

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

019-0057	Salem		WNH.160
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Town/City: Wenham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Address: 19 Larch Row

Historic Name: Moses and Lydia Wilkins House

Uses: Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1849

Source: style, deeds

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Not known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite, cut

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards and trim

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: barn/garage (newly attached)

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Side porch (20th c) – Dormers, connector to barn, front entrance surround (E 21st c)

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.88 acre

Setting: Densely built streetscape with small-scale residential buildings at edge of village center. Located on main cross-town thoroughfare near Main Street (Route 1A).

Locus Map Map #s are last two digits of lot #s.



Recorded by: Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

Organization: Wenham Historical Commission

Date: June 2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WENHAM

19 LARCH ROW

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.

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.

19 Larch Row faces southwest onto Larch Row behind a modest setback. Maintained chiefly in lawn, the rectangular lot slopes down to the northeast around the house and barn. A high hedge and wood fence line the street in front of the house; mature trees edge the perimeter of the site. A wide paved driveway extends along the southeast side of the house, leading to the barn/garage. The house consists of a 2½ -story main block with an extension and setback at the rear and a one-story addition connecting it to an adjacent barn/garage.

Measuring roughly 27 feet wide by 29 feet deep, the three bay by four bay main block rises 2½ stories from a granite block foundation to a front gable roof with gable returns and a slender chimney near the front on the northwest slope. Walls are sheathed with clapboard and trimmed with corner pilasters and a high, molded frieze. Windows typically have 2/2 double-hung sash and flat casings with narrow molded cornice caps.

The three bay façade (southwest elevation) has a classically inspired, offset entrance with a single-leaf door, engaged Tuscan columns, molded entablature, and pediment. Fenestration includes two windows on the first floor, three asymmetrically placed windows on the second floor, and two symmetrical windows in the half-story.

The southeast elevation contains three window bays and three modern, pedimented dormers in the forward section. The building steps back at the rear to a one-bay section with a modern picture window on the ground floor and 2/2 window above. The northwest elevation features two window bays and a gabled (but not pedimented) dormer towards the front of the main block. A short, 2½ story gabled wing projects from the back of this elevation; it has one window bay facing the street, banded modern windows on the first floor of the gable end, and one window each on the second and half stories of the gable end. A screened porch with a low hip roof wraps around the north corner of the house. A small two-story addition with what appears to be a hip roof is roughly centered on the rear (northeast) elevation.

A side-gabled, one-story addition with a center entrance and full height sidelights connects the house to an adjacent barn/garage. The garage building rises one story from a fieldstone foundation to a side gabled roof without gable returns. It is sheathed with clapboards and has flat trim at the corner boards and door openings. The façade (southwest elevation) contains three symmetrical vehicle bays, the center of which projects slightly from the main wall and is capped by a shed roof. A small 6/6 window is off-center on the ground floor of the southeast elevation.

Well maintained and generally well preserved, 19 Larch Row is a large and dignified example of Greek Revival middle-class housing in Wenham. The design is notable for its large scale, picturesque massing, bold wall trim, high proportion of windows, and historic barn/garage. Significant alterations include the crowd of prominent dormers on the southeast elevation and a somewhat incongruous front door surround.

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.

19 Larch Row was likely constructed in 1849 by Moses D. Wilkins (1825-1894), a cordwainer. Wilkins purchased the lot from Francis W. Merrill in December of 1848 and took out a mortgage for the property from Moses Putnam, a shoe manufacturer, on the same date. (Essex South Deed Book 405, Page 9-10) The 1855 census includes Wilkins at this location with wife, Lydia, and their two young children. Two teenage boys, perhaps apprentices, and two adult boarders, also cordwainers, lived here as

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well. Wilkins fought in the Civil War on two separate occasions. (*U.S., Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861-1865* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com.)

The Wilkins family continued to occupy the property into the 20th century. The 1880 census indicates that Moses and Lydia's son Charles living here with his parents and working as a carpenter. Moses Wilkins worked as a railroad flagman during his later years and died in 1894. The 1910 map notes this as the property of "L.E. Wilkins." City directories in 1909 and 1918 include on Larch Row L. Frank Wilkins, a foreman working in Beverly, and F. Blake Wilkins, a civil engineer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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City Directories. 1870, 1871, 1886, 1888, 1901, 1909, 1918, 1924, 1932. Ancestry.com.

Cole, Adeline P., compiler. *Notes on Wenham History: 1643-1943*. Wenham Historical Association, Newcomb and Gauss Printers. 1943.

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Massachusetts birth indices. Ancestry.com.

Massachusetts death indices. Ancestry.com.

Massachusetts marriage indices. Ancestry.com.

United States Census for 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940. Ancestry.com.

Walling, Henry Francis. *A Topographical Map of Essex County, Massachusetts...* Smith & Worley, 1856.

Walker, George H. & Co., *Atlas of Essex County*. Boston: George H. Walker & Co., 1884.

Walker Lithography and Publishing Company. *Atlas of the Towns of Topsfield, Ipswich, Essex, Hamilton and Wenham, Essex County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Walker Lithography & Co., 1910.

Wenham Tax Assessor records.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGE



Photo 2. Garage.

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 Stacy Spies

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

19 Larch Row is a contributing feature of the eligible Larch Row Historic District. The neighborhood along Patch Avenue and Larch Row near Main Street is eligible as a historic district under Criterion A at the local level. Developed during the 1840s and populated nearly entirely by cordwainers in the mid-19th century, this neighborhood is representative of the dramatic rise in the shoemaking trade in Wenham during the middle decades of the 19th century. This densely-developed neighborhood allowed residents access to workshops and small factories on nearby Main Street in addition to ten-footer shops located on site. The buildings feature Greek Revival stylistic features popular during that time. The buildings all retain integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association.