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# TOWN OF MENDON

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## Historic District 2022 Expansion Study Report

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## SUMMARY

In 2015 Mendon’s Historic Commission approached the Mendon Board of Selectmen to discuss initiating the process to establish a local historic district. In 2016 the Board of Selectmen subsequently appointed a study committee to investigate the feasibility and desire of establishing a local historic district in the Town. At the Town meeting on 5/5/2017 the Town approved the creation of the Mendon Center Historic District and the Taft Homestead District. An Historic District Commission was appointed to enforce the newly created historic district by-law. The Commission created a set of Design Guidelines. Now with a few years of experience, we feel it is time to expand by adding a few more districts to protect more historically significant areas in town.

To that end we are proposing the creation of the following new Historic Districts:

- Washington Street Historic District
- Jotham Hayward Homestead District (6 Bates Street)

<b>Proposed Timeline</b>	
Completion of Study Report	Feb 2022
Submission to State Historic Commission and Local Planning Board	Feb 2022
Public Outreach	March/April 2022
Public Hearing	5/2/2022
Town Meeting	5/6/2022

## Introduction

Under MGL Ch40C, municipalities are empowered to create local historic districts and a local historic district by-law. The main purpose of a local historic district the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the Town, its architecture, and through the maintenance and improvement of settings for such buildings and places and the encouragement of design compatible therewith.

In 2017 Mendon adopted a local historic district by-law and created two districts, the Mendon Center District, and the Taft Homestead District. The buildings and structures within these districts reflect or constitute distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, economic, political, or social history of the Town. The intent of the historic district by-law is to protect and preserve these resources through a local review system that encourages and ensures appropriate improvement and development within the districts. There are over 220 historic districts in Massachusetts which have been responsible for protecting many irreplaceable historic and cultural resources. The Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, was created to protect and preserve these resources through a local review system that encourages and ensures appropriate improvement and development within the historic districts. Our goal is to preserve and protect the distinctive architecture and characteristics of significant buildings and places in Mendon. These homes, churches, and commercial buildings, constructed over a period of time, represent a variety of architectural styles which convey a sense of connection to and pride in Mendon's history.

The Mendon Historic District Commission (HDC), appointed by the Mendon Select Board, is charged with preserving the architectural and historic integrity of the structures within the historic districts. The commission meets monthly to assist property owners within the Historic Districts to make informed decisions about exterior architectural and site changes. The Historic District Commission is authorized to review the appropriateness of exterior changes to buildings and places within the district that are visible from any public street, way, or body of water

After consultation with the Historic Commission, the Historic Society, and residents, the District Commission is recommending the creation of two new districts. This report will demonstrate how our committee identified the proposed districts, their relevance to Mendon's history and why the committee's recommendations address community feedback and alignment to the Town's strategic growth plans.

## Methodology

Since the creation of the first districts in 2017, the District Commission and Historic Commission have continued to inventory and research historic properties and landscapes in town. A set of design guidelines were developed based on feedback from residents and the Local Historic District Committee. This committee is comprised of professionals including a realtor, an architect, community members and homeowners in the new districts.

Building on the work that was done in the previous district study in 2017, the Commission began to look at expanding the Mendon Center Historic District. The proposed extension encompasses the lower half of Washington Street. In 2003 the following locations were reviewed and adopted by the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts into the National Register of Historic Places. These areas included Main Street, Hastings Street, Maple Street, North Ave, George Street and part of Washington Street.

Since the introduction of the first Local Historic Districts in Mendon there has been an increased interest from individual homeowners as well as neighborhoods. The Historical Commission distributed letters to historic homeowners in 2021 and the response and feedback has been favorable. Property owners reached out to the Commission to inquire about preservation efforts along parts of Washington Street. We have had the opportunity to speak with individuals and small groups by going door to door. As the Town continues to experience sprawling, erratic commercial growth, Washington Street and the property located at 6 Bates Street are considered at high risk for loss or demolition.

