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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Wheeler-Harrington House
other names/site number Joseph Harrington House

2. Location

street & number 249 Harrington Avenue

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town Concord
state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 01742

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Brona Simon May 20, 2013
Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon, SHPO, MHC Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

John Edison H. Beall 7.23.13
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	3	buildings
0	0	sites
2	0	structures
1	0	objects
4	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Conservation land

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

foundation: STONE: fieldstone

COLONIAL

walls: WOOD: weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: N/A

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The **Wheeler-Harrington House** is a two-story, center-chimney clapboarded single-pile, five-bay house with a mid-18th century core, and details and proportions characteristic of the 1820s. The building is a south-facing, side-gabled house with a two-part, cross-gabled northeast rear ell and a long one-story shed-roofed mid-20th century rear addition extending west of the ell, across the back of the house. This 20th-century addition, which replaced a lower rear leanto and a long line of sheds of undetermined date, echoes its predecessor in both form and footprint, terminating several feet beyond the northwest corner of the main house. In addition to the main brick center chimney, which was rebuilt above the roof line in the 1930s, there are two narrow chimneys in the rear part of the building - a brick chimney that pierces the east roof slope of the outer northeast ell, and a concrete-block chimney in the center of the rear 20th-century addition.

The house stands back from the north side of Harrington Avenue, close to the crest of a hill on a 15.22-acre property called "Harrington Park", above the south bank of the Assabet River. With the exception of a small truck farm just to the west and two late-19th century houses, the immediate surrounding area consists of a neighborhood of mid- to late-20th century single-family dwellings

Narrative Description

Main house (Photos 1-4)

A center-chimney plan in a building that is typically Federal in form, proportion and detail is unusual for Concord. Most houses of a similar type in the Concord area have paired rear chimneys, rather than center chimneys. The anomaly is apparently the result of a major 1826-27 rebuilding of a mid-18th century house, in which the original central chimney stack and a considerable portion of the older frame were retained. (An 1826 "Liberty Head" penny, found when the rotted front sill was replaced in 1983, may have been placed there during the rebuilding.)

Structural evidence indicates that the present appearance of the main house is largely the result of that building campaign of 1826-1827, coinciding with Joseph Harrington's acquisition of the former Wheeler farm. At that time the roof, parts of the frame, and most of the architectural details were replaced, and a considerable number of older timbers were relocated throughout the building. The roof has the relatively shallow pitch typical of the Federal era. There is little roof overhang, and the shallow eaves are boxed, with a bed molding below and returns on the gable ends. On the end walls, the roof trim consists of a rake board and a crown molding that has the echinus profile associated with the incoming Greek Revival style.

The window openings on the front and gable-end facades have the proportions of 6/9-sash, but most contain 2/2s dating to the late 19th- or early 20th centuries. The first-story windows have molded crowns; the frames of the second-story façade windows abut the front cornice. The nine windows on the main façade are symmetrically arranged and aligned one above the other. The west gable-end fenestration consists of one window at each story (including attic), centered under the gable peak. (Photo 3.) All of the main windows have projecting plank frames of the "jamb superior" type except for the windows of the east chamber, which were replaced in the 20th century with 6/6 windows in flat casings.

Other exterior detailing on the main house includes narrow cornerboards and a wide water table above the fieldstone foundation. The center entry was updated at least twice: the present full-length divided sidelights date to the Greek

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Revival era, and may have been part of renovations made in 1840-41. The door, however, which has five panels and heavy applied moldings, appears to be contemporaneous with the wide Italianate hood supported on elaborate incised brackets, dating to the 1870s or 1880s. One notable feature of the front entry is the large granite millstone that functions as the door stone. Its origin is unknown, but it is likely to have come from one of the gristmills that once operated west of the Harrington Farm on Second Division Brook, or at the larger Conant mill site at the falls of the Assabet.

The east end of the main house has the same fenestration pattern as the west end except for an additional 2/2 window at the first story. (Photo 2). A shed-roofed porch spans the east wall at the first story, continuing north along the main east wall of the northeast ell. Typical of the very late 19th- or the early years of the 20th century, the porch has turned posts and saw-cut "S" brackets.

Northeast ell (Photos 2 and 4)

The two parts of the northeast ell may have been built at different times, although the similarity of their construction suggests that they both date fairly close to the middle of the 19th century, if not actually to the same building campaign. An adjustment to Joseph Harrington's 1841 property tax that added a substantial \$250 in value "for repairs on [the] building" may indicate the date of the ell. The larger south section of the ell was built for a kitchen (apparently the third in the house), and the north end for a sink room. The south part is two stories, and about as wide as the east first-story room of the main house, the original kitchen. The rear sink room is narrower, and one story in height. The gabled roofs of both sections of the ell are oriented perpendicular to the house roof. In the south part of the east elevation of the ell, which follows the same plane as the east wall of the main house, is a large four-panel door that may have been a former front door, judging by the narrow Federal-style moldings that trim the edges of the panels. Long rectangular glass lights take the place of the upper two panels, and the door surround consists of a wide flat casing. North of the door is a 2/2 window, also with a plain, flat casing. Another 2/2 window is centered in the east wall of the north, smaller part of the ell, just north of the interior chimney that stands against the south end of that wall. There is a 1/1 window in the rear wall of the outer ell, and another in the west part of the inner ell's north wall. A 6/9 window centered under the north gable peak of the inner ell is much earlier than the other windows in the house; its sash is the only one in the house that may date to the ca. 1827 rebuilding. In contrast to the Federal door on the east side of the main ell, a door in the west side of the smaller north section is a Greek Revival type, with two long recessed panels.

1960s rear addition (Photos 3 and 4)

The long shed-roofed section across most of the back of the house was built about 1960 to house a kitchen, bathroom and utility room, replacing a leanto and an attached line of sheds that extended west toward the freestanding barn (also demolished.) Evidence of a former window opening in the north wall of the west first-story room of the main house suggests that the original kitchen leanto probably did not extend all the way across the back of the house. (Paint evidence indicates that this window was in place until at least the beginning of the 20th century.) The north wall of this late addition has irregular fenestration including a 9-light over 2-panel door, and a paired 3/3 window toward the west end. A 2/2 window is located in the west end wall of this section. An entry in the south front of the projecting west end of the addition has a panel and glass door identical to that on the rear.

Framing and foundation

The main house has a post-and-beam frame of pine and oak that appears to consist of a combination of portions of the original 18th-century house frame, additional timbers dating to the ca. 1827 rebuilding, and a number of re-used, relocated timbers of unknown age and origin. The roof framing is of the principal-purlin type, with a 5-sided hewn ridge beam and a single heavy, hewn purlin set midway up the roof slope. Upper and lower rafters measuring approximately 4 x 4" are tenoned into mortises in the outer face of the purlin. Falling braces support the outer ends of the roof, and short diagonal struts span between the center of each purlin and the summer beam below. The roof sheathing boards run horizontally. The presence of some forged nails in the flooring and end-wall studs suggests that at least part of the frame and flooring in the attic predates 1826.

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The direction of the house's summer beams is unusual for the Concord area. All three sets are transverse (running front to back), rather than alternating between transverse and longitudinal (from chimney girt to end wall) as was prevalent in this part of Middlesex County. The exposed summer beam of the first-story southeast room is particularly heavy, measuring over 12 inches in width.

