

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS 1:
REPRESENTATIVE ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN BELMONT

Architectural Styles in the “Town of Homes”

Belmont’s historic resources present a panorama of the architectural styles that have been popular in this country over the past three centuries. Throughout the town there are both vernacular and high style examples of a variety of architectural styles. Many buildings blend characteristics of two or more styles, reflecting both evolution of architectural forms and alterations made by owners who sought to keep their houses up-to-date. Large numbers or concentrations of a given style can reflect a period of great population growth or the development of a certain area within a relatively short time period.

Georgian 1720-1780

The Georgian style is the first architectural style to appear in the American colonies. In Belmont, somewhat simplified versions of the style were used for the homes of a few prosperous residents, mostly farmers. The houses in this style typically display a five-bay façade with center entrance, a massive center chimney, windows with many small panes, wide side elevations and classically-inspired trim including entablatures and door surrounds. The houses can be capped by gable or hipped roofs; elsewhere gambrel roofs were also used.



325 Common Street



Thomas Clark House, 59 Common Street (demolished)



154 Mill Street



981 Concord Avenue

Federal 1780-1830

The Federal style is in many ways a refinement of the Georgian style. Houses almost always exhibit the same five-bay façade but tend to be more delicate in their massing and detailing. One of the hallmarks of the style is the fanlight or fan over the center entrance. The front door is often flanked by sidelights running halfway down the door. Larger panes of glass became more affordable and readily available in the late 18th century and thus windows typically display double-hung sash with six panes of glass in each.



291 Brighton Street



95 Clifton Street



490 Pleasant Street



160-162 Washington Street

Greek Revival 1830-1860

The development of the Greek Revival style reflects an increasing interest in classical buildings and patriotic allusions to the democratic ideals of Ancient Greece. The style is based loosely on the Greek temple front and columns in either the Doric, Ionic or Corinthian order are a prominent feature. The style was popularized and spread by various builders' guides and manuals. In addition to pediment-fronted dwellings, the influence of the Greek Revival style is seen on traditional, five-bay, center entrance houses that often display pediment ends and cornerboards. The Greek Revival had a lasting effect in American architecture through the popularity of gablefront houses with sidehall (offcenter) entrances.

The best example of the Greek Revival style in Belmont is undoubtedly the Samuel O. Mead House constructed in 1836. The temple-like façade features four two-story fluted Ionic columns that support a pedimented gable. The original owner was a son-in-law of Jeduthan Wellington, and the house has been owned by descendants of the Wellington, Mead, and Underwood families since its construction.



*346 Concord Avenue
Credit: Images of America: Belmont*



577 Belmont Street



66 Mill Street



592 Pleasant Street



307 Pleasant Street

Gothic Revival 1840-1870

The Gothic Revival style saw limited popularity for residential construction in Belmont. Common hallmarks of the style include curvilinear wooden trim (bargeboards) made possible by the invention of the scroll saw and steeply pitched gable roof slopes. Other typical features included pointed arches, finials and label mold lintels over the windows. Exterior sheathing may include board-and-batten siding or wood siding, scored to simulate stone.



36 Sycamore Street



76 Common Street



386 Common Street

Italianate 1850-1885

The Italianate style was in vogue in the 1860s and 1870s and since this was a period of great growth in Belmont, the style is well represented locally. The Italianate dwelling typically displays low-pitched roofs with eaves decorated by large brackets. The arched and rectangular window openings are often elongated on the first floor and commonly topped by bold entablature lintels with heavy trim. Square porch posts display chamfered corners and are set on pedestals. In addition to porches, bay windows, cupolas and towers are often part of the design.

Constructed ca. 1850 the Underwood Estate at 50 Common Street is a high-style example of the Italianate style. It exhibits a T-shaped cross gable plan with the gentle pitched roofs decorated by brackets with drop pendants and a flat-roofed octagonal cupola. Other hallmarks of the style include the smooth stucco finish and the arcaded porches.



50 Common Street

Elsewhere in town, the influence of the Italianate style is readily apparent in bracketed cornices, bay windows and porches and chamfered porch posts.



151 Lexington Street



30 Hawthorne Street



642 Pleasant Street

French Second Empire 1855-1880

Based on the latest French fashions, this style existed at about the same time as the Italianate and its details including heavy trim, porches, and brackets are quite similar. The defining characteristic of the Second Empire style is the mansard roof that can have concave, convex or straight sides and was typically covered in slate with dormers. This style was also quite popular in Belmont and examples in town range from well-sited mansions to modest cottages.

The William Flagg Homer House at 661 Pleasant Street combines elements of the Italianate style with the mansard roof of the French Second Empire. It was built ca. 1853 as a summer residence for William Homer, a crockery dealer, who was also the uncle of artist Winslow Homer. The house is now the Belmont Women's Club.