In 2019 voters of Mendon approved the designation of Washington Street as a scenic road. It demonstrated that our community values the rural farmlands and architecture of this quaint area whose character has remained relatively intact. Washington Street, also known as Birch Alley, with horse farms, mature trees and extensive historic stone walls continues to capture a period of time in Mendon's history of modest residential growth beyond the village center and small farms that supported the needs of the local economy.

A new Master Plan Committee has resumed work to complete the Mendon Master Plan. The number of responses from the initial survey from residents was considerably good. Based on the 2021-2022 surveys the feedback has not changed since the last survey done in 2012. Overall, the community favors the small town feel of Mendon and its history. Preservation of our historical resources is important to residents as is the desire to see suitable commercial growth continue. Balancing the two is a priority for the Local Historic District Commission.

The decisions to incorporate the individual district at 6 Bates Street was a result of conversations with the property owner. The property is located in the commercial zone and is in danger of being lost to development.

## Current Relevance: Strategic Alignment to Growth/Revitalization Efforts

Today the Town center and connecting roadways remain a focal point for the community as they house many historic structures tied to Mendon's past. With the Mendon Center Historic District approval in 2017 we are recommending this district be the anchor for extending our local historic district preservation efforts. There are multiple strategic initiatives underway focused on the Town center and contiguous areas; these efforts focus on revitalization and commercial development which is where a historic district would help preserve the "look and feel" of Mendon while complimenting and assisting with those efforts. Specifically, the Planning Board is working towards creating a village/walking district. The Select Board supported a campus study which has been a valuable guide to revitalizing the Village Center.

Aside from those efforts targeting the proposed district there continues to be a need to increase Mendon's commercial tax base along Hasting's St / Route 16. We believe the establishment of a local historic district just beyond the Town Center will provide a balance and control to that future commercial growth. The Master Plan will help to guide development in a manner that is in keeping and harmony with the historic character of our community and not at the expense of losing it.



## SIGNIFICANCE

### **Washington Street District**

In the 19th century, Washington Street was known locally as Birch Alley for the abundance of stand-alone birch trees that populated the street. Washington Street was later named for George Washington after his visit to Mendon in 1789. The period of 1830-70 saw the transformation of Mendon from primarily a landscape of loosely distributed farms around a meeting house to a modern commercial village. After a period of prosperity and growth through the mid-1800s, Mendon's development dropped off considerably until the very late 19th, early 20th centuries. Today's remaining Washington Street houses illustrate these factors. The house at 16 Washington c. 1750 is one of the few remaining examples of the town's original colonial landscape. The continued existence of peripheral farmland along Washington Street is a subtle but significant reminder of the antiquity of the town.



4. View south on Washington Street (Photographer: Neil Larson, 2002)

The area was once primarily farmland which became more residential as the town center (the triangle of Hastings, Main and Maple streets) became more developed. With the introduction of the Milford – Uxbridge Trolley line at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the establishment of the town as a place of retreat showcasing Nipmuc Lake Park new employment opportunities arose outside of the farming industry. Improvements in transportation allowed people to make their home in Mendon and commute to work. The housing growth at that time rendered cape style homes, craftsman style homes and modest bungalows many of which line Washington Street. Later development continued at a slower pace as residential neighborhoods and developments were being established in other parts of the town. As a result, Washington Street has been able to retain its modest and rural character for many years.

### **Jotham Hayward Homestead District (6 Bates Street)**

In 1818, John Hayward, "In consideration of five hundred dollars paid by my son Jotham Hayward of Mendon a certain tract of land situated and lying in Mendon..." In 1840, Jotham, a farmer by trade, leased a portion of his land to the Mendon 4<sup>th</sup> School District for the building of a school. He sold his land and dwelling to John Howe in 1845.

The Haywards settled in Mendon in the 1600's and were involved in town government during the 1700's. In 1712, William Hayward was among those chosen as a Selectman and Assessor. Samuel Hayward was promoted to second lieutenant in 1760 for his loyalty, courage and good conduct.

This property located in an area that was often referred to as South Milford, is one of the few remaining historic buildings on the south side of town. It is located on a state highway (Rt. 140), in the commercial zone, and one of the few properties in town connected to municipal water. From the mid 1700's until 1860 this remote section of Mendon grew into a thriving center of its own. Depending on road and weather conditions it became increasingly difficult for these people to get into town to purchase goods, get mail and attend church services which were required.