There is a full-height cellar under both the main house and the inner part of the northeast ell. The massive mortared fieldstone chimney base extends several feet north of the rear wall of the main house into a crawl space beneath the ca. 1960 kitchen addition. Such a chimney configuration indicates that there was a rear hearth in an earlier leanto kitchen, and that the leanto probably predated the northeast kitchen ell. The front sill of the northeast ell is butted against the rear face of the original main house sill. Like the main cellar, the ell cellar is full-height. A deep, narrow fieldstone well (Photo 6) is located in this part of the cellar. Against the ell's rear foundation wall, associated with the well, is a mortared stone shelf that supports an early-20th century **Gould pump**.

Interior features

Like the house exterior and the timber frame, the finish of the house interior displays elements of more than one stylistic period. Several features of the building's center bay are consistent with the middle of the 18th century. Among them are the planed board paneling and the stair rail with simple, square newel posts on the turning stair of the center lobby entrance, which was originally open all the way to the attic. Another early treatment is the delicate sponge-painted design on several relocated joists in the east part of the house.

Much of the interior trim, however, is in the Federal mode, with woodwork fastened with a type of machine-headed cut nails that came into use about 1815. The outer corner posts protrude into the rooms and are (or were) plainly boxed, as are the lower edges of the second-story plates and girts. (The plaster ceilings and beam casings of the two first-story rooms were removed sometime in the 20th century.)

The two west rooms -- the west first-story room (parlor) and the west chamber above it -- retain most of their early 19th-century woodwork. The window surrounds there have splayed jambs, with trim boards edged with the type of narrow, incised bead that was common in the Federal period. The casings of the windows of the west first-story room (the original parlor) are mitered, and trimmed with an ogee band molding. The plaster walls of that room are ringed with a chair rail with a molding below it similar to the molding on the window casings, and there is evidence that there was previously a wood dado below the chair rail.

By contrast, the window and door casings in the east part of the house are very plain. The wide, flat interior casings on the east, south, and west walls of the east first-story room are consistent with its one-time role as a kitchen. The casing of the doorway in the north wall of that room, leading to the ell, is the only one that displays a narrow-beaded edge like those at the windows in the room to the west. The casings in the east chamber are also wide, flat, and unadorned, but they project about ½ inch out from the plaster wall, and appear to be the result of a mid-20th century remodeling of that space.

All but one of the interior doors in the main house, with four flat panels recessed on one side and with a very slightly raised field on the other, are similar to a prevailing Federal door type, but are actually much later in date. They all have very long upper panels, porcelain knobs rather than latches, and are hung on two-part slip-joint hinges, suggesting an installation date in the middle of the 19th century, perhaps around the same time that the main entry was updated with the long Greek Revival sidelights. Only one door -- north of the fireplace in the west chamber -- has the high lower panels more indicative of the Federal period.

Alterations were made to the fireplaces at various times, and one of them was taken out altogether. The fireplace in the early rear leanto was entirely removed, possibly when the northeast ell kitchen was constructed. Evidence for it exists, however, in the broad hearth support at the back of the chimney foundation, and in the outer bricks of a flue in

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the rear face of the chimney, visible in the attic. In the original kitchen in the east first-story room, the fireplace was rebuilt in the early 20th century, and a bake oven to the right of the firebox (probably dating either to the late 18th century or to the 1826-1827 renovations) was removed. Only a wrought-iron eye for a crane remains embedded in the left jamb of this fireplace, and part of a secondary flue for the oven is still in place on the right. The removal of all the features on the north side of the chimney stack left an interior space that was divided into two ample-sized closets at each story – one serving each of the principal rooms.

The surround of the fireplace in the parlor was removed in the 20th century, but paint evidence indicates that its architrave was probably similar to those of the two fireplaces in the east and west chambers. Both are a simple Federal design of flat pilasters and frieze surrounded by a finely proportioned ogee backband molding that is flush with the plaster. (Photo 5.)

While rooms and utilitarian spaces were added to the building over time, one early or original room was removed. Marks remain from partition walls and wall shelving of what was apparently a buttery (pantry) set into the northeast part of the east room/kitchen. The room had a door opening in its west wall, facing the fireplace. Late machine-headed cut nails in the floorboards of this area, along with paint-sequence analysis, suggest that the partition walls were removed, and repairs made to the floor, around the middle of the 19th century.

Access to various spaces was also altered over time. At the second story, a small northeast chamber over the kitchen ell, its ceiling and floor set lower than those of the main house, was apparently built with no access from the main second floor. The present doorway into the room from the main east chamber dates to the 20th century. Prior to the doorway's construction this little, plainly finished room was reached only by the enclosed staircase against the west wall of the kitchen below – an indication that it probably functioned as sleeping space for a servant or boarder.

Landscape and setting (Photos 7 and 8)

The Wheeler-Harrington property is the largest parcel in a residential area south of the Assabet River that is otherwise developed with mid and late-20th century single-family houses. The neighborhood is located in West Concord, close to the southwest corner of town. To the northwest, Main Street/Route 62 passes over the Assabet near the outlet of Second Division Brook in the small industrial 18th and 19th-century village of Westvale.

The 15.22 acres on which the house stands, since 1974 called "Harrington Park," are wooded in the north and east portions, and incorporate extensive wetlands along the Assabet River at the north edge. Trails lead north through the woods from a small unpaved parking area at the top of a short driveway southwest of the house. Portions of broken-down **fieldstone walls** are present in the woods north of the house.

The western third of the land is leased for agriculture to the abutting farmer, continuing the centuries-long tradition of the farmland as a combination of tillage and meadow. A row of pine trees that lines the west property boundary was probably planted in the 1940s or 1950s. The southeast part of the property includes an extensive area of wetlands, where one natural feature is a spring traditionally called Harrington's Spring.

In the center part of the property where the house is located, a long, tree-lined asphalt driveway winds northwest up the slope from the road, ending west of the house at the remains of a mid- or early 20th-century apple orchard. Between the orchard and the house is a small cottage garden bordered on the south and west by low fieldstone walls. North of the house and garden is a cluster of three small post-1975 one-story wooden outbuildings – a **tool shed**, an **equipment shed**, and a **chicken coop** with an adjoining wire-fenced poultry yard. All of the present outbuildings are noncontributing to the present National Register nomination.

The present sheds occupy the general location of four outbuildings that were standing just before the transfer of the property to the Town in 1974 -- a small horse stable, a long, open-sided horse shelter, and two sheds. All these

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buildings dated to the middle years of the 20th century, and were demolished soon after the purchase by the Town. The stable had stood on the site of a large earlier barn, which may have been the building called a “new barn” in town Assessor’s records of 1827. A 1908 survey plan shows a barn, considerably larger than the house, with a milkhouse or other small addition at its northeast corner, standing close to the end of the line of attached sheds mentioned above. Another plan of 1913 depicts a somewhat smaller building there, but with the milkhouse still clearly shown.

Directly in front of the house is a tall lilac hedge, just in front of the lower course of a fieldstone wall that parallels the length of the façade. After the Town’s purchase of the property, many stones from that wall were used to reinforce the front foundation of the house. Some of those were later relocated to form part of the low walls around the kitchen garden. A pair of large spruce trees dominates the center of the expansive, sloping front lawn. The spruces, which were planted in the 1930s or 1940s, stand on the approximate site of two towering elm trees that, as “Harrington’s elms”, were noted for their beauty by Henry Thoreau and others. The long, gentle slope descending immediately east of the house is planted with quince and berry bushes, and a very tall sugar maple tree, (probably the last of several), still stands near the roadside.