661 Pleasant Street

The Capt. James Homer House at 613 Pleasant Street is a smaller interpretation of the French Second Empire style.



613 Pleasant Street

A number of mansard-roofed cottages, some with towers or pavilions, are located in the Waverley section of town.



4 Cambridge Street

The French Second Empire cottage at 55 Alexander Avenue in Belmont Center is notable for retaining its polychromatic slate roof with floral and banded patterns. The building was originally part of the W.H. Locke farm.



55 Alexander Avenue

Stick Style 1860-1890

The Stick Style was not as popular as the Italianate or Second Empire styles but is evident on some local late 19th century houses. As the name suggests, it is identified by its diagonal, vertical and horizontal applied stickwork that often imitates the half-timbering of medieval structures. Other commonly used details of the style include the use of jerkinhead (clipped gable) roofs, incised detailing and decorative wood trusses in gables.



560 Concord Avenue



104 School Street



396 Concord Avenue

Queen Anne 1880-1910

The Queen Anne style is a decoratively rich style that typically features an asymmetrical composition combining a variety of architectural forms including porches, towers, turrets, gables, bays, chimneys and other projections. The exterior is further enlivened by contrasting surface textures, materials, and colors. In Belmont, most of the Queen Anne homes were built in the 1890s in subdivisions that developed in proximity to the streetcar. The largest concentration of Queen Anne dwellings is located in Belmont Park which was developed between 1896 and 1898. Other examples are found in the Waverley area and Payson Park.

The Queen Anne-style house at 96 School Street was built ca. 1895 for William Lowe who developed the Belmont Park area. Next door, 90 School Street, was the home of his business partner, Wilbert Bartlett, and nearly a mirror image. Both houses were likely built by the Bartlett Brothers who constructed at least fifty homes in the School Street area during this period.



96 School Street



69 Waverley Street



596 Trapelo Road



111 School Street

Shingle Style 1880-1900

As its name suggests, this late 19th century style is characterized by the uniform covering of wood shingles (originally unpainted). Unlike the Queen Anne style, the Shingle Style is based on a homogenous and monochromatic shingle covering that wraps the entire building like a skin, including turrets and recessed porches. Fieldstone is sometimes used for foundations, porch supports and chimneys. In Belmont, there are few if any pure Shingle Style dwellings; more often Queen Anne style houses show the influence of the Shingle Style. Examples of this trend are found throughout Belmont Park as well as Payson Park.

The H.O. Underwood House at 100 Common Street is a large Shingle Style residence designed in 1885 by noted Boston architects Hartwell & Richardson. Underwood was the owner of a successful meat canning business and town benefactor. Originally the shingles were stained a dark brown. Hartwell and Richardson were also the architects for the First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist (1890).



100 Common Street

The house at 90 Somerset Street, built in 1877 as a summer home for writer William Dean Howells, was originally clad entirely in red shingles, giving it the nickname “Red Top”. It was designed by Howells’ brother-in-law William Mead, a partner in the noted architectural firm of McKim, Mead and Bigelow (later McKim, Mead and White).



90 Somerset Street



35 Cedar Road



70 Lexington Street



52 Willow Street



29 Oak Street

Colonial Revival 1880-1930+

After the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, American architects began to look to the country's Colonial forms for inspiration. This new interpretation of Georgian and Federal precedents combined details in a decidedly new way that was often exaggerated and out of proportion when compared to earlier structures. Later Colonial Revival buildings are typically more carefully researched and often exhibit more correct proportions and details.

The Colonial Revival style is probably the most widely-used architectural style in Belmont and is visible in many varied forms. The house below is a ca. 1895 version from the Belmont Park area, off School Street.



12 Goden Street

By the 1920s when 41 Tyler Road was built, the Colonial Revival had entered a more scholarly phase as seen in this First Period replica, designed by architects Derby and Robinson.



41 Tyler Road

The house at 48 Oakley Road is a brick Georgian Revival structure constructed in 1908 with recessed arches, keystones and splayed lintels. It was built by James McArdle, a well-known Boston contractor, for his own use.



48 Oakley Road

The Atkins House at 567 Concord Avenue was built in 1918 and designed by Boston architect, Henry Richardson Shepley.



567 Concord Avenue

The house at 256 Slade Street is an illustration of the continued reliance on Colonial/Neo Classical forms even as new technologies emerged. Although it appears to have a flushboard façade, it is actually constructed of reinforced concrete. The house was designed by local architect Victor Wigglesworth in 1922.



256 Slade Street

The Colonial Revival was used for large houses on Belmont Hill as well as more modest homes in many subdivisions.



