

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

5-65	Boston North	B	BLM.784
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Town/City: Belmont

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

Photograph



Address: 39 Oak Avenue

Historic Name: Herbert L. & Sarah Davis House

Uses: Present: single family dwelling

Original: single family dwelling

Date of Construction: 1908

Source: deeds, Payson Park Plan

Style/Form: Craftsman Colonial

Architect/Builder: H.L. Davis, architect;
C.W. Kilpatrick, builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood shingle

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

garage (1919)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

2001 – side porch (Spruce St.) relocated to rear of structure near garage and driveway, skylights added
2008 – repairs to front porch

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 6,412 SF

Setting: neighborhood of similar early 20th century dwellings on small, informally landscaped lots

Locus Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): November 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

39 OAK AVENUE

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.

Located at the northeast corner of Oak Avenue and Spruce Street, 39 Oak Avenue is a 2 ½-story, 3 x 2-bay dwelling which, like many homes in the neighborhood, bears the imprint of both the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles. The hip-roofed house displays overhanging eaves and rests on a mortared stone foundation. It is clad in wood shingles. Various features lend interest to the rectangular plan including bay and oriel windows on the first floor, a two-bay porch with squat posts which fronts part of the façade, a pedimented central bay and a variety of window sash including 2/1 double-hung sash, double-hung windows with diamond-paned upper sash and a Palladian window in the front pediment.

A driveway extends along the north side of the house, terminating at a hip-roofed garage constructed in 1919.

This is one of a number of well-preserved wood shingled dwellings in the Payson Park neighborhood displaying the influence of the Colonial Revival, Queen Anne, Shingle and/or Craftsman styles.

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 who included Costello Converse of Malden, William Faxon, Jr. of Cohasset and Andrew Reed of Belmont. Oak Avenue was laid out in 1889 and the houses on the street date from 1902 to 1928, fueled in large part by the arrival of the streetcar line in 1898. The deeds for the Oak Avenue lots included restrictions that were in effect until 1912. These limited development to a single house and stable, prohibited the sale of liquor or offensive trade and required a setback of 25' from Oak Avenue.

This was lot 40 of the Payson Park subdivision. Deeds indicate that in June 1907 the Payson Park Land Company sold a parcel of land to Herbert L. Davis of Cambridge (Book 3309, Page 561). In 1908 H.L. Davis of Cambridge was given a building permit for the construction of a house of his own design. The builder of the house was C.W. Kilpatrick of Waverley. The 1909 Plan confirms that the house had been constructed by then. A two-car detached garage was constructed for H.L. Davis in 1919, constructed by J.A. Peppard.

Herbert Lincoln Davis (1865-1937) was employed as the superintendent of the Poole Piano Company of Cambridge. He lived here with his wife Sarah who died in 1933. They are both buried at Mount Auburn Cemetery. The property was conveyed to Viola Davis in 1935. The 1940 U.S. Census indicates that she was then a 59-year old widow, living here with three lodgers. The property was sold to Leslie and Anita Williamson in 1942 and was sold by Anita Williamson's estate in 1992 to Philip Thayer and Lauren Meier (Book 21897, Page 387).

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Belmont Tribune, February 16, 1906.

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Cini, Marcia M. Area form for Payson Park (BLM.B), 1982.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA

Payson Park Land Company Brochures, 1898, 1909.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1915, 1922, 1931, 1949.

Stadley, George W. *Atlas of the Towns of Watertown, Belmont, Arlington, and Lexington.* 1898.

Town of Belmont, Building Department Records.

U.S. Census, various dates.



Payson Park Brochure, 1909