

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: Lincoln Sunset Historic District

Photograph



Address: 30 Fearing Street

Historic Name: Wallace F. & Katherine Powers House

Uses: Present: Single-Family Residence

Original: Single-Family Residence

Date of Construction: c. 1930

Source: Sanborn insurance map (1930)

Style/Form: Cottage/Story Book/Tudor Revival

Architect/Builder: N/A

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Mixed stone/wood/brick/Stucco

Roof: Asphalt composition shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garage

Locus Map



Major Alterations: None

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .53 acre

Setting: Near the top of a residential, somewhat busy, tree-lined street, just west of a quiet commercial technology building with little traffic, otherwise blending with Vernacular houses c. 1900-1929 in this family neighborhood close to the University of Massachusetts. To the rear, wooded land surrounds the old Dora Fearing House.

Recorded by: Gretchen G. Fox

Organization: Lincoln Sunset LHDSC

Date: November 2015

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

30 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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

30 Fearing Street is a small scale, one-and-three-quarters-story cottage built in the Tudor Revival, "Story Book" style. Mixed rough and smooth stone, brick, stained, and painted wood are used decoratively against simple stucco cladding on the main walls. Brick and random stone masonry clad the entry wing. A sloping garden wall connects to the east line of the front gabled roof, extending the cottage's 30-foot frontage by about seven feet. That entry wing of the cottage protrudes four feet from the front of the house. It is clad in brick and random rough-cut stone facing, a stone arch surrounds a painted entry door. A small, paned window appears at the half-story over the door, thinly framed, like the entry, in dark stained wood, finished top and sill with stone, crowned with a single keystone. Two small brick steps and porch floor lead to the entry.

The roof over the gabled entry flattens out on the west side to form a shed roof with deep eaves over the lower story. Dark wood frames the two pairs of 6/6 windows with braced, heavy sills. An angled concrete chimney foundation springs from the intersection of the gable and shed roof, extending above the dormer. It is topped by an extended, decorative brick chimney. The shed dormer's two 6/6 windows are spaced over the outside edges of the eastern-most pair of first story windows. The dormer's roof springs from the main, eastern-facing gable roof somewhat below the ridge. This crowded decorative architectural system on the eastern side of the front elevation and on the eastern elevation (whimsical intersecting roof lines, variety of surface materials, mixed window styles) creates a distinct rural English cottage appearance, belying its carefully placed and measured elements. On the eastern elevation abutting a broad driveway, the continuous wall and garage are clad in stucco and decorative stained wood, in greatly simplified Tudor style. Here the main gable fronts east, and fenestration is again well measured, but suggests random placement. The foundation is concrete, and two concrete steps lead to a kitchen door with 4/4 lights.

A single bay, concrete-based garage in similar architectural character attaches to the house at the rear, keeping the eastern wall alignment. Its gable roof and double-hinged doors face east at the top of the paved driveway. The 5-foot brick garden wall at the north end of the house shelters a kitchen garden. The large rear garden prominently contains one of the very large, ancient maple trees that notably exist on this shaded block, reminders of the once extensive landscaped gardens of the Fearing Estate. To the rear of the property stands Dora Fearing's old home, now made into apartments, hidden in the woods surrounding it. That property slopes down from North Pleasant Street creating drainage to Tan Brook, which runs above ground on the land surrounding the Feller House at 52 Fearing Street.

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.

Dora Fearing, widow of Henry Fearing (m. 1903), deeded the front 2/3 of Lot 18 on the Fearing Extension subdivision, in 1929. This was the smallest lot she sold from that subdivision of the former 12+-acre Fearing Estate, established in the 1870s with his first wife, (m. 1860) Amelia Gay Hills, daughter of Leonard Hills. This lot's neighbor to the east was the stately old (1879) Fearing mansion, mortgaged to Dora, then sold, converted to the QTV Fraternity in 1917/18. Abutting at the south, with Pleasant St. address, lay Dora Fearing's own large house built for her retirement years by her husband before he died in 1917. Terms of the deed placed building restrictions on the lot: only one family residence to be erected with no out buildings except a garage; and permission to run pipes, ducts, and wires on its west side to her homestead. The buyers, the head of the MSC Physics Department Wallace F. Powers and his wife Katherine, had built the house by 1930, when it appeared on the Sanborn Insurance Map of that year. Powers was largely responsible for growth of the physics faculty from two to eight, and the building of modern lab facilities. In 1957, he resigned from the University after 31 years.

In the 1940s, the stately old Fearing/QTV House burned down. That property now has two buildings: neighboring this house 20 Fearing Street, a windowless, one-story brick building occupied by Verizon Corp. for technical equipment, and facing North Pleasant Street a two-to-three story brick office building, now location of the University of Massachusetts Hearing & Speech Center.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

HLR, Amherst Assessors Records

Henry D. Fearing files, misc. clippings, Jones Library, Special Collections.

Sanborn Insurance map, 1930

"Wallace F. Powers," file, UMass W.E.B. Du Bose Library, SCUA