Archaeological Description

One Native American site has been documented on the Wheeler-Harrington House property and another site may extend into the property. Seven ancient sites are located in the general area (within one mile) of the property. The Harrington’s Spring Site, 19-MD-149 was recorded by the MHC from the Ben Smith artifact collection. The site is located along the eastern boundary of the Wheeler-Harrington House property. It was recorded as a small Late Archaic camp site based on the presence of an Atlantic-like and Small Stemmed projectile points. Within 200 feet of the western property boundary an unnamed site, 19-MD-150 has been located on a high sandy bank above the Assabet River. That site was recorded by the Concord Antiquarian Society and was also collected by Ben Smith. The unnamed site was also recorded as a possible Late Archaic camp although no artifacts are listed. The site could easily extend onto the nominated property. Environmental characteristics of the property are generally favorable for many types of prehistoric sites. The property is located on a well drained level to moderately sloping riverine terrace above the Assabet River which borders the property to the north, a highly favorable locational characteristic. Given the above information, the size of the property (15.22 acres), historic period development, and high site densities in the area, and the presence of one and possibly two Late Archaic sites on the property, the presence of ancient sites is documented, and a high potential exists that additional sites will be found.

A high potential also exists for the recovery of historic archaeological resources within the Wheeler-Harrington House property. Structural evidence may survive from at least two barns and a stable that were present on the property by the mid 20th century. A small horse stable, a long, open-sided horse shelter, and two sheds were all built in the mid 20th century and demolished after purchase by the town in 1974. The stable stood on the site of a large earlier barn, which may have been the building called a “new barn” in town assessor’s records of 1827. The presence of a “new barn” in 1827 may indicate the presence of a second or “old barn,” possibly dating to the 18th or early 19th century. Based on the passage of some 80 or more years between the construction of the house in the 1740s and “new barn” in 1827, archaeological evidence of a third barn may also exist. Historical evidence and archaeological testing might produce evidence of other, poorly documented, outbuildings including sheds, a milkhouse, and a poultry house. Archaeological evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may also survive associated with the farm and its occupations. Artifact scatters, including large-dimension hearth bricks and redware ceramic fragments, have also been reported on the property.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1740s to 1963

Significant Dates

ca. 1740s (original construction)

1826-27 (rebuilding)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Wheeler-Harrington House begins in the mid 18th century, probably in the 1740s, when Josiah and Mary Wheeler are believed to have built the original house shortly after their 1742 marriage. The building's historical significance extends through the 80-year period of Harrington ownership and renovation, into the accelerated development and subdivision years of the early 20th-century. It continues through the late 1920s to the early 1960s, the period when the LeBallister family preserved both the house and most of its agrarian setting as a horse farm.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Wheeler-Harrington House fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register individually, at the local level.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Wheeler-Harrington property meets **Criterion A** for its multiple roles in the Concord's social, agricultural, and economic development over the course of two centuries. The oldest known building in West Concord, the house's connection to the agrarian life of the west part of town began with its early association with the large Wheeler family, original settlers of the rural "South Quarter". The property exemplifies local and regional trends and patterns of development of various historical periods. For instance, like many 18th-century Concord farmers, the first owner of the farmstead, Josiah Wheeler, carried on a second occupation as a bricklayer. Early in the 19th century, a period when a good portion of Concord's farmland was leased out by its owners, under Noah Wheeler, Jr. the farm entered a period of absentee ownership. And in the second and third quarters of the 19th century under Joseph Harrington the property typified a general farm moving into the era of agricultural specialization. For thirty years in the following generation, the 100+-acre Harrington Farm was one of a handful in Concord operated by a female farmer, Joseph's daughter Lucy Harrington. The farm was subdivided during the residential building boom of the early 20th century, but remained largely undeveloped for decades. After World War II the acreage directly around the farmstead took on a new agricultural use as the horse farm of the LeBallister family.

The Wheeler-Harrington House is eligible under **Criterion C** as a well-preserved example of a comfortable, though modest, center-chimney Federal dwelling retaining portions of its earlier colonial core and frame, while also displaying later Greek Revival features. Although by the late 20th century the farmstead had lost its early outbuildings and residential development continued to expand around it, thanks to preservation by the town of Concord the house retains its natural setting of 15.22 acres of open meadows, fields, and woods overlooking the Assabet River. In spite of minor updates in the 20th century and the addition of a rear kitchen in the 1960s, the building retains integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Background and early history

In 1635, the town of Concord, located 15 miles west-northwest of Boston, was incorporated as the first inland settlement in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It was a hospitable site for the English settlers, where nine miles of rivers – the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord – and numerous streams promised abundant resources for trappers, fur traders, and farmers. The houselots of the first settlers were located near the meetinghouse in the center of town. While most of the outlying land was initially held in common, in the 1650s two successive divisions of common land provided sizable land grants to the early proprietors. Among those landowners were members of the Wheeler and Hayward families, who soon settled in the great triangle of land in the "South Quarter" – an area roughly defined by the town's southwest boundary line, the Sudbury (or "South") River, and the Assabet (or "North") River.

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In about 1664 George Hayward established a sawmill near the west corner of town on the South Brook, (later renamed Second Division Brook for the second division of land in 1653). Hayward's mill stood close to the point where the brook flowed north into the Assabet. Over the next century several Wheeler farms were developed on the land east of the brook and southeast of the river, especially in the Nine Acre Corner area north of the Sudbury line.

Wheeler family ownership: ca. 1740s to 1827

Wheeler continued to dominate much of the South Quarter for over 250 years, as the original land grants were subdivided over successive generations to provide farms for sons, daughters and grandchildren. Most of the Wheeler homestead farms were established at Nine Acre Corner and between the regional roads leading to Sudbury and Marlborough. But the 18th-century farm of which this 15-acre property was a part, consisting of 100+ acres tucked between Second Division Brook on the west, the Assabet on the north, and the road leading south to Marlborough on the east, was the westernmost and the most isolated of them all.

The presence of 18th-century architectural elements in the Wheeler-Harrington House including nails, lath, and other early technical and stylistic features supports the longtime understanding that this house was built for farmer and bricklayer **Josiah Wheeler** (1718-1768), probably a few years after his 1742 marriage to **Mary Lee**. Mary was the daughter of the prosperous Dr. Joseph Lee, owner of the largest farm near the center of town, which covered all of Nashawtuc Hill at the confluence of the Assabet, Sudbury and Concord Rivers. Josiah was a great-grandson of original settler George Wheeler and the youngest son of John Wheeler, whose homestead farm lay to the east along Old Marlborough Road. Josiah and Mary had nine children, all of whom were living when Josiah wrote his will shortly before his death at age 50 in 1768. He bequeathed five or six pounds "lawful money" to each of the children, and left his dwelling house and farm on the North River to his wife, who outlived him by over thirty years.

Mary Wheeler, who died in 1799, apparently remained in the house for the rest of her life. By the end of the Revolutionary War her three oldest sons had all left Concord, at least two of them for Temple, New Hampshire. The youngest son, Thomas, had died. However, according to the 1790 U.S. census, in that year Mary's household included one male and four females over the age of 16, suggesting that several of the other children remained on the farm long after they reached adulthood.

Little is presently known about the farm itself during the decades of Wheeler ownership, nor about exactly how the property came into the hands of a relative, **Noah Wheeler, Jr.** As far as is known, Noah Wheeler, Jr. (1778- 1855) did not live on the farm, (he ultimately took over his father's Nine Acre Corner homestead at 350 Fitchburg Turnpike), and it is likely that he leased this western farm to tenants. If so, he may have required a typical rotation of crops similar to that planted around 1820 on the Hosmer Farm to the north, where fields were burned over and planted with rye, sown with corn or potatoes the second year, and seeded with a specific mixture of hay grasses after that. (See Hosmer Homestead, NR-Ind 1999).