In addition to a school House South Milford boasted a place of worship on the upper level of the Green Store which was located at the intersection of Hartford Ave East and Cape Road (Route 140). Goods and services were available from the Penniman General Store (Green Store) as well as postal services. Across from the Green Store was a tavern and hotel for weary travelers on the Old Hartford Turnpike which was the only route directly connecting the Boston Colony to the Connecticut Colony. At that intersection was the home of Dr. Daniel Thurber an esteemed and highly regarded physician who received honorary degrees from Harvard University and Brown University of R.I. His colleagues established the Thurber Medical Association which continued for over 125 years.

Since this area was zoned highway business in 2013 much of the history and the structures that defined this thriving area are now gone. The modest center chimney 1 ½ story house c. 1780 located at 6 Bates Street is danger of loss due to development. The property owner has expressed her desires to see this property protected for the future.

## Boundary Description(s)

### **Washington Street District**

This district will include lots 1-31 on the southern half of Washington St. The new Washington St. Historic District boundaries were drawn to encompass the historic resources at the core of the town center as well as agricultural properties at its fringes that convey the significant role of farming in the creation of the center.

### **Jotham Hayward Homestead District (6 Bates Street)**

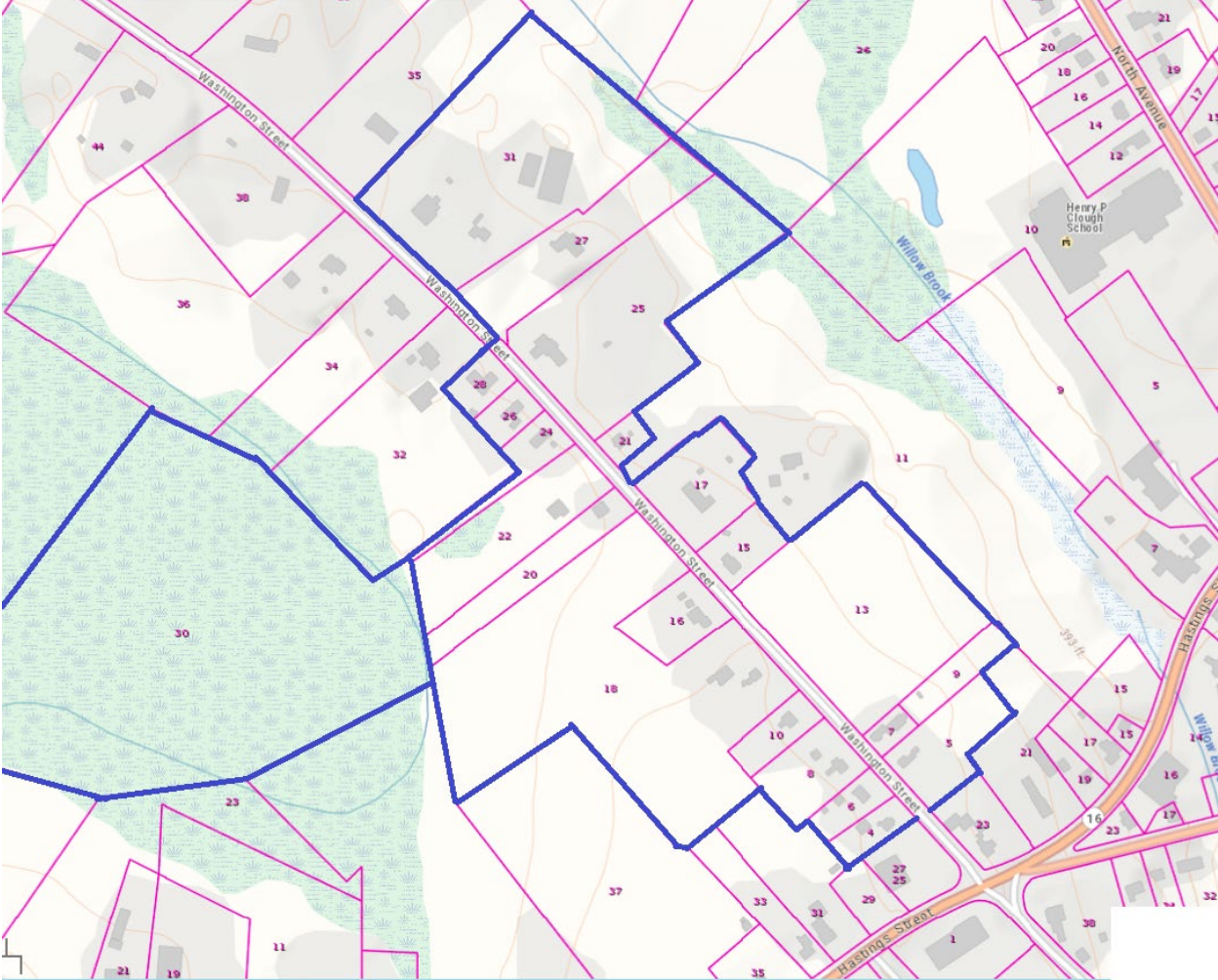
This district will be a single lot district comprised of of tax parcel 14-106-6-0 (6 Bates Street) consisting of 1.57 acres and having 281 feet of frontage. This also includes the accessory building located on the same lot.

