

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

11C-150	Mt. Toby	E	AMh.
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Town/City: Amherst

Place: Amherst Center

Photograph



Address: 26 Beston Street

Historic Name: Terrance McGowan House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: c. 1893

Source: town property form

Style/Form: farmhouse

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: painted brick above ground, fieldstone below

Wall/Trim: smartboard

Roof: asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major Alterations (with dates): House substantially rebuilt in 2016 using fiber-cement. Solar panels added to roof and new side-deck with trellis.

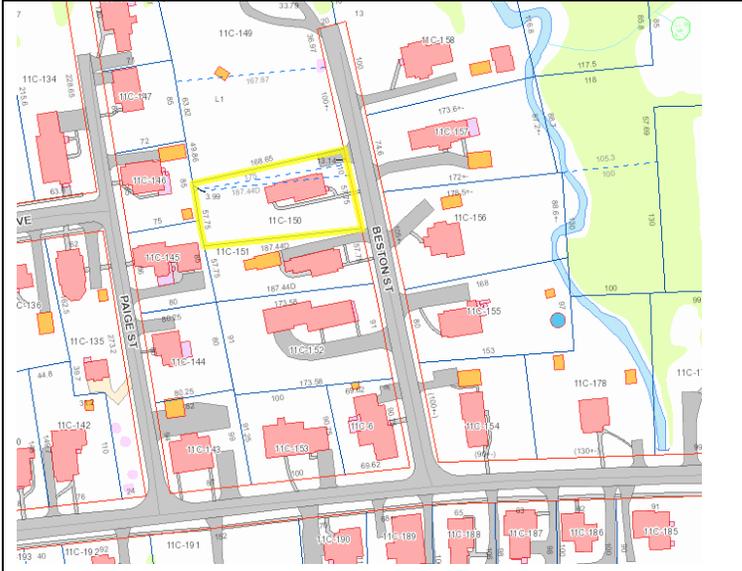
Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.26 acres

Setting: rural college town

Locus Map



Recorded by: Elizabeth Gouin and Maurianne Adams

Organization: LSHD

Date (month / year): March 2016

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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 house has the same footprint and design as its neighbors to the south, 14 and 20 Beston. The house is two stories, with two windows and a left-aligned front door on the first floor, and two windows centrally placed in the gable of the second floor. A roofed but open porch with railing runs along the length of the façade. A single story ell appears on the south side of the building (added in the 2014 renovation). The area between the south-side of the main house and the ell include a south-facing deck off the south-facing lawn and garden (deck and side entrance added 2014) with a wooden pergola attached to the house. The 2014 renovation included dormers above the north-side roof with large windows. The 2014 major renovations included energy-efficiency siding and solar panels on the roof.

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 area north of Beston Street was originally farmland owned successively by Theodore Lyman, John Borland and Horace Henderson, and to the east by Luke Sweetser, who was a merchant and farmer raising cattle near the current high school. Sweetser was interested in the land to provide access to water for his cattle at Tan Brook. (Tan Brook runs parallel and to the east of Beston St., midway between Beston St and current day East Pleasant St.) Henderson's 80 acre farm extended from Pleasant Street to the Hadley line, north of current day Beston Street.

Horace Henderson constructed Beston Street (year unknown) along the property division between his land to the west side of Beston and Sweetser's land to the east. Beston Street may have possibly linked Henderson's farm with McClellan Street, which may have existed as early as 1854.

Henderson's 80 acre farm was the former Lyman/Borland farm to the north of Beston St. Sweetser, who had bought 4+ acres from Henderson for access to Tan Brook, sold the 4+ acres 116 rods back to Henderson (198/235) on Nov 8, 1860. Henderson at some uncertain date established Beston Street on his

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westward boundary. The eastern boundary was Tan Brook, reserving Sweeter's dam right.

McClellan Street had been planned as early as 1854, probably for access to the farm to the north at that time owned by Borland. The future Beston Street may have been a farm lane from McClellan Street located due north to the Lyman/Boland/Henderson farm, but the 1860 Walling map shows only the brook, no roads or building in the area. The 1873 revised Beers map (pp. 42-43) shows (but does not name) Beston Street due north from its southerly beginning at McClellan and terminating in the lot identified as H.D. Fearing to the south of Fearing Street. It also shows the house on the southeast corner of the lot, noted on the map as belonging to C. McLaughlin, situated between the property of Jane White to the south (now 14 Beston) and John Bestin (misspelled on the map) to the north (now 44 Beston). Beston runs directly from McClellan and consists of lower-lying land, which drains down from the elevated topography of McClellan and becomes swampy during heavy rainfalls.

