

Waverley

The Waverley section is located in the southwest corner of Belmont, near both the Waltham and Watertown town lines. It includes Waverley Square, one of the town's three commercial centers, as well as various residential neighborhoods with resources dating from the mid 19th to 20th century.

The Waverley section of Belmont has seen many changes since its origins as a rural settlement in the mid 19th century. Lexington, Belmont and North Streets (now Trapelo Road) were early transportation routes. The arrival of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1843 opened up the area for development and growth increased as Waverley became a railroad center and then a streetcar suburb.

In 1854 the Waverley Land Company subdivided 300 acres of land in the area and laid out Sycamore, Beech, Maple, Walnut, Chestnut, Linden and White Streets. This was the first area in Belmont to be subdivided for suburban development. The house at 36 Sycamore Street is one of the few pre-1853 houses to remain standing.



36 Sycamore Street

The building at 44-48 Church Street is another one of the earliest extant buildings in Waverley and is thought to be the original Waverley Hall, built by the Waverley Land Company ca. 1851. It was originally located across the street from its current site and was built to provide a meeting place and general store for the new village center. It was moved to its present location prior to 1875. The building may have also been used as housing by immigrant workers who came to Belmont in the late 19th century and were involved in the construction of buildings at nearby McLean Hospital.



44-48 Church Street

The house at 151 Lexington Street was built ca. 1870 by William Munroe, one of the original incorporators of the Waverley Hall Company. It is a good example of the Italianate style.



151 Lexington Street

In the early 1870s developer D. Gilbert Dexter of Cambridge purchased an eight acre-parcel on either side of Waverley Street. He was active in real estate and was the founder/editor of the *Cambridge Tribune* newspaper. Waverley Street had recently been completed between Common Street and Trapelo Road and was also located convenient to transportation and community landmarks such as the recently completed Waverley Congregational Church. The houses erected in the area reflected the latest architectural trends. Today, a number of well-preserved French Second Empire-style dwellings are visible on Waverley Street, Hawthorne Street and Cambridge Street; several incorporate distinctive towers.



4 Cambridge Street



33 Hawthorne Street

With the arrival of the streetcar in 1898 there was demand for additional residential construction resulting in a variety of architectural styles and forms. This included houses in the Queen Anne and Shingle styles.



69 Waverley Street



70 Lexington Street

In addition to single-family dwellings, new types of housing were being constructed in Waverley and Boston's other "streetcar suburbs". The Thayer at 20 Moraine Street was constructed in 1908 and is a six-unit building. A unique variation on the three-decker, it displays two-story Ionic columns and may incorporate features of an earlier mansion that stood on the site.



20 Moraine Street

Commercial development was concentrated at Waverley Square and along Trapelo Road which began as a streetcar thoroughfare and later became a major automobile route.



Postcard view of Waverley Square

The Kaplan Block displays a distinctive rounded corner at the Trapelo Road/White Street intersection. The Colonial Revival building was constructed in 1927 according to designs by local architect H. Thaxter Underwood.



464-470 Trapelo Road

The Strand Theatre Block was constructed in 1920 at the corner of Trapelo and Beech Street and was designed by Boston architects Funk & Wilcox. The moving picture theater opened in September 1921 to an overflow crowd of 700 citizens and residents. Initially the theater showed silent movies and had a pit for a piano player. "Talkies" arrived in the summer of 1929.



Strand Theatre, 368-380 Trapelo Road

Waverley also includes a number of historic churches and public buildings built in the late 19th and early 20th century to meet the needs of the growing population in this part of town. St. Luke's Church was established as a mission church of St. Joseph's Church to serve the Waverley members of the Roman Catholic congregation. The first church was a wood-frame chapel built on Beech Street in 1915 (razed in 1929). The present church was constructed in two phases between 1926 and 1934. A school, rectory and convent complete the complex.



St. Luke's Church, 132 Lexington Street

The former Unitarian Church at 51 Lexington Street is an altered Shingle Style structure constructed in 1896.



51 Lexington Street

The First Baptist Church at 129 Lexington Street was built in three phases in 1904, 1935 and 1955 and combines elements of the Shingle Style, English Revival and Gothic Revival.



First Baptist Church, 129 Lexington Street

The Victorian Gothic building at 445 Trapelo Road was built in 1873 as the first Daniel Butler Grammar School. Rev. Butler was a Congregational minister and active school board member. The building was converted to a fire station in 1906 and the sandstone Art Deco entrance bays at the west end were added in 1930. Later an addition was constructed for a branch library. The building was converted to condominiums in 2006.



Former First Daniel Butler School/Waverley Fire Station, 445 Trapelo Road

The second Daniel Butler School was constructed at 90 White Street in 1900 according to designs by E.B. Homer who had designed the High School (Town Hall Annex) several years earlier. The original 8-room building was expanded in 1920 and 1930. It is still in use as a school today.



Historic postcard. Second Daniel Butler School, 90 White Street