/Form: Vernacular

Architect/Builder: Henry A. Hollis

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Asbestos shingle/wood

Roof: Asphalt composition

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations : Front entry (date unknown)

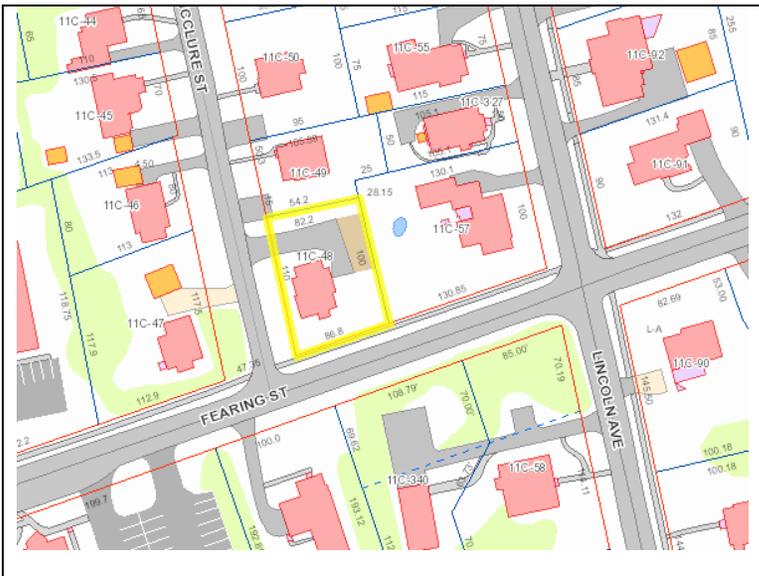
Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .22 acre

Setting: Residential neighborhood near University of Massachusetts on one of two short blocks on north side of Fearing near University dorm area. A student rental like its small neighbor on the next block west. Rear area and side lot to east used for parking.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Gretchen Fox

Organization: for LHD Study Committee.

Date: August 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST, MA

133 FEARING ST

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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:

133 Fearing Street is substantial, gabled-roof family residence typical of Vernacular houses in Amherst: two-bay main house, with two short cross-gable extensions on either side of the front elevation (27 Fearing Street, q.v., a near twin, but with veranda-style porch). These extensions create a more commodious look and slightly larger interior plan and are offset: the western one (2-foot by 13-foot) bayed and recessed two feet from the front façade, the eastern one (3-foot by 18-foot) squared-off and recessed twelve feet. A slight overhang above the first storey adds horizontal interest on all sides of the house. The house stands on the northeast corner of the quiet residential McClure Street leading to the University of Massachusetts. The rear area and side yard to the east are dedicated to parking, accessible from McClure Street, and give visibility to all sides of the house.

The front porch (3 feet by 8 feet) looks to have been moved as it does not match the plan shown on the current town assessment sheet, neither is it centered. It is shown there as offset to the west one foot from the south eastern corner of the house, whereas in fact it is offset c. five feet west of that, the lower portion of its simple, two-post, pedimented roof joining the top west framing of the east window. The newer narrow entrance door is offset to the east of the pediment center. The awkward asymmetry of the entrance is a marked departure from this kind of carpenter vernacular house of its era, and indicates extensive remodeling of the interior entry, possibly caused by the need to house many tenants in what was a relatively open floor plan designed for a family. The remainder of the house keeps its regular, simply framed fenestration pattern, with each side bay having three multi-paned over single double-hung windows on both stories. Several of the upper, multi-paned windows have been replaced with a single large pane. Each of the four gabled-ends of the house has double or single multi-paned attic windows.

A side entry with porch measuring six feet by three feet, approached by three wooden steps, extends forward from the north end of the eastern bay. An enclosed, wood clad porch (7 feet x 21 feet) built across the rear of the house offers cellar door access to the basement through what appears to be part of an older remodeling. Three pairs of windows set high on the porch's northern wall and one at either end give interior light. Two windows pierce the brick foundation on both east and west sides. Lattice work covers the porch foundations. A corbelled brick chimney appears central to the joined ridged lines of the roof.

