

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

035-0032	Salem		WNH.125
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Town/City: Wenham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Lord's Hill

Photograph



Address: 14 Burnham Road

Historic Name: Elaine and Mayer Weisman House

Uses: Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1956

Source: Deed

Style/Form: Contemporary -- Mid-Century Modern

Architect/Builder: not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Wood, vertical board

Roof: Rolled composition

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*): none

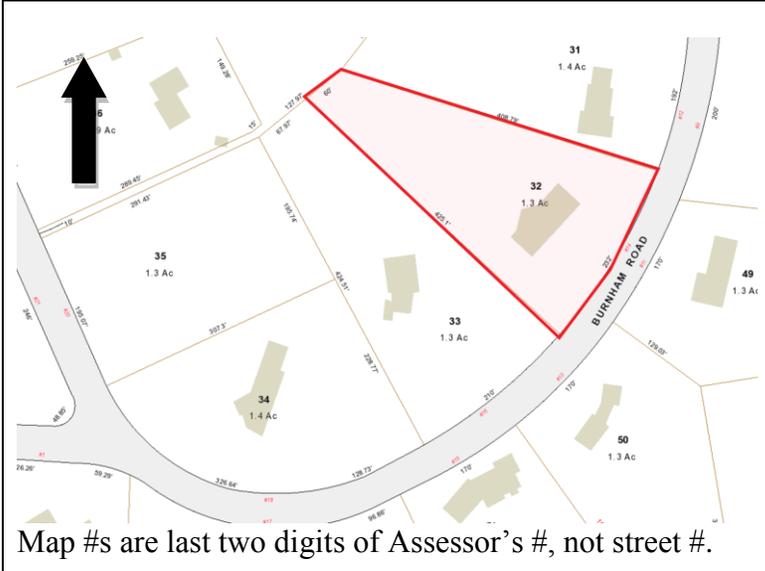
Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 1.3 acres

Setting: Suburban *cul-de-sac* neighborhood developed during the mid-20th century containing a variety of contemporary and traditional house forms.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Wenham Historical Commission

Date: July 2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WENHAM

14 BURNHAM ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

WNH.125

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

The Weisman House is located on a sloping trapezoidal lot on the eastern slope of Lord's Hill. The parcel is maintained largely in lawn with scattered shrubs and mature trees. A paved driveway leads from Burnham Road to the basement-level garage at the north end of the house. The house is banked into the slope and has an unusual plan; the entrance is located at the rear elevation that faces uphill, away from the street. A set of steps leads from the driveway up to the entrance centered on the north elevation.

The 2-story house rests on a poured concrete foundation and is formed by a rectangular plan intersected by a projecting oblique bay on the north elevation that contains the main entrance. The house has a shallow shed roof covered with rolled composite material. The roof has very deep, overhanging eaves with exposed beams at the north and south elevations. The first floor (basement) is constructed of poured concrete. The upper floor is sheathed with vertical boards beneath casement windows that run the length of the southeast elevation. 55 Arbor Street is an excellent example of contemporary design in Wenham from the mid-20th century. The design is unusual in its use of a shallow shed roof with very wide eaves, the placement of the entrance on the rear elevation, and the extensive fenestration. The building retains a high level of integrity.

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.

In 1953 the Burnham estate on Topsfield Road was subdivided and named the Lord's Hill development. The 1955 landscape plan for the development was designed by Arthur A. Shurcliff (1870-1957) and his son, Sidney N. Shurcliff (1906-1981) of Boston. Arthur Shurcliff is perhaps best known as the landscape designer for the re-creation and restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, Shurcliff's practice included private gardens and landscape restorations, as well as the planning of public parks. Shurcliff served as a consultant to the Boston Park Department for many years. Sidney Shurcliff received both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in landscape architecture at Harvard and joined his father in practice in the 1930s. Sidney Shurcliff continued his father's practice and expanded its scope; the firm was ultimately known as Shurcliff, Merrill & Footit. (N.B. The Shurcliff firm papers are located in Special Collections, Frances Loeb Library, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, and at the Massachusetts Historical Society. An examination of the finding aids of the collections did not reveal any items relating to the Lord's Hill project.)

Mayer G. Weisman (1928-2003) and Elaine Bierstock (b. 1934) were married in 1954 and lived in Brookline, Massachusetts. The Weismans purchased the property in 1956. (Essex South Deed Book 4324, p. 591). Weisman followed his father into the scrap metal industry and eventually became president of Samuel Gordon & Sons, a longstanding metal recycling firm in Chelsea. The Weismans occupied 14 Burnham Road until 2010.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Essex South Plan Book 87, plan 55. 1955.

http://www.movoto.com/wenham-ma/14-burnham-rd-wenham-ma-01984/pid_sm5mfgztfh/. Accessed May 15, 2017.

Lillie, Rupert B. "Houses & lands associated with Lord's Hill, 1637-1983, Wenham, Massachusetts." Unpublished manuscript. 1984. (Hamilton-Wenham Library)

Massachusetts Birth Indices, Death Indices, Marriage Indices. Ancestry.com.

Wedding announcement. *Boston Jewish Advocate*. August 26, 1954. Ancestry.com.

Wenham Tax Assessor records.