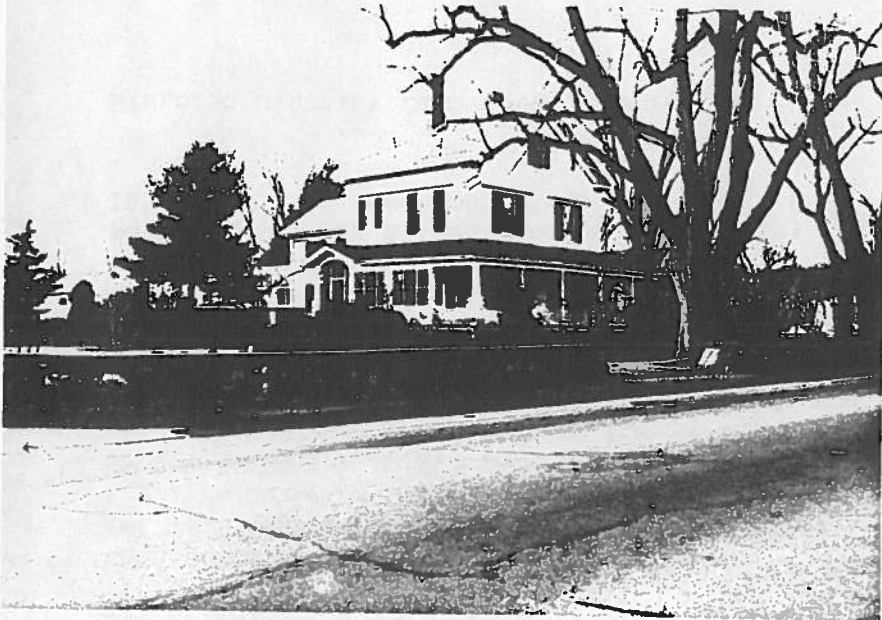


FORM B - BUILDING

AREA <u>NONE</u>	FORM NO. <u>37-1</u>
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108



City Belmont

Address 170 Brighton Street

Historic Name Jonathan Frost House

Use: Present residence

Original same

DESCRIPTION:

Year 1851

Source Belmont Historic District
Commission Files

Style Greek Revival

Architect _____

Exterior wall fabric Flushboards

Outbuildings Attached shed and carriage
building

Major alterations (with dates) _____

Porch enlarged and enclosed in c.1920

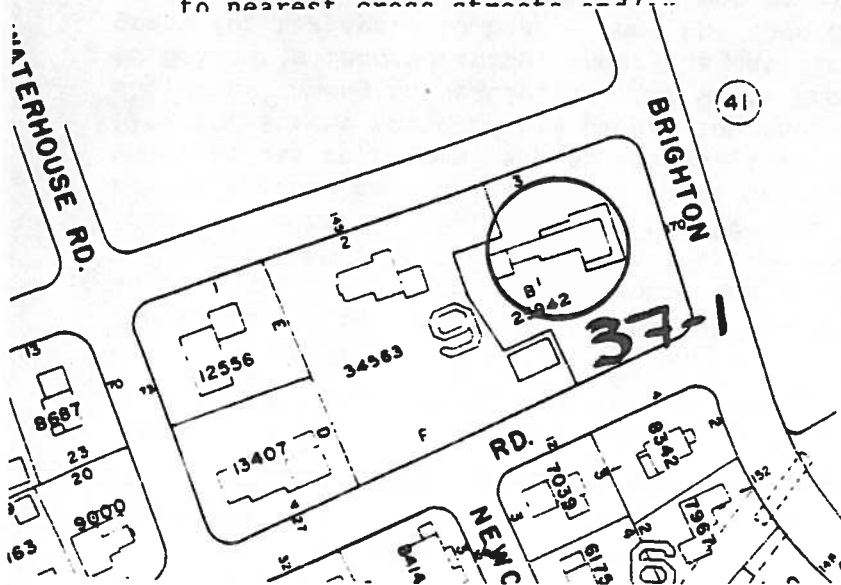
Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 25,942 sq. ft.

Setting Single-family houses

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation
to nearest cross streets



Recorded by Christopher Forbes Nash

Organization Boston University

Date November, 1982

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

Set in a neighborhood of early 20th century suburban housing, the Jonathan Frost house stands out as a reminder of the wealthy market gardening past of Belmont. The Greek Revival house, with heavy corner pilasters, is set gable-end to the street on a large lot. In the early 20th century, a three-bay porch on the facade was extended around the house and partially enclosed. Other significant period features include parlor floor windows, and, on the interior, a Bullfinch-style staircase with scrolled newel post. Black marble fireplaces are extant, as are heavy moldings and cornices in the central rooms. Original kitchen features include a dutch oven of handmade bricks.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

Important as the residence of both the Frosts and other important market gardeners in Belmont, the Jonathan Frost House was built by the grandson of Capt. Ephraim Frost and nephew of Capt. Stephen Frost, both famous in the Revolutionary War. Jonathan, born in 1788, lived on the 80-acre Frost Homestead on Pleasant Street and became trained as a brickmaker. Later he entered the market gardening business which he was to become very successful in. In 1851, Jonathan sold his inherited Pleasant Street house to his oldest son and built this house for his wife and eight children. Among the activities for which Frost was well known is his opposition to Belmont's incorporation, under the justification that the expenses would be too great for taxpayers to bear. Once the town had incorporated, he filed suit in equity claiming that the cost should not be withdrawn from the first year's treasury, but rather returned to the town and spread out over ~~time~~ ^{time}. Winning the case before the Supreme Court in March, 1862, Frost loaned Belmont funds to help defray the sum of \$8,779 which the Town Treasurer had been ordered to restore.

When Jonathan died in 1873, his son Artemus bought the house and 6-acre property for \$9,000, continuing to ~~field~~ ^{farm} it as a market gardener. The house remained in the Frost family until 1920, when it was sold to Walter Lenk. Lenk developed a famous wholesale flower business, "Belmont Gardens," allowing him to produce a rare hybrid the "Belmont Gardenia, earning one of the first U.S. government patents for plants. Lenk became the fourth largest specialty flowergrower in New England, shipping as

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

many as 50,000 gardenias a day to markets throughout the country. He owned 100,000 sq. ft. of greenhouses and a packing and processing plant on property between Hoitt Road and Sherman Street. His son, Richard, ran the flower business from 1949 until 1954, when the greenhouses were torn down and the area subdivided.

Historic District Commission Files.