The east side yard and rear yard are dedicated to parking spaces, approached from McClure Street, giving full visibility to all sides of the house.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The house was built in 1916 by Henry A. Hollis, a local carpenter/builder, on Lot 14 of the 1899 P. B. Moore Co. subdivision (HLR 526/130), a northwestern portion of the old Lyman/Henderson Farm. That portion had been purchased by Jared Westcott and Levi Stockbridge, a partnership of Amherst land investors, and sold to the Moore Co. of Springfield in 1899. Lot 14 ran c. 126 feet along the eastern side of McClure Street and just 54 feet along Fearing Street. In 1915, Hollis acquired it and the northern adjacent Lot 15, now Lot 9 McClure Street, from William T. Chapin, owner at that time of some 24 lots in this subdivision.

Henry A. Hollis was an early developer entrepreneur, a common profession at this time in Amherst, and especially in this area, where the sound of the saw and hammer must have been almost continuous. His residential and financial history is not atypical, and worth recording. He had lived as a tenant at 16 Hallock Street, with just \$100 of stock in trade as taxable property. By 1907, he had moved to 13 East Pleasant Street, adding a cow, for \$130 in value. By 1908, he had also acquired a horse and Lot 26 of Henry Fearing's former property, then a subdivision owned by Stanley Phillips on west side of Nutting Avenue near Fearing Street. There he built a house and added a barn, so that by 1910, his aggregate taxable value was nearly \$2,500. An

Continuation sheet 1

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advertisement for his construction business appears on p. 195 of the Amherst Directory of 1910. He continued to live at 6 Nutting Avenue (sometimes listed as 5 Nutting Avenue, but on the west side of the street, today 14 Nutting Avenue) with his wife and three children.

Hollis was living there in 1915 when he bought Lots 14 and 15 on the Moore subdivision, the greater footage being on McClure Street, not yet developed; his taxable assets were listed at \$6000. He had also acquired Lots 24 and 25 of the Phillips subdivision on Fearing Street (75 Fearing Street, q.v.), where he built a shop.

Across Fearing Street from Lot 14 stood vacant land belonging to Salmon Dickinson, and just west of that on the corner of Sunset Avenue stood Amherst Creamery Co. (ACC, 150 Fearing Street, q.v.). The ACC employed several men and a female bookkeeper, of whom least three, the Fish family, lived upstairs at the creamery, which until the 1930s occupied a large frame house. On Hollis' side of Fearing Street, west across McClure Street, which stopped at Fearing Street, Mary and Patrick Martin raised their eight children in a cottage of earlier (1870) vintage, most of the family employed at the local hat factory. At one acre, that cottage's land was particularly large for this area, although the ACC had been set on a ten-acre parcel, probably a small dairy farm earlier. But the larger neighborhood was rapidly becoming residential, owing primarily to the growth of the nearby Mass Agricultural College.

Hollis built this house on Lot 14 and sold it in 1917 to Frank E. Loomis, a retired farmer who worked in the Grange store on North Pleasant Street. He had recently moved to 53 Lincoln Avenue, owned by Julia M. S. Loomis. Frank E. also owned property on Nutting Avenue, two houses, 12 Nutting Avenue and 18 Nutting Avenue, adjacent to Hollis's home. In 1918, the house was purchased by the ACC. That year the Fish family were still living upstairs at the ACC, but the following year they moved into 43 Fearing Street, apparently the first tenants. Charles T. Fish was still in residence there in 1934. (In 1920, Hollis sold Lot 15 to the ACC, whose driver, Frank E. Morin lived there, (then 10 McClure Street, today 9 McClure Street) with his son, Joseph E., who became, a butter maker at ACC, like Charles T. and his father Lauriston Fish, their neighbors.)

In 1927, ACC acquired the western half of Moore's Lot 13, adjacent to the east, adding 28 feet to the frontage of 133 Fearing Street. In 1943, ACC's properties' heir deeded the house by quitclaim to the neighbor across Fearing Street, Warren R. Brown, a locally well-known author and chronicler of Amherst life. He had earlier bought the property across Fearing Street belonging to Salmon Dickinson and made his home there, facing Lincoln Avenue (290 Lincoln Avenue, q.v.). In 1949, Brown sold it to William E. and Bertha C. Kelley.

SOURCES

"Fish on creamery job for 50 years" S.U. 4/1/42(sic), n.p., Jones Lib. Sp.Coll. Scrapbook

"Amherst man 50 years a buttermaker" S.S.U. 5/27/34

Amherst Tax records

US Cen. 1920, 1930

Hampshire Land Records

Amherst Street Directories

Amherst Directories

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