Beston Street's first residents were entirely Irish immigrant families of modest means and the street later had several African American families in residence. The extended McGowan family lived mainly on the western side of Beston and across the street at 31 Beston. After John Beston's death, his family sold 44 Beston to a Black family named Bias and Erwin Pettyjohn's African American (listed in the censuses as "mulatto") family moved into 44 Beston in the 20th century, bought 17 Beston along with the lot to the south, and moved a house from Tillson Court to form 15 Beston. (See Historical narratives for those properties.)

The west side of what became Beston Street was developed by the mid-19th century farmer and developer Leavitt Hallock, who sold 399 sq. rods of land (about 2.5 acres) to Emeline S. Williams on August 17, 1863, for \$459.69, with a mortgage for the full amount to be paid off by 1868 (Deed Book, 214/p. 30). Also in 1863, Emeline acquired her residence on North Prospect Street, part of Hallock's development there, where she continued to live. Emeline was the

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wife of Edward Williams (7/16/1814-9/13/1865), a carpenter who died two years after Emeline bought the Beston St property and did not build any of the Beston Street houses. It is likely that the Williamses had intended to develop the lots of Beston Street.

Access to a roadway to be built by Horace Henderson on the east side of the 399 sq. rod parcel was promised for all lots, presumably providing access from McClellan to the Henderson farm to the north. Emeline Williams's 399 rod parcel eventually became the present-day properties at 14, 20, 26, and 44 Beston Street as well as the corner house at 51 McClellan.

The west side of Beston Street was developed on 399 sq. rods of land (about 2.5 acres) acquired by Emeline S. Williams from Leavitt Hallock's larger holdings on August 17, 1863. Emeline Williams's 399 rod parcel eventually became the present lots for 14, 20, 26, and 44 Beston Street as well as the corner house at 51 McClellan.

On June 3, 1868, Emeline Williams sold a half acre double lot (eventually to become 20 and 26 Beston) to Christopher McLaughlin for \$200. "Christy" McLaughlin (1838-1911) was a brick mason from County Kildare, Ireland, who had a house built in 1868 and lived there with his wife and family, until moving away in 1888. (See historical narrative for 20 Beston Street.)

The McLaughlin house and double half-acre lot (11C/ 150 and 151) were bought by Irish-born sisters Kate and Mary Galligan in August 1888 for \$1300., with one house (now 20 Beston) on the lot. Mary Galligan (1863-1937) married Irish-born John J. McGowan (1862-1922) on January 14, 1892 and moved across the street. (See Historical narratives for 25 and 31 Beston.) Kate Galligan (1858-1932) married Massachusetts-born Dennis E. Linnehan (1861-1934) and stayed in the original house (see Historical Narrative for 20 Beston) but sold the north half of the lot to Terrance McGowan (1856-1943) and wife Susan (1855-1925), both Irish-born, who had a house built by 1893 - now next door at 26 Beston - where they raised a large families.

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The Linnehan (20) and Terrance McGowan (26) houses are two of the three similarly designed houses at 14 (built c. 1872), 20 (c. 1868-9) and 26 Beston Street (1893). Street numbers, not assigned until 1938-9 (many but not all street and house addresses appear in an annotated 1937-8 street listing at the Jones Library Special Collections) varied more than usual on Beston Street and it is challenging to assign with certainty which of the McGowan clan lived in specific Beston Street houses during this period. Family relationships are uncertain, since many members of the family have the same given names (Mary, John), middle initials are not always recorded in Amherst Directories or census reports, and neither directories nor census reports give street addresses when they list family members living under the same roof.

In the 1889-90 Amherst Directory, Terence McGowan, laborer, was listed as residing in a house on Beston, and in the 1895 Directory, Terence McGowan was listed "house Beston" and John McGowan, laborer, in a "house foot Beston." In 1905 Directory, Terrence McGowan, a laborer, was at 14 Beston (renumbered later to 26), where John J. (his son, a plumber) boarded. John McGowan (laborer) had a house at 11 Beston (renumbering unclear) and Catherine McGowan, employed by Katherine Scannell, also boarded at 14 (renumbered 26) Beston. Terrance McGowan is listed in the 1918 Tax volumes as owning 14 Beston, \$700, worth \$900 by 1919.