## Historic District By-Law

These new districts will fall under the existing Historic District By-law and will be overseen by the existing Historic District Commission. The current by-law and design guidelines are available on our website [mendonma.gov/hdc](http://mendonma.gov/hdc) .

# Maps

## Washington St District



## 6 Bates Street



## LISTED STRUCTURES IN PROPOSED LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Tax Parcel Address	Current Use	Notes	Year Built
<b>Washington Street</b>			
4 Washington St	Residence		1925
5 Washington St	Residence		1890
6 Washington St	Residence		1925
7 Washington St	Residence	23 <sup>rd</sup> oldest house in Mendon	1779
8 Washington St	Residence	Mitchell-Wood House	1831
9 Washington St	Vacant land no frontage		n/a
10 Washington St	Residence		1958
11 Washington St	<i>Lot does not exist, included as placeholder</i>		
12 Washington St	<i>Lot does not exist, included as placeholder</i>		
13 Washington St	Vacant land		n/a
14 Washington St	<i>Lot does not exist, included as placeholder</i>		
15 Washington St	Residence		1957
16 Washington St	Residence	16 <sup>th</sup> oldest house in Mendon	1750
17 Washington St	Residence		1983
18 Washington St	Residence	Rawson-Whiting House	1850
19 Washington St	<i>Lot does not exist, included as placeholder</i>		
20 Washington St	Residence		1950
21 Washington St	Residence		1947
22 Washington St	Residence		2018
23 Washington St	<i>Lot does not exist, included as placeholder</i>		
24 Washington St	Residence		1921
25 Washington St	Residence		1840
26 Washington St	Residence		1920
27 Washington St	Residence		2002
28 Washington St	Residence		1920
29 Washington St	<i>Lot does not exist, included as placeholder</i>		
30 Washington St	Vacant land		
31 Washington St	Residence		1910
<b>Bates Street</b>			
6 Bates Street	Residence	Jotham Hayward House	1780



## PROPERTY DETAILS & PHOTOGRAPHS

### 4 Washington Street c. 1925



#### Architectural Description

This Four-square Craftsman style house has a 3x1 bay main block and a center hall plan. Alterations to this structure include aluminum siding and ornate architectural details that may have existed on the exterior of the building are unknown as a result. Alterations have been made but the overall design features are compatible with similar 1905-20 Craftsman-style houses in scale and form. The windows are 1/1 metal sash and the house is a two story structure rising from a stone foundation. An enclosed one- story seasonal porch at the front entrance runs the width of the façade.

The property has an unattached modern two car garage.

#### Historical Significance

Listed as part of the Mendon Center Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places this house is emblematic of Mendon's return to population growth and the expansion of the town center area during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century after nearly a century of stagnation. This was a result of the break-off of surrounding towns. With no major waterway or railroad links to benefit the towns development Mendon was unable to participate and benefit during the industrial revolution. Mendon had remained largely agricultural with cottage industry to support her economy.