31 Fieldmont Road



48 Fairmont Street

The 1 ½-story Cape Cod house form provided a slightly smaller Colonial Revival option and are found in many Belmont neighborhoods. Several of the Cape Cod houses in the Belmont Hill area were designed by Royal Barry Wills.



40 Stone Road

One of the more unusual examples of the Cape Cod house form in town is located at 86 Juniper Road. It was moved from Strafford, New Hampshire in 1936 and relocated to Belmont by G. Holden Greene of Boston, a “reconstruction adviser”.



86 Juniper Road

Dutch Colonial 1910-1930

The Dutch Colonial style, with its omnipresent gambrel roof, is just one variation on the Colonial Revival style that found popularity in the early 20th century. Examples of the style are widespread in Belmont.



73 Lincoln Street



3 Colonial Terrace



41 Cedar Road

Spanish Colonial Revival 1915-1930

There are only a few examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in Belmont. They are typically identified by their stuccoed or plaster exterior walls and red tile roofs. Round arched openings are a common feature as are embellished door surrounds.



32 Rockmont Road



33 Hillcrest Road



225 School Street

English Revival/Arts and Crafts 1910-1930

Vying for popularity with the Colonial Revival in the early 20th century were a number of eclectic styles based loosely on English prototypes and designed for a more picturesque effect. The buildings lack the symmetry of the Colonial and typically display steeply-pitched gables with decorated vergeboards, half-timbering and diamond-paned windows. Most of the houses of this style in Belmont were architect-designed and are more prevalent in stylish subdivisions such as Clark Hill and Walnut Hill.



200 Common Street



60 Oak Avenue



15 Clover Street



58-60 Oakley Road

Tudor Revival/Later English Revival 1920-1940

A slightly later expression of the English Revival, the Tudor Revival is a bit more modern in its appearance and often displays a brick rather than stuccoed exterior. Doorways are often elaborated with stonework ranging from simple quoins to elaborate Renaissance-inspired surrounds that often incorporate Tudor arches. Large, elaborated chimneys are seen on grand manor-like homes. Best known for his Cape Cod designs, architect Royal Barry Wills also designed several English Revival homes on Belmont Hill including 43 Village Hill Road.



25 Lincoln Road



8 Fieldmont Road



225 Prospect Street



43 Village Hill Road

Prairie 1910-1920

The Prairie Style was a short-lived early 20th century style that grew out of the early work of Chicago architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The designs emphasize horizontality and display a low, wide massing. The houses are usually capped by low-pitched hip roofs with widely overhanging eaves. Although the style was not widely used in New England, the house at 24 Cedar Road is an excellent example, designed by local architect Victor Wigglesworth in 1913. Noteworthy features include the use of stucco and contrasting wood trim and the masonry front porch piers with low pedestals fronting the porch.



24 Cedar Road

Sheathed in wood shingles, the design of 18 Oak Avenue utilizes the long porch with porte cochere to emphasize the sense of horizontality. The tapered porch posts are a common feature of the style while the extensive use of granite reflects the occupation of the original owner who was a granite manufacturer.



18 Oak Avenue

Craftsman/Bungalow 1910-1930

The Craftsman style was a style that derived from the Arts and Crafts movement in England. In this country it was popularized through pattern books and magazines. In New England the Craftsman Style translated most often to simple, practical homes capped by low-pitched gable and hip roofs with overhanging eaves decorated by exposed, decorative beams, braces or rafter tails. Porch supports may consist of tapered square posts, columns or even pergolas. The Craftsman style was also utilized for two-family dwellings and could be blended with Colonial details to create Craftsman Colonials.



15 Oakley Road



45 Chester Road



36-38 Cushing Avenue



186 Payson Road

The term “bungalow” refers to a one or one-and-a-half story version of the Craftsman style. It can be capped by a low-pitch gable roof or hip roof and almost always has a front porch. Designs for these affordable cottages were widely disseminated in early 20th century publications and could also be obtained as mail-order kits delivered to a nearby train station. There are quite a few modest bungalows in Belmont.

The side-gabled bungalow at 72 Cushing Avenue is an excellent example of the style displaying wide eaves with triangular knee braces and a large dormer on the front slope with matching details. The recessed porch is supported by Doric columns. Originally the house was stuccoed with wooden stick trim. An illustration of the house appeared in the *American Architect* in 1914.



72 Cushing Avenue



As illustrated in American Architect, 1914

The hip-roofed bungalow at 38 Raleigh Road was constructed in 1920 by a local carpenter using plans or a kit purchased from the Aladdin Company of Bay City, Michigan. The bungalow is clad in a distinctive pattern of wood shingles alternating courses with narrow and wider reveals (described as a “double shingle effect” in the catalog). The house is capped by a steeply pitched hip roof with wide overhanging eaves displaying exposed rafter tails (a “Japanese roof effect” according to the Aladdin catalog).



