

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

23-93	Boston North	Q	BLM.817
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Town/City: Belmont

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

Address: 104 School Street

Historic Name: Richardson-Swift House

Uses: Present: single family dwelling

Original: single family dwelling

Date of Construction: 1883

Source: Betts, p. 78

Style/Form: Stick Style

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard

Roof: slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
garage (1985)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: less than 1/2 acre (11,457 SF)

Setting: corner lot in neighborhood of late 19th century dwellings

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

104 SCHOOL STREET

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.

The oldest house in the Belmont Park neighborhood, 104 School Street is a good example of the Stick Style, an architectural mode which found popularity in the late 19th century due to the increasing availability of millwork trim. Typical of the style the house is sheathed in wood clapboards with applied stick work which is used for ornament rather than to express structure. There is a wide variety of wood trim including turned porch posts and turned balustrades, fancy brackets at the tops of the porch posts, at the tops of the cornerboards, decorating bay windows and overhangs and supporting canopies over the first floor windows. Jigsaw trim is located below the windows and raised wooden knobs decorate the gables and second floor window lintels. A large brick chimney with corbel cap rises from the east slope of the slate hip roof. Windows for the most part contain double-hung 1/1 sash. A fixed Queen Anne style sash with geometric border is located in the front gable. Behind the main house block is a historic ell and wing.

The house is set on a level corner lot measuring about 11,000 SF with frontage on both School Street and Goden Street marked by a modern iron fence. Shading the front yard is a large, old beech tree. A driveway to the east of the house terminates at a two-car garage capped by a hip roof with cupola. According to assessors' records it was constructed in 1985, although a garage had been built on this site prior to 1922 (Sanborn maps).

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.

The house at 104 School Street predates the Belmont Park subdivision and is the only house which was standing when the plan of the proposed subdivision was drawn in January 1894 by Walter C. Stevens, Civil Engineer and Surveyor for William W. Lowe (MCSR Plan Book 87, Plan 7). The property was lot 41 of the new subdivision.

Thomas Richardson had purchased the property about 1881 and in 1883 built this house at the corner of School and Goden Streets (Betts: 78). It was Richardson's land that was subdivided for Belmont Park in 1894. Belmont Park was an early speculative development of single family housing in Belmont, located off Concord Avenue. Advertisements touted the development of "moderately-priced suburban homes". Located a little more than a quarter mile from the depot and six miles from Boston, the neighborhood quickly became popular with affluent Boston commuters and all of the lots were developed by 1898.

By 1896 the house at 104 School Street was owned and occupied by Sarah K. Swift. The 1900 Census lists Sarah Swift as a 43 year old widow. In 1910 she was living here with her daughter Nancy Hernandez, mother Adeline Mead and a servant.

The property was conveyed to Grace E. Hayward in 1919 and she sold it in 1924 to William Chute. Later owners included Francis and Margaret Schaffer (1929-1941) and Philip and Barbara Towne (1941-1968). The house was purchased by David and Anne Lessels in 1968 and sold to Zeph and Diana Stewart in 1974 (Book 12648, Page 327). The Stewarts owned the house until 1985 when it was sold to the present owners, Scott Fitzgibbon and Kwan Kew Lai Fitzgibbon. The Fitzgibbons built the present garage in 1985.

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Belmont: The Architecture and Development of the Town of Homes. Prepared for the Belmont Historic District Commission, 1984.

Betts, Richard B. *The Streets of Belmont and How they Were Named* (2nd edition). Belmont: Belmont Historical Society, 2012.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA

Plan of Belmont Park House Lots in Belmont belonging to William W. Lowe and Others, Jan. 1894. Plan Book 17, Plan 7.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1905, 1910, 1915, 1922, 1931, 1949.

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

Town of Belmont, Building Department files.

U.S. Census, various dates.

