

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

52-17	Boston North	AZ	BLM.146
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Town/City: Belmont

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Belmont Hill

Address: 210 Clifton Street

Historic Name: Edward K. Robinson House

Uses: Present: single family dwelling

Original: single family dwelling

Date of Construction: 1928

Source: building permit

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder: Philip S. Avery, arch.;
Robert D. Donaldson, builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: brick

Roof: slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
garage (1929)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 116,505 SF

Setting: situated on top of hill on well landscaped lot at end of long, winding driveway

Photograph



Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): Dec. 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

210 CLIFTON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

Constructed in 1929, the house at 210 Clifton Street is a representation of Colonial design that is reasonably accurate given its date of construction. The 2 ½-story, side-gabled dwelling has a brick exterior and a characteristic five bay façade with a center entrance. The door surround has pilasters supporting a broken pediment and a semi-circular fan above the six-panel door. The doorway is flanked by 2 x 4-light sidelights that are set into the brick wall (a 20th century touch). Windows contain double-hung 12/12 sash on the first floor of the façade and 8/12 above; all are flanked by shutters with iron hardware. Three gabled dormer with arched double-hung windows rise from the front roof slope. An enclosed porch is offset to the southwest of the main house block and there is a 1 ½-story clapboarded wing to the north. The wing has a less historic appearance than the main house with a group of four windows on the façade and less ornate dormers. The exterior of the house has seen few if any alterations since its construction.

To the northwest of the house is a detached two-car garage constructed in 1929. The side-gabled building has a clapboarded exterior.

The house is set on a large lot measuring over 2 ½ acres. It is setback from the road and screened by vegetation, accessed by a long driveway which it shares with the adjacent property.

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 house at 210 Clifton Street was constructed as part of the first phase of development of the Belmont Hill Company. In 1918 Henry O. Underwood formed the Company with other prominent local residents. They bought land on Belmont Hill with a goal of developing it slowly, in the way they thought was in the best interest of the town. The homes in this area were constructed between 1920 and 1932 on large lots ranging from ¾ to 3 acres, laid out by Loring Underwood, Landscape Designer. This lot was sold by the Trustees in February 1928 to Edward K. Robinson (Book 5209, Page 412). The house was designed by architect Philip S. Avery and constructed by Robert D. Donaldson of Lincoln. The building permit was granted on June 12, 1928 and the estimated value of the house was \$24,000.

Edward Robinson was a publishing executive and in 1930 was living here with his wife Hope, daughter, and a maid. The Robinsons owned the house until 1945 when they sold it to Arthur C. Cope (Book 6831, Page 17). Dr. Arthur Cope (1909-1966) was a Professor of Organic Chemistry at MIT. In 1963 he conveyed the property to Bernice Abbott Cope (Book 10277, Page 58). She sold it to Jerome and Cele Kagan in 1971 (Book 12084, Page 573). The Kagans still live there today (2016). Jerome Kagan is a Professor Emeritus in Psychology at Harvard.

The architect of the home was Philip S. Avery (1888-?). The MACRIS database lists Avery as the architect for approximately ten large dwellings in Boston's fashionable suburbs including Brookline, Newton, and Wellesley between 1919 and 1936. Avery also designed the house at 204 Prospect Street in Belmont for Miss Lucia Peabody in 1913. No additional information was found concerning Avery.

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