According to deed searches this lot, along with several other abutting properties on Hastings Street was part of the Elisha Wood farm during the early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Wood family represents a long-time multi-generational land-owning and farming family of Mendon who made significant contributions to the community.

#### Reference:

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS)

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 form # 197.

**5 Washington Street c. 1890**



### Architectural Significance

5 Washington Street, also known as Birch Alley during the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of its magnificent birch trees, and is a contributing mid-19<sup>th</sup> c. cottage within the proposed Mendon Village Historic District. It is an altered example of Greek revival cottage-scale housing and complements the scale, form and siting of more intact historic resources within the historic district. It possesses a gable block form. Its 2x3 bay main block has a rectangular plan and rises 1 ½ stories from a granite basement to an asbestos shingle covered gable roof. This property seems to be devoid of any additional structures.

### Historical Significance

The first deeds show that this cottage, c. 1831, within the proposed Historical District, was recorded in 1853. It was transferred from Aaron C. Cook, a farmer married to Susan Wilcox in Mendon, to Henry Rawson. This property abuts the property of Aaron C. Cook located at the corner of Hastings and Washington Street. Henry Rawson became the next owner. He is listed as boot maker and he and his wife, Abby Luther Rawson, are both buried in Swandale Cemetery. He is a descendant of Rev. Grindal Rawson, the second minister of the Church of Christ in Mendon from 1680-1715. He was invited to come to Mendon to further his settlement. A distinguished and pious man, Rev. Grindal Rawson was most notably remembered for his compassion and the work he did to transcribe the teachings of the church to share with the native American tribes who remained in the area. He is buried in Old Cemetery in a finely carved monument erected by the town in his honor. As the home of a branch of the Rawson family during 1840s-1870s this property is considered historically significant with regard to its lineage to significant community members.

An additional owner of this house was Henry A. Holbrook from 1876 and it appeared to remain in the Holbrook Family until approximately 1912. Henry was a descendant of the early Holbrook's of Mendon dating back to the 1600's. This house appears to have only seven owners over the years.

### Reference:

The Reverend Grindal Rawson by Miss Sarah L. Staples. *[Read at the first meeting of the Mendon Historical Society, February 18, 1896]*

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS).

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 form # 198.



## 6 Washington Street c. 1925



### Architectural Description:

This 1 ½ story cape located at 6 Washington Street was constructed in 1970 replacing the original structure of 1925. Although it is not considered a contributing property to the district its most notable quality is with respect to the scale, form and siting of the existing historic properties along Washington Street.

### Reference:

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 MACRIS form # MEN 239.

## 7 Washington Street c. 1779



### Architectural Significance

Architecturally, #7 Washington Street is an altered 1 1/2 story mid 19<sup>th</sup> century farm house which stands with its steeply pitched gable end to Washington Street. It possesses a gable block form. The main façade is clad with modern wood vertical boards as are the side and rear facades. The basement walls are granite and the roof has asphalt (not asbestos) shingles. It has an attached barn/shed.

#7 Washington Street is a contributing mid 19<sup>th</sup> century cottage within the Mendon Village Historic District. It does not meet criteria A, B, C, or D of the N.R.H.P. but is compatible with the more intact historic resources of the district by virtue of its scale, form and siting.

### Historical Significance

#7 Washington Street is historically significant as the home of Horatio Hastings during the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Hastings family were prominent members in the legal and civic affairs of Mendon during the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Seth Hastings, the family patriarch was a lawyer, Congressman and president of Mendon's bank during the 1820's.

Washington Street, formerly called Birch Alley, was named in honor of George Washington who stopped to see Captain Philip Ammidon, owner of Mendon's Ammidon Tavern, during his tour of the ex-colonies after being elected President in 1789.

The house provides a physical link documenting Mendon during the period 1830-1870 which was characterized by population growth (3,152 in 1830 to 3,524 in 1840). Agriculture was Mendon's main economic resource. Boot and shoe making as well as wood working related trades also significantly contributed to Mendon's economy.