Joseph Harrington, Jr. ownership: 1827 to 1877

Joseph Harrington, Jr. (1795-1877), who bought the farm from Noah Wheeler, Jr. in 1827, was a descendant of another old colonial family, whose progenitors included Lockes and Russells. The son of Joseph and Lucy (Russell) Harrington, he had grown up in Lexington. In 1821 he married Mary Snow of Westford. They had two daughters, Mary (1821-1835), and Lucy, who was born in Concord in 1829.

Joseph and Mary apparently leased the farm from Noah Wheeler, Jr. for several years before they purchased it. They were married in Concord, and the April 1827 deed for the farm refers to their existing residence as Concord rather than Lexington. According to local tax records there was a new barn on the 104-acre farm in 1827,

(continued)

Wheeler-Harrington House
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suggesting that tenants, probably the Harringtons, had been actively working and managing the farm in the mid-1820s. The deed describes the property as 70 improved acres (i.e. cleared farmland), and 34 acres unimproved.

Assessor's and census records for the second quarter of the 19th century depict the Harrington farm as a fairly large farm that was typical for its time, with a small assortment of livestock, fields planted with hay and a variety of grains, and a few acres of potatoes and beans. The Harringtons were not just scraping by, however. As early as 1837 Joseph owned a horse and a chaise, and he was among the minority of Concord's farmers who had a personal estate high enough to show up on the tax records. His monetary assets were valued at \$100 in 1837, and rose to \$645 the next year. After the Fitchburg Railroad was built in the mid-1840s, Joseph even owned some railroad stock. By 1850 his personal estate had risen to \$1162 in value, and to \$2000 by 1870. He continued to increase his numbers of livestock, and by 1841 he owned four oxen, along with seven cows and two pigs. In 1840 and 1853 he added a few acres of land to the southwest end of the farm, which gave him access to the mill pond on Second Division Brook.

Joseph Harrington was not active in town politics or organizations, but he was apparently a man of strong opinions, some of them quite unpopular. During the Civil War, he was one of a group in Concord who were delinquent in paying their war tax. When he refused to hang out the American flag, an angry mob attacked his house, although no damage was reported.

While Joseph Harrington's oxen eased the farm work, in contrast to Josiah Wheeler he never had a large family that included the grown sons or sons-in-law once deemed necessary to the management of a hundred-acre New England farm. He and his wife had only two children, and their older daughter died at age 14 in 1835. Mary Harrington died in 1846 at the age of 55. For the next thirty years Joseph carried on the farm alone with the help of their younger daughter Lucy, who undoubtedly grew into all the roles traditionally performed by a farm wife. Census information indicates that in most years there was only one farmhand in the Harrington household. In 1850 it was laborer Isaiah Nealy, age 19; in 1860 it was 21-year-old Albert Conant. In 1870, when Joseph Harrington was 75 years old, there was still only one young farm laborer, Samuel Ward, boarding with the family. By then, however, there was also a live-in domestic servant. 35-year-old Nancy Fitzpatrick, who, like many household servants in Concord in the 1870s, had been born in Ireland.

Lucy Harrington ownership: 1877 to 1907

Joseph Harrington died in 1877 at the age of 82. In his later years he had reduced his livestock to a horse and one cow, but he still operated the farm with the help of his daughter and a farmhand or two. The property he left to Lucy upon his death was 111 acres with a house, barn, and shed. Over the next thirty years, Lucy Harrington (1829-1907) was one of a handful of women who ran Concord farms in the post-Civil War era. The 1880 agricultural census reveals that she had an active agricultural business: she owned a horse, a cow, 30 chickens, and a 100-acre farm with a value of \$4,000; hay appears to have been her primary market crop – in that year 25 tons were grown on 50 of the 100 acres. A few acres produced corn and potatoes, and the trees on the property provided eight cords of commercial firewood - an important agricultural commodity of the time. Unlike most local farmers, Lucy was still producing butter – 150 pounds in 1880. That year she sold \$450 in farm products, \$260 of which came from market produce. Her expenses included \$100 paid to farmhands for nine weeks of work. Beginning in 1896 Lucy also presumably received rental income from a small cottage she had built that year on the opposite side of the lane to the farmhouse (204 Harrington Avenue, CON.278).

At the turn of the 20th century the Harrington Farm yielded at least one significant contribution to the town of Concord. In 1901 several loads of gravel from the farm were used to improve the east end of the semi-public "Old Road to Miss Lucy Harrington's," for which the Selectmen expressed their gratitude to Lucy in their annual report for the year.

(continued)

Wheeler-Harrington House
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In contrast to the series of young farmhands her father had employed over the years, “Miss Lucy”’s two principal employees stayed with her for decades. Brothers William and Francis (“Frank”) Chamberlain were both listed as farmers and boarders at the Harrington Farm by 1886, and William was living there as early as 1880. The Chamberlains were born in Acton – William in 1829 and Francis in 1834. In the years between 1880 and 1907 Francis Chamberlain was taxed for the six or seven cows on the farm. Also during most of that time William owned a horse, and both Francis and Lucy kept chickens.

In February 1907, during a week in which the *Concord Enterprise* reported that influenza was “having full swing,” both Lucy Harrington and William Chamberlain died of the disease within a day of each other. Both were 77 years old. Frank Chamberlain subsequently bought a small house nearby on Hayward Court, where he died in 1910.

Lapham ownership: 1912 to 1924

Lucy Harrington left no will, and her farm, along with a substantial personal estate of nearly \$19,000, passed to five cousins who lived outside of Concord. In May 1912 the Harrington heirs sold the property to **Waldo P. Lapham**. Waldo and his brother C. Daniel Lapham were sons of Edward Everett Lapham, a former watchman at the Concord Reformatory. Their parents and two other brothers had relocated to Carlisle in 1903, where their father invested in real estate during his retirement years. Waldo and Daniel, however, both of whom were first listed in censuses and directories as brick- and stone masons, stayed in West Concord, where Daniel also worked as a plasterer. Waldo was soon listing his profession as a contractor and, like his father, became heavily involved in real estate development. By the time he bought the Harrington Farm he already owned several rental houses and a business block near the foot of Commonwealth Avenue at Concord Junction.

When Waldo Lapham bought the Harrington Farm, West Concord had been experiencing a commercial and residential building boom that had lasted for over thirty years. The construction activity was fueled by the late-19th century establishment of the state prison/Massachusetts Reformatory and by the industrial and commercial expansion associated with the junction of three railroads. Many local West Concord citizens took advantage of the demand and became small-time developers, building houses and commercial blocks in the west part of town either as members of small real estate “syndicates” or as individual entrepreneurs. Building upon his Commonwealth Avenue experience, shortly before World War I Waldo Lapham embarked on another ambitious development project, this time on the old Wheeler-Harrington Farm. In 1913 he divided the land into 34 lots on both sides of the old road that later became today’s Harrington Avenue. The road still ended at the Harrington farmstead, west of which a well-worn cart path led to Main Street (Route 62), crossing over Second Division Brook. Waldo Lapham soon improved the entire length of the road with his own construction equipment, (and again with gravel from the farm), and the road was accepted by the town as Harrington Avenue in 1929.