The 1919 Directory has a number of McGowans living at 14 (renumbered 26) and 15 (renumbered 31) Beston: Agnes (a bookkeeper), John (laborer) Mary (employed by H.C. Shumway) were at 15 (renumbered 31) Beston, and Jane (employed Hills Co), John J. (plumber), Susan A. (employed at the Hills Col), Mrs. Susan (wife and mother), and Terrence (father, husband, owner, employed 24 S. Pleasant) were living at 14 (becomes 26) Beston. Susan (the wife and mother) had been employed at Hills Co in 1905 and daughters had worked at Amherst Laundry in 1911-1914.

Also, in 1916, another Galligan family member, Patrick Galligan, began boarding at 14 (became 26) Beston (Amherst Directory), employed at GBB & Son, living in the house owned (according to the Directory) by Terrance

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McGowan, employed at 35 South Pleasant. The Directory has him boarding there from 1916 through 1919, gone by 1920. But the Tax assessments complicate the picture. In 1917, although Patrick Galligan resides at 14 Beston, he appears to own 12 (becomes 20) Beston (\$700) and 14 McClellan (\$700). By 1918, Patrick Galligan is credited by tax volumes as owning two houses, one at 14 Beston (valued \$700) more regularly attributed to Terrance McGowan's ownership, and one at #14 McClellan (\$1200, with barn and sheds at \$125).

Patrick is the brother of the Galligan sisters, Mary and Kate, who originally bought the double lot from Christy McLaughlin on Beston Street that was subsequently divided into 20 and 26 Beston when the northerly lot (#26) was sold to Terrance McGowan. Thus Patrick is the uncle of the twins Agnes C. and Mary Ann McGowan, daughters of Mary G[alligan] and John J. McGowan, who continue to live across the street from the rest of the McGowan family (see Historical Narrative for 31 Beston).

An Executor's Deed notes dated September 11, 1919) (749/515) notes that Patrick Galligan's Will grants his property at 20 Beston to his twin nieces, Agnes C. McGowan and Mary A. McGowan.

Family relations seem clear in the 1920 Census: Terrence and wife Susan (both age 62) (both Irish) McGowan had son John (38) and daughters Susan and Jane (age 32 and 30) both of whom were trimmers at the Hat Shop (born Ireland, Scotland, and Massachusetts). Terrence's brother John J. (married to Mary G.) at age 45 appears to be Terrence's younger brother, as Terrence is also clearly the uncle of the twins Agnes and Mary. Terrence's wife Susan worked at Hills Co. in 1905 and her daughters Susan and Jane worked at Amherst Laundry in 1911-1914.

In the 1923 through 1935 directories, family members were still living at 14 (renumbered 26) and 15 (renumbered 31) Beston, and were self-employed as laborers, plumbers, and bookkeepers, or working for Amherst Laundry, Sears &

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Dalton, the Hat Shop, or MP&H Co. Susan remained the housekeeper at 14 (renumbered 26) Beston where her husband Terrance remained the owner.

In 1936-7, when the houses were renumbered, Terrance McGowan (age 79, laborer, John J. (57, plumber), Susan (49, at home), Mary J. (46, at home), William P. 46, laborer) are at 14 Beston (renumbered to the current #26). Mary G[alligan] McGowan (72, home), Agnes C. 42, bookkeeper) and Mary Ann (42, bookkeeper) are at 15 Beston (renumbered to the current #31). 20 and 31 Beston are the only two houses by 1936-37 still identified with the McGowans. By 1937, it appears that Mary and Terrance McGowan had taken over both houses built from the original double lot: 20 and 26 Beston. The 1938 Amherst Directory gives the new town-wide address renumbering system and shows Terrance (owner) and Susan (housekeeper) at 26 Beston along with Jane M. and William P. (plumber).

A June 19, 1978 Deed (2030/290) deeds two parcels to the Mary Jane McGowan Trust which are then deeded from the Trust to Charles E. and Carol S. Taylor on June 11, 1979 (2102/255) (listed on the Town of Amherst Property Card as 26 Beston) and subsequently sold to Mary C. Jackson on June 20, 1983. The Jackson Living Trust sold the property to Michelle O'Neill on July 1, 1999 (5729/16). Janet Howard bought the property on June 23, 1914, opened up and remodeled the interior of the house and rebuilt the exterior while maintaining the original footprint while adding many environmentally-conscious exterior features such as solar panels, fiber-cement cladding, and a deck and pergola on the south side.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Deed Books
Maps
Amherst Directories
Census
Tax Records

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Images of 26 Beston St. from Zillow.com, from before 2014 sale and renovations.