

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

**Address:** 245 Amity Street

**Historic Name:** William Albert Burnett Public Art Museum

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

Original: Private Museum

**Date of Construction:** 1918-19; 1917-18 (garage)

**Source:** Tax records (1918 & 1919)

**Style/Form:** Greek Revival/Museum

**Architect/Builder:** N/A

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Fieldstone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard

Roof: Rubber

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Was converted from a museum to a house (second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century)

**Condition:** Excellent

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

**Acreage:** .25 acre

**Setting:** Residential, rural college town.

## Photograph



## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Ed Wilfert

**Organization:** LHDSC

**Date** (*month / year*): February 2016

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

245 AMITY ST

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.*

Building was originally used as a museum for the private art collection of William Albert Burnett (1861-1924). Evokes classical architecture with a façade of two pedimented temple-front porches, the right with a front door and the left framing a garage. House was once part of the larger property on 8 Sunset Avenue belonging to William Burnett.

## 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.*

Originally built to house the private art collection of William Albert Burnett (1861-1924). The William Burnett Public Art Gallery Inc. was established February 18, 1920 by Burnett and a number of local sponsors and certified by the state March 25, 1920. A book of its proceedings can be found in the Jones Library Special Collections.

William Burnett's father, George B. Burnett, was the owner of the highly successful Burnett straw hat factory on Dickinson Street, with buildings in East Amherst near the train depot. Burnett had bought the business from H. D. Fearing in 1892. Straw hats had declined in popularity by 1936, when the factory finally closed. William Burnett was a partner in the business. His art collection was donated by the corporation to the town of Amherst after his death, and some of it is maintained at the Jones Library. The corporation dissolved itself in 1925.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Jones Library Special Collections