Only a few of Lapham’s 34 lots sold immediately. The Wheeler-Harrington farmstead was on the 6.33-acre Lot #32, which was bought, together with 5.25-acre Lot #33 to its east, by **Edgar L. Willard** in October 1913. Willard may have been a real estate investor or a middleman, as in September 1915 he sold both lots to Waldo Lapham’s brother Daniel. **C. Daniel Lapham**, with his wife Eva and young son, moved into the old farmhouse, where they resided for nine years. Two more sons were born to them there before 1920. Daniel continued to work as a mason and plasterer, and it does not appear that he and his wife farmed the land, although they may have planted some apple trees. The Laphams made several improvements to the house, including installing electricity and plumbing. It was probably they who set up the pump in the cellar to bring water from the well up to the kitchen and a new bathroom in the rear part of the ell.

(continued)

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Name of Property

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LeBallister ownership: 1924 to 1974

In 1924 Daniel Lapham sold the 11.6- acre double lot to **Theresa and Ralph LeBallister**. The LeBallisters were mother and son. Mrs. LeBallister was the widow of Charles LeBallister. The 1924 Concord Directory lists Ralph, then in his twenties, as a clerk, but by 1930 he was working as a carpenter at the American Powder Mills. The powder mills were located on a large acreage at the west corner of Concord, straddling the boundaries of Maynard and Acton. Sometime in the 1930s Ralph joined the Concord Woodworking Company, where he was a foreman by 1941. The company, founded by Kennan Damon, was located in the old Damon Mill at nearby Westvale (CON.479, NR-Ind), where it manufactured garden furniture.

Over the years Ralph LeBallister, who soon began to be listed in directories as a real estate agent, bought back many of the lots that Waldo Lapham had divided out of the old farm, including some on the south side of Harrington Avenue. He also expanded his land on the north side by purchasing part of Lot 30 and the narrow Lot 31, which adjoined the farmstead to the west.

Ralph LeBallister was married about 1940. His mother died in 1950 at the age of 76, and Ralph became sole owner of the property. In the early 1960s Ralph and his wife Mildred tore down the old rear leanto and the remains of the line of sheds, and replaced them with the present rear addition for a kitchen, bathroom and utility room. They also installed a hot-air heating system with a furnace in the new addition. For many years in the mid-20th century the LeBallisters boarded and raised horses on the old farm, using much of the land as pasture. It was apparently the LeBallisters who replaced the old 19th-century barn (shown on surveys as late as 1913) with a smaller horse stable.

In 1970 Ralph LeBallister transferred a half-interest in the remaining acreage of the farm to his son David C. LeBallister, and in 1973 they put the property up for sale. Real estate developers acquired most of the remaining lots that Waldo Lapham had laid out on the south side of the road, while a coalition of volunteer groups worked to persuade the Town to buy the farmstead and over 15 acres of land on the north side between the road and the river. With help from a government grant, in 1974 the town of Concord purchased 15.6 acres of the old Wheeler-Harrington Farm, including the rundown farmhouse, to become **Harrington Park**. The principal purpose was to preserve open land for conservation and passive recreation. To that end, town staff quickly demolished the LeBallister outbuildings, and began preparations to tear down the house.

Town of Concord ownership 1974 to present

A grassroots group of citizens approached the Concord Historical Commission, who secured a delay in the scheduled demolition of the house. In 1975, having gained supporters such as the Louisa May Alcott Women's Society, the group succeeded in passing a Town Meeting appropriation of \$6,800 to stabilize the building – an arrangement that included a promised 619 hours of volunteer labor. Over that summer, local volunteers logged 649 documented hours of work, and the first tenants moved in later in the year.

In 1977, Town Meeting established a revolving fund for the upkeep of the house. Since that time the rental income from four successive sets of tenants, administered by the Historical Commission, has provided for the maintenance of the property, assisted by the devoted care of the tenant-caretakers themselves.

Archaeological Significance

Although numerous ancient Native American sites have been recorded in the Concord, Sudbury and Assabet River drainages (which converge approximately 2.5 miles to the northeast), few sites have been systematically excavated in the area limiting their interpretable value and making surviving sites in the area potentially significant. Ancient sites

(continued)

Wheeler-Harrington House
Name of Property

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in this area may contain information that clarifies the role they played in local and regional subsistence and settlement systems between sites located along tributaries of the Merrimack River and along the primary Merrimack drainage corridor. Ancient sites in this area may be part of an interior socio/political network focused on the area around the convergence of the Concord, Sudbury and Assabet Rivers. The sites can also be part of a larger regional pattern with a primary focus on the Merrimack River, possibly at its convergence with the Concord River. Such locales have been recognized as regionally important settlement locations or cores, especially during later Woodland Periods. Ancient sites in this area may also contain information that can contribute to a greater understanding of regional trade patterns, particularly between interior and coastal locales. The Merrimack River and its tributaries represent a regionally important transportation corridor for both the prehistoric and historic periods.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on the social, cultural and economic patterns that characterized a farmstead and one branch of the Wheeler family that dominated much of Concord's South Quarter (the southwestern portion of town) for 250 years. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing may contribute additional evidence to support technical and stylistic evidence that the house was built for Josiah Wheeler within a few years after his 1742 marriage. Archaeological research may contribute information that documents and provides information on early construction techniques and the additions/alterations that occurred over the next 250 years. Archaeological survey and testing can also help identify the full range of outbuildings and occupational-related features over time as the homestead evolved through Wheeler Family ownership until ca. 1827, the Harrington Family to ca. 1907, the Lapham ownership to ca. 1924 and the LeBallister ownership to 1974. Accurate mapping of the farm's layout and analysis of occupational related features may produce evidence which documents activities and functional changes at the farmstead from early agricultural efforts by Josiah Wheeler to the LeBallister husbandry (horses). Little information is presently known about the farm during its period of Wheeler ownership. Archaeological survey, testing, and excavation may be our only source of information for this early period of the farm's evolution. Detailed analysis of occupational related features may also contribute information relating to specific occupants of the farm during its different periods of ownership, possibly within stratified contexts. Information may also be present indicating the effect of tenancy at the farm, which began under the ownership of Noah Wheeler. Important information may be present that indicates the effects of tenancy on agricultural production, agricultural techniques, and the socio-economic relationship between landowners and tenants.

Josiah Wheeler's profession as a bricklayer may have entailed the making of bricks as well as constructing brick masonry. Large dimension hearth bricks have been found in the cellar and at various locations on the grounds. Another interpretation for the presence of the large bricks could be that renovations were made to the fireplace at some point in the past, possibly during the extensive renovations to the farmhouse in ca. 1827. It has also been reported that many fragments of redware have surfaced where the ground has been disturbed, suggesting to some researchers that Josiah may have fired pottery as well as bricks on his farm. An alternative hypothesis could be that the broken redware is associated with the dairying activities conducted on the farmstead.

(end)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books, articles, manuscripts

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(continued)

Wheeler-Harrington House
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
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- Forbes, Anne. MHC B-Forms: 249 Harrington Ave. (5/2011); 350 Fitchburg Turnpike (7/1990). Massachusetts State Census. Transcriptions for 1855 and 1865.
- Middlesex County Probate records.
- Middlesex County Registry of Deeds.
- US Agricultural Census. 1860, 1880.
- US Direct Tax Census, 1798.
- US Population Census. Most decennial years from 1790 to 1940.

Town of Concord documents and files

- Concord Directory*. Intermittent years, 1886-1937. Publisher varies.
- Concord Assessor's Records. 1790 and intermittent years from 1826 to the present.
- Concord Vital Records.