### Reference:

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 form # 199

## 8 Washington Street c. 1831 Mitchell-Wood House



### Architectural Description

This structure is a 1 ½ story cottage scale Greek Revival farmhouse with a steeply pitched roof slope. It has a gable block form with a 5x3 main block and center hall plan. The main façade, side and rear facades are clapboard with 2/2 wood sash windows. The front porch seems to be a well-crafted later addition to the house. Particularly noteworthy are the boldly accented edges with Doric corner boards and the retention of the simple Greek Revival entrance enframements.

There is an old shade tree in front yard and a modern detached garage on the property.

### Historical Significance

This house is listed as part of the Mendon Center Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. It is an intact example of center hall Greek Revival housing of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in Mendon. It demonstrates the trend toward dispersed agricultural settlement in Mendon during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The house provides a physical link documenting Mendon during the period 1830-70. This period in Mendon's history was characterized by population growth as a byproduct of industrialization, but the break-off of towns and finally the loss of Blackstone began to signal the slowing of Mendon's prosperity. The lack of major waterways and railroad links limited the towns growth and development. Mendon was left to rely on cottage industry and agriculture while the break-off towns around her flourished with industrialization.

This Homestead is linked to the Mitchell, Wood and Wheeler (1857, 1870, 1898) families. The Wood family were long-time farmers and substantial land-owners in Mendon who made significant civic



contributions to the community. The family burial ground is located on Hartford Ave West. Former owners Perry and Austin Wood are buried there along with many generations of Wood family. The owner of the homestead from early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century was George H. Wilbur who was the last full-blooded Nipmuc Native American living in Mendon.

Reference:

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 MACRIS form # MEN 200.

## 10 Washington Street



Architectural Description:

This 1 ½ story cape located at 10 Washington Street was constructed in 1980. Although it is not considered a contributing property to the district its most notable quality is with respect to the scale, form and siting of the existing historic properties along Washington Street.

Reference:

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 MACRIS form # MEN 240.

**11 Washington Street**





**13 Washington Street**





## 15 Washington Street



### Architectural Description:

This 1 ½ story Colonial Revival Cape located at 15 Washington Street was constructed in 1940. Although it is not considered a contributing property to the district its most notable quality is with respect to the scale, form, and siting of the existing historic properties along Washington Street. Additional deed research needs to be completed on this property to confirm the dates.

### Reference:

Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1989 MACRIS form # MEN 241.

## 16 Washington Street c.1750



### Architectural significance

16 Washington Street dates to a time when it was known as Birch Alley and is an early mid-18<sup>th</sup> century house within the proposed Mendon Village Historical district. It demonstrates the pattern and disbursement of Agricultural settlements in Mendon. It is situated on a large lot framed by an antique stone wall on Washington St. and retains much of its 18<sup>th</sup>19<sup>th</sup> c. rural character. Tax records from the 1800's show that it was a farm with a barn and animals. Older tax records show a larger tract of land with more acreage that was sold off in parcels in later years.

It is a modestly altered farm house similar to those built during the early colonial settlement period. It consists of a 2-1/2 story, 3x3 bay main block with a side ell, possibly a hall and parlor house. The house is shingled with clapboards, its windows consist of 12/12 wood sash and is set on a granite basement. Its outbuildings include a garage and shed.

### Historical Significance

16 Washington Street dates back to the early first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> c. Further research is needed in this property. The MACRIS listing identifies this house as the "Mellen House", however there is no evidence in the deeds of it being owned by the Mellen family. Research shows that other prominent residents who owned this property were Seth Davenport, Enos and Nancy Taft, and Paul Wheeler. All of these families were lifetime residents of Mendon. They were born here, resided and worked here and most are buried in Mendon, in both the Old Cemetery and Swandale. Thru the 1800's most of the owners of this property listed their occupation as farmers thus showing that it probably was a farm house and part of the agricultural settlement of this period.