38 Raleigh Road



Aladdin Houses, 1919 catalog

International Style 1930-1960

Developed in Europe during the period between World Wars I and II, the International Style was a reaction against the traditional, historical-based styles that preceded it. The International Style house typically has a flat roof, smooth, unornamented wall surfaces, no decorative detailing at doors or windows, cantilevered projections, and large expanses of glass.



12 Park Avenue (demolished)

The house that architect Eleanor Raymond designed for her sister, Rachel Raymond, at 12 Park Avenue in Belmont in 1931 was widely considered one of the first International Style houses in New England. Although that building was demolished in 2006, there are several other notable mid-century residences in Belmont designed by Raymond and other prominent International Style architects. Eleanor Raymond designed the house at 105 Juniper Road in 1936. The house presents its more modest two-story facade to the street with an expansive three-level elevation visible only from the rear of the sloping lot. The dwelling is unusual in that it combines allusions to the Colonial Revival with the box-like volumes the International Style is known for.



105 Juniper Road

The Snake Hill Road Development consists of eight homes on Snake Hill Road designed by Carl Koch. Koch had studied at the Harvard School of Design with Walter Gropius, the founder of the German school of design known as the Bauhaus, and later developed an interest in prefabricated housing in Sweden. The initial five homes were built on the rocky hillside in 1940 and included Koch's own home at 77 Snake Hill Road. Three additional houses were constructed in 1941 (one was later demolished) and the final house was built in 1946 for Koch's sister and her husband.

The development was an early effort at community living and the homes were designed for convenience and economy of design with open floor plans. Complicated details and expensive millwork were eliminated.



77 Snake Hill Road

Walter Gropius and Benjamin Thompson of The Architects Collaborative (TAC) designed the elegant, cypress-sided house at 69 Pinehurst Road in 1948. The finished project was featured in the June 1950 issue of *Architectural Forum*. Not visible from the street are the walls of glass facing the backyard.



69 Pinehurst Road (street view)



Rear elevation (ncmodernist.org)

The house at 85 Juniper Road dates to 1952 and was designed by Lincoln architect Henry B. Hoover who also studied at the Harvard School of Design. Like others of its type, it is a minimalist design with two levels of terraces and walls of windows at the rear.



85 Juniper Road

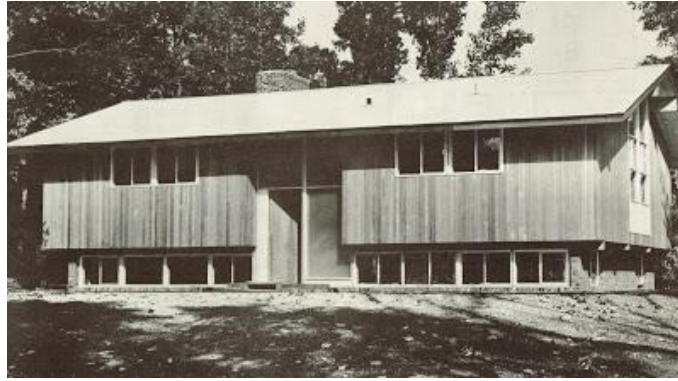
Tech Built/Prefab Houses 1950+

Located at the base of Snake Hill Road, 737 Pleasant Street is an example of a prefabricated Contemporary house manufactured by Techbuilt Homes. Although constructed in 1973 it continues the basic principles of the designs developed by company founder Carl Koch in the 1950s.



737 Pleasant Street

First introduced in 1953 the Techbuilt house was a low cost, semi-factory-built modern style house that utilized modular construction. It was developed by architect Carl Koch who designed the groundbreaking community of modern homes on Snake Hill Road up the hill in 1940-1. Carl Koch lived at 77 Snake Hill Road from 1940 to 1949.



A Techbuilt House

Capped by a low pitch gable roof with widely overhanging eaves the two-story house is of post-and-beam construction with modular walls sheathed in cedar vertical boards. The predominant window is a casement unit with larger expanses of glass found on the wide gabled ends. The lack of ornamental detail is characteristic of the Techbuilt form. In keeping with the Techbuilt philosophy the house is set into a natural and wooded landscape.

Examples of houses constructed utilizing modular house plans and/or building systems by Techbuilt, Deck House and other companies are located throughout Belmont and found popularity during the 1960s and 1970s. Other similar houses included the house at 533 Pleasant Street which is a Deck House with Deck House garage (1963) and the house at 36 Dunbarton Road (1973).