Maps and plans

- Beers, Frederick W. *Atlas of Middlesex County, Mass.* NY: F.W. Beers, 1875.
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(end)

Wheeler-Harrington House
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Massachusetts Historical Commission
Concord Free Public Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____ MHC #: CON.277

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 15.22 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>19</u>	<u>302100</u>	<u>4702300</u>	3	<u>19</u>	<u>302450</u>	<u>4702160</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>19</u>	<u>302450</u>	<u>4702320</u>	4	<u>19</u>	<u>302080</u>	<u>4702190</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Wheeler-Harrington House occupies a broad 15.22-acre rectangular parcel of land, (Concord Assessor’s Map 11C.. Parcel 2712), bounded on the north by the Assabet River and on the south by Harrington Avenue, with 1278 feet of frontage along the road. The east and west boundaries run roughly north to south – 523 feet on the west, and about 480 feet on the east.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Wheeler-Harrington House stands on “Harrington Park”, the 15.22-acre town-owned property that comprises the largest intact part of the historic Wheeler-Harrington Farm. This parcel includes the site of the longtime Wheeler-Harrington farmstead, of which only the farmhouse remains. While all the historic outbuildings are gone, the property preserves the open, rural setting surrounding the house, with views to the Assabet River that are still unobscured by modern development.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Forbes, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director, MHC
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date May 2013
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125
e-mail anneforbes@verizon.net

Wheeler-Harrington House
Name of Property

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Wheeler-Harrington House

City or Vicinity: Concord

County: Middlesex State: Massachusetts

Photographer: Anne M. Forbes

Date Photographed: 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. South façade
2. East elevation, with south façade at left
3. West elevation
4. North elevations, camera facing southeast
5. West chamber fireplace
6. Well
7. Aerial view of farmstead area, looking north
8. View southwest from farmstead area, with unpaved parking area (looking toward #204 Harrington Ave.)

Wheeler-Harrington House
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
County and State

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Town of Concord
street & number 22 Monument Square, PO Box 535 telephone 978-318-3000
city or town Concord state MA zip code 01742

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**Wheeler-Harrington House
Concord (Middlesex), MA
National Register Data Sheet**

Key: C = contributing; NC = non-contributing
 B = building; O = object
 Si = site; St = structure

MHC No.	Assessor No.	Street Address	Historic Name/Use	Date	Style or Type	Resource Register Type	Status	Acreage
CON.277	11C.2712	249 Harrington Avenue	Wheeler-Harrington House	ca. 1740s/1827	Federal dwelling	B	C	15.22
			well	18th or 19th century	utilitarian	St	C	
			pump	early 20th century	utilitarian	O	C	
			tool shed	ca. 1980	outbuilding	B	NC	
			equipment shed	ca. 1980	outbuilding	B	NC	
			chicken coop	ca. 1980	outbuilding	B	NC	
			system of fieldstone walls	18th-19th century	structure	St	C	

Contributing

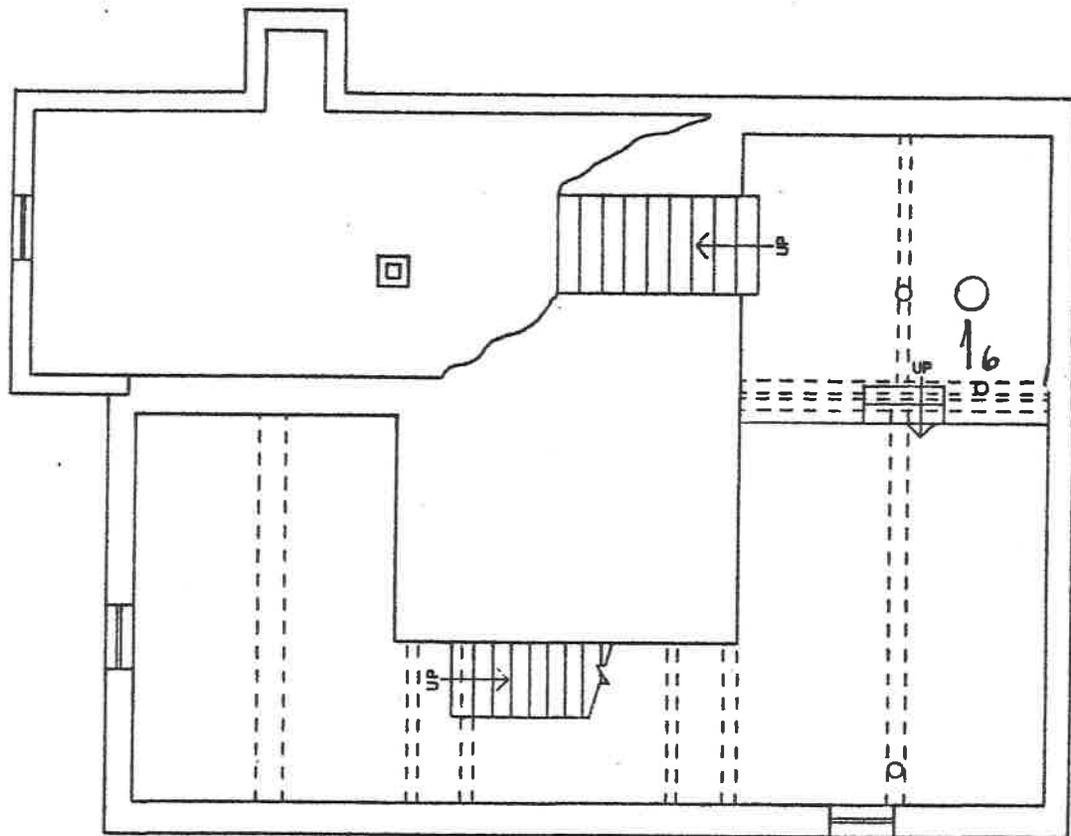
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Noncontributing

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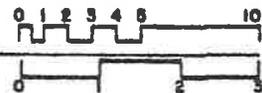
Buildings
Sites
Structures
Objects

