

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

17-117	Boston North	M	BLM.40
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Town/City: Belmont

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Waverley

Address: 325 Common Street

Historic Name: Col. Christopher Grant House
(Grant-Chenery House)

Uses: Present: single family dwelling

Original: single family dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1760 (wing may be earlier)

Source: deeds, visual inspection

Style/Form: Georgian

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboards

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
garage (1939)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
late 19th c. – front porch
1935 – rear porch

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 11,109 SF

Setting: busy thoroughfare, surrounded by early 20th century development

Photograph



Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): July 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

325 COMMON 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.

The Christopher Grant House at 325 Common Street is significant as one of Belmont's earliest surviving homes and for its relatively unaltered status. The "main" house displays a five bay façade with center entrance, large central brick chimney and gable saltbox profile with close eaves. The simple front porch with tapered posts was added in the late 19th century. The three-story, shed roofed wing to the north may predate the section to the south. It has three unevenly spaced bays and a sidehall entrance.

The window openings on both sections contain double-hung 6/6 sash and all but the second floor windows on the main block are capped by entablature lintels. The windows also display footed sills. The third story windows on the wing are slightly smaller.

The house is set close to the road with a small informally landscaped front yard. Behind the house there is a hip-roofed garage constructed in 1939.

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.

This house was constructed ca. 1760 although it may incorporate an earlier building which was shown on this location on the old 1720 map of Watertown. The property was purchased by Christopher Grant about 1760. He married Sarah Watson of Cambridge on August 4, 1763 so the house was likely completed by then. Christopher Grant became a Sargent in Captain Samuel Barnard's Watertown Company in 1775. By the end of the Revolutionary War he had reached the rank of Colonel. After the war he returned to farming and is known to have had apple orchards. Col. Grant served as a Watertown Selectman from 1781-1794. He died in 1818 and his widow died in 1821. At the time of his death Col. Grant owned 96 acres in Belmont, then Watertown. The 1875 map shows the property as being owned by "C. Grant".

In 1882 the property was purchased by David Chenery Jr. and his wife Flora Pierce Chenery. The Chenery family also owned two other houses to the north, on the west side of Common Street, and another on the east side of Common Street, north of Washington Street. David and his father, who lived next door at 271 Common Street (no longer extant), farmed the land and specialized in fruits, successfully experimenting with modern farming methods. It was known for its apple orchards, fruit and currants. One of Belmont's Civil War heroes and Belmont's first constable, David Chenery Jr. (1838-1921) lived here until his death in 1921 at the age of 83. His widow Flora was still living here in 1934 with her children, Franklin W. Chenery (1875-1956) and Nella Chenery (1870-1944).

In 1937-8 Franklin Chenery petitioned to subdivide the Chenery property on the west side of Common Street into house lots (this area includes what is now Pierce Road, Hastings Road and Brettwood Road). Franklin Chenery kept the house at 325 Common Street and lived here until his death in 1956. The other Chenery house at 271 Common Street was torn down in 1939. That same year a two-car garage was constructed behind 325 Common Street.

The house was purchased by Robert and Mary Peretti in the 1960s. It is still owned by family members today.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

325 COMMON STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Wing to north (seen at right) may predate the main house block.

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance by _____ Lisa Mausolf _____
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Col. Christopher Grant House at 325 Common Street is locally significant under Criterion C, Architecture, as a well-preserved example of an 18th century Georgian house displaying a five-bay façade, central chimney and saltbox profile. The adjacent wing is believed to predate the main house. It is one of the oldest surviving homes in Belmont and is also significant for its associations with the Chenery family and agricultural activities.