

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

5-75	Boston North	B	BLM.10
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**Town/City:** Belmont

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*):  
Payson Park

**Address:** 18 Oak Avenue

**Historic Name:** John L. Goss House

**Uses:** Present: single family dwelling

Original: two family dwelling

**Date of Construction:** 1915

**Source:** building permit

**Style/Form:** Craftsman/Prairie

**Architect/Builder:** W.A. Wadsworth, arch./bldr.

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: wood shingles

Roof: slate

## Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

garage (1915, updated 2004)

## Major Alterations (*with dates*):

2008 – expansion of front and rear dormers

**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 13,740 SF

**Setting:** large informally landscaped lot

## 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

18 OAK AVENUE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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 1915, the Goss House at 18 Oak Avenue is a Craftsman style, wood-shingled dwelling that shows the influence of the Prairie Style in its widely overhanging eaves and its sense of horizontality which is reinforced by the placement of a porch on one side of the main house block and a porte cochere on the other. The front porch and porte cochere display squat, tapered porch posts that rest on a shingled wall. The somewhat unusual use of granite blocks under the porch and porte cochere is a reflection of the original owner who was a granite manufacturer. The windows include double-hung windows with 6/1 and 8/1 sash as well as a stained glass window and rectangular oriel window on the north wall. The front hip dormer was originally smaller but was enlarged in 2008. This and the enclosure of the south porch are the only minimal alterations that the house has seen since its construction.

Behind the house is a stuccoed garage capped by a slate hip roof with glass and panel doors. It was originally constructed in 1915 and updated in 2004.

## 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 is located within the Payson Park subdivision which occupies land that was originally part of J.P. Cushing's estate, "Bellmont". After Cushing's death in 1862, the estate was purchased by Samuel Payson who sold the property to the Payson Park Land Company in 1886. The former estate was developed in three stages between 1886 and 1920 by the trustees. This property comprised Lot 206 and the northeast part of 184 on the plan. The land was sold by the Trustees to Eugenie Goss, wife of John L. Goss of Boston in February 1914. The following year W.A. Wadsworth was granted a building permit on behalf of John Goss. Census records indicate that John Goss was a granite manufacturer. William A. Wadsworth was married to his daughter Lillian and was the superintendent of a Boston construction company (Wadsworth & Greenwood). Directories and Census returns indicate that the two couples lived here together into the 1930s.

In 1938 the house was sold by the Goss heirs including Lillian Goss Wadsworth to Raymond and Ollave Douglass (Book 6215, Page 15). Raymond Douglass (1894-1978) was a math professor at MIT and also served as chairman of Belmont's Civil Defense Committee during World War II. Raymond Douglass died in 1978 and his wife died the following year. The house was sold by family members in 2000. The present owners have owned the house since 2002.

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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 John L. Goss House at 18 Oak Avenue is potentially eligible locally under Criterion C, Architecture, as a well-preserved example of the Prairie Style. Constructed in 1915, the house displays a characteristic low-pitched roof with widely overhanging eaves and a horizontality associated with the style while the unusual use of granite reflects the occupation of the original owner who was a granite manufacturer. The house has seen minimal alteration since its original construction and retains a high level of integrity.