Total

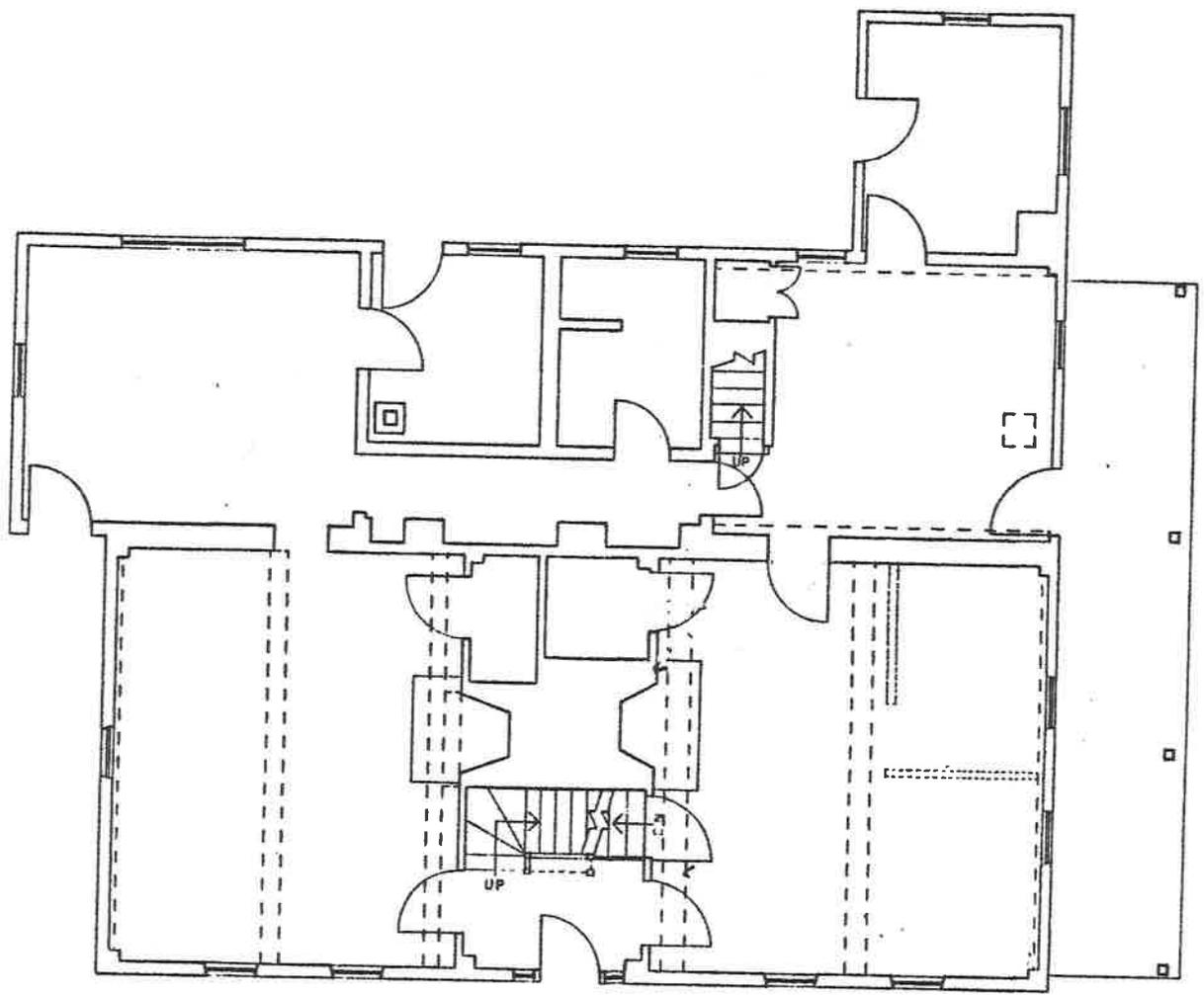


BASEMENT PLAN

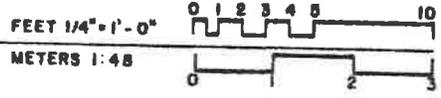
FEET 1/4" = 1'-0"
METERS 1:48



(scale reduced)
↑ = photo location

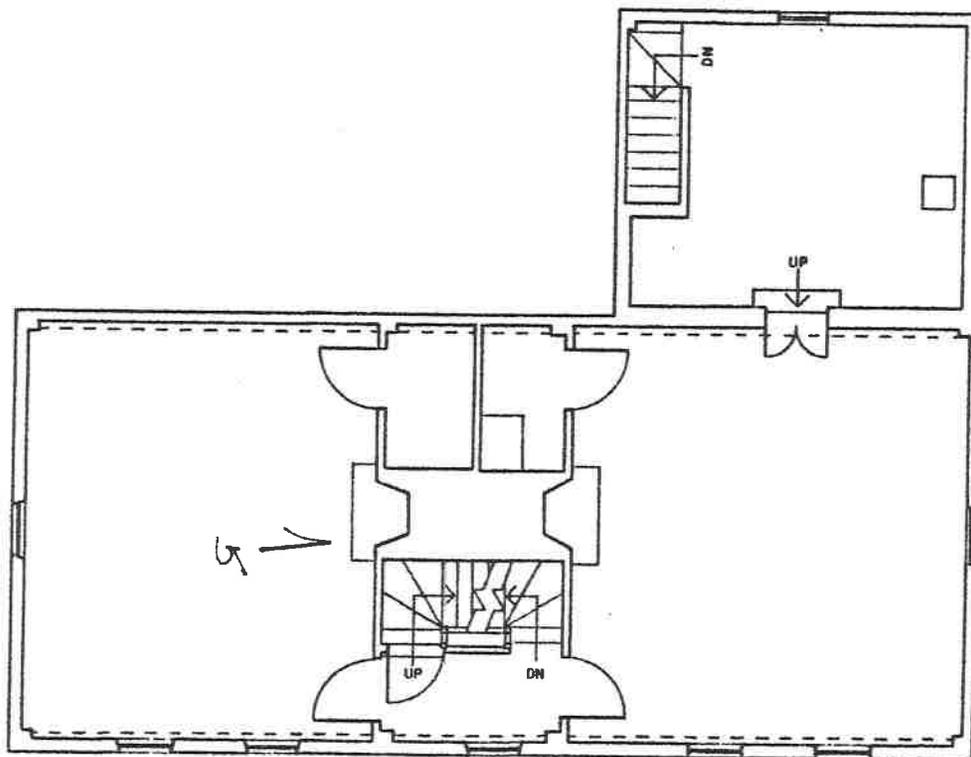


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

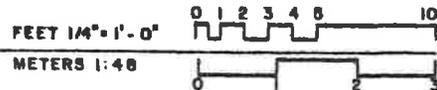


Scale reduced. 1 = photo location

1
7 (aerial view)

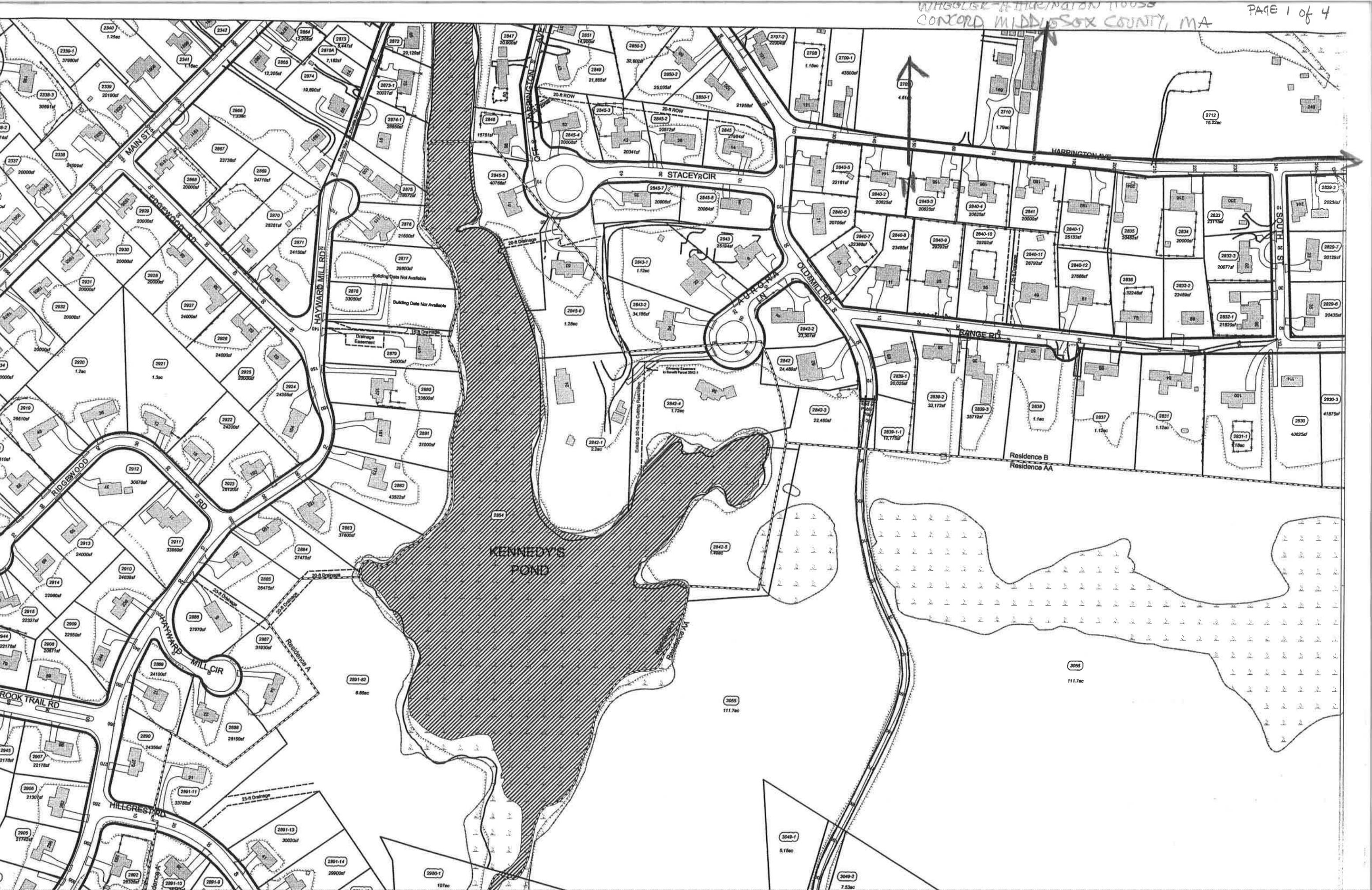


SECOND FLOOR PLAN



(scale reduced)

1 = photo location



KENNEDY'S POND

Residence B
Residence AA

MAIN ST

R STACEY CIR

HARRINGTON AVE

RIDGEWOOD RD

MILL CIR

ROCK TRAIL RD

HILLCREST RD

3049-1
5.15ac

3049-2
7.53ac

3055
111.7ac

2830
4187sf

2829-8
2043sf

2829-2
2025sf

249

2712
18.22ac

2835
2000sf

2839
2248sf

2837
1.12ac

2839
33.172sf

2839-1
12.775sf

2839-2
20.025sf

2839-3
22.460sf

2840-1
25.133sf

2840-2
20.622sf

2840-3
20.622sf

2840-4
20.622sf

2840-5
22.161sf

2840-6
20.705sf

2840-7
22.388sf

2840-8
23.480sf

2840-9
29.922sf

2840-10
29.922sf

2840-11
27.922sf

2840-12
27.660sf

2841
20.000sf

2842
24.460sf

2842-1
1.72ac

2842-2
23.307sf

2842-3
22.460sf

2842-4
1.72ac

2842-5
1.72ac

2843-1
1.12ac

2843-2
34.188sf

2843-3
1.28ac

2843-4
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2843-39
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6.85ac

2891-13
30.000sf

2891-14
20.000sf

2891-10
25.220sf

2891-9
20.000sf

2891-11
33.780sf

2891-12
24.350sf

2891-15
24.100sf

2891-16
21.970sf

2891-17
26.475sf

2891-18
27.475sf

2891-19
31.030sf

2891-20
31.030sf

2891-21
37.000sf

2891-22
33.800sf

2891-23
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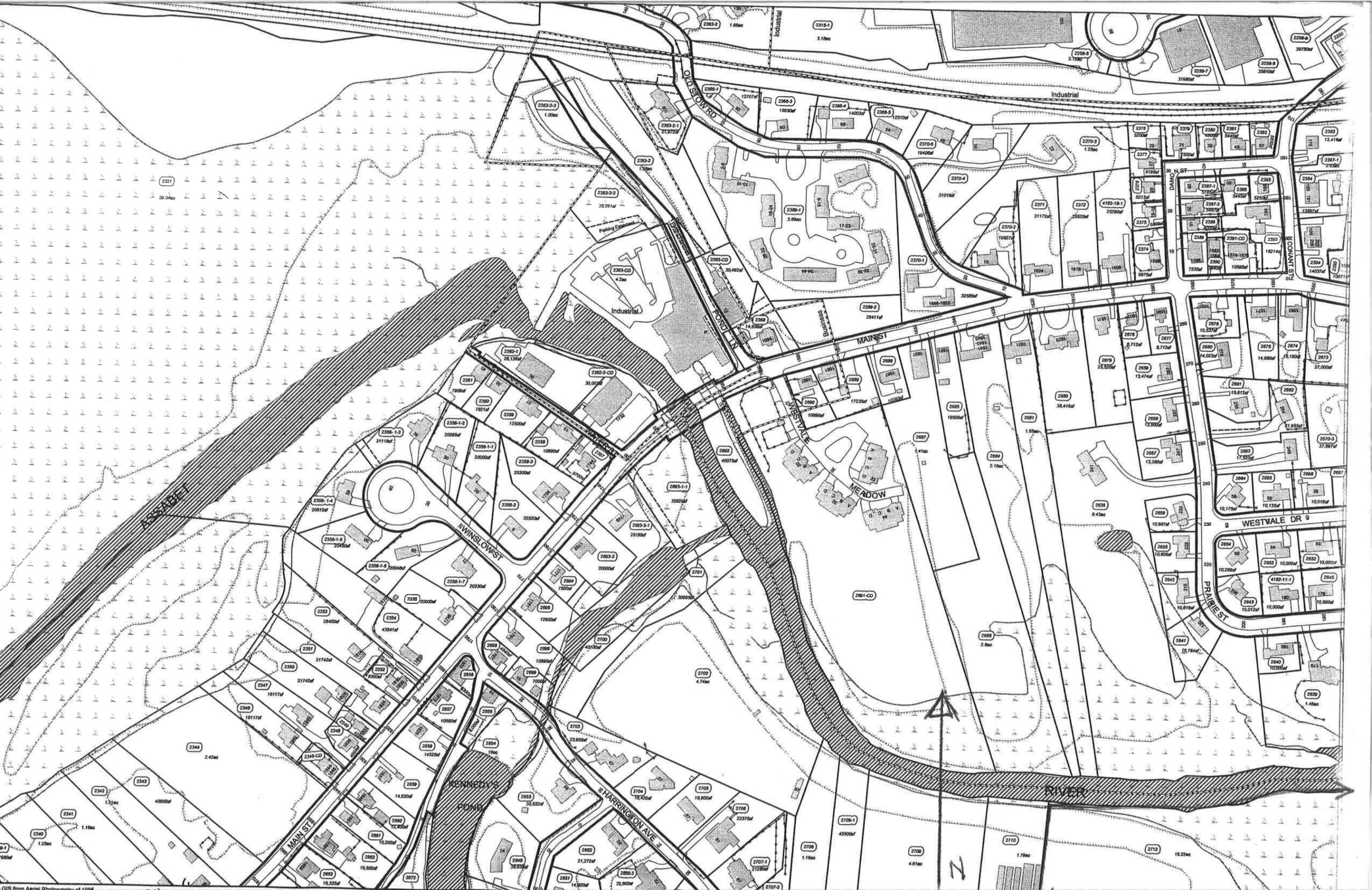
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CONCORD, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, MA