**17 Washington Street**



## 18 Washington Street c. 1850 Rawson-Whiting House



### Architectural Description

Despite its synthetic siding this property is considered an intact example of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Greek Revival farmhouse. The home is a gable end form with 4x2 bay main block and rectangular plan with 6/6 wood sash windows. Particularly noteworthy are the front door's paneled Doric pilasters and heavy, cornice-headed entablature. This 1 ½ story house rises from a stone foundation. The gable roof has return eaves and is finished with asphalt shingles. A later dormer was added to the home. According to the 1898 Atlas this property is mapped out with a large barn which may date back to 1850. An old stone wall exists along front yard area.

### Historical Significance

Listed as part of the Mendon Center Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places  
The house retains much of its pre-1900s character.

This farmhouse was originally owned by members of Mendon's prominent Rawson family who descended from Grindal Rawson. Grindal Rawson mentioned earlier was the minister of the town's meeting house 1680-1715 and instrumental in bridging the gap between colonists and the areas original inhabitants.

This farmstead provides a physical link documenting Mendon during the period 1830-70, when Mendon experienced significant growth and prosperity. That quickly changed when parts of Mendon separated into their own towns. "Mother Mendon" as she was known, was left with a dwindling population and no access to the important industrialization requirements of major waterways and railroad links.

### References

National Register Report of the Mendon Center Historic District (2003) Form B Building Listings (1989) MACRIS MEN #201.

[www.hope42.com](http://www.hope42.com) (Cemeteries).

*\*House referred to as #12 Washington Street in older records due to recent re-numbering error; listed as #18 on NRHP and assessor's map.*



**20 Washington Street**



**21 Washington Street**



**22 Washington Street**





## 24 Washington Street c. 1910-1930



### Deed Research:

A large parcel of land was owned by Theodore Cook, a descendent of Walter Cook (1760's) was one of Mendon's earliest residents. A later relative, Olney Cook was a glazer who built and ran the Onley Cook shop on Hartford Avenue East in 1837. According to deed research Theodore Cook sold this parcel of land to Lyman Wheeler in 1884, who in turn sold this parcel to Joseph Randor in 1926 and a house was built on it, today known as 24 Washington Street. This house is an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Craftsman House.

### Architectural Significance

This residential home is situated currently on approximately less than a one-acre lot. It is a single-story Craftsman Bungalow style house. It is representative of a time when small cottage style housing options began to surface in Mendon. The craftsman style home made popular in the early 1900's was an American architectural tradition inspired by the British Arts and Crafts movement. It aimed to celebrate the simplicity of materials and modesty in architecture. #24 Washington Street sits in a row along with #26 and #28 Washington Street. All three share similar characteristics and match in size and form.

### Historical Significance

This house provides physical evidence documenting Mendon during the period 1915-1940. This period in the town's history was characterized by population growth after five decades of decline. By 1940, it reached the level of population present in 1860. Population growth was undoubtedly tied to the improvement of local roads as auto highways. The trend toward recreational cottage development continued at Nipmuc Pond. Mendon villages housing stock was augmented by the construction of a few Craftsman and Tudor Revival dwellings. Manufacturing was virtually non-existent at this time and many of Mendon's residents commuted to Milford and other towns for work.

### References

J.G, Metcalf , Map of Mendon, 1831; Town of Mendon Deed Research; Massachusetts Historical Commission documentation of historic homes in Mendon.

## 25 Washington Street c.1840



#25 Washington Street may be National Register eligible as a property which represents the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century trend in Mendon toward dispersed farm homesteads along outlying roads. It is also associated with the important Taft family which settled in Mendon during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The house is a well-crafted example of a center hall plan Greek Revival structure of the c. 1820's.

### Architectural Significance

#25 Washington Street was built between 1828 and 1830. It is recorded on the 1831 map of Mendon marked the home of Enos Taft. The house is a well-crafted 1 ½ story example of c. 1820's Greek Revival

architecture with its center hall plan with its gable end facing the road. The edges are accented by wide Doric corner boards. The front door has multi-paned lights on each side with pilasters and incised entablature. The windows are 2/2 wood sash and a brick chimney projects from the main block. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and in the 1940's modern siding was applied. The out buildings included two attached 1- story sheds, a large barn and a long, low greenhouse. In 2019 the house was altered. The sheds, barn and greenhouse were removed and replaced by a 2- story addition. The siding was replaced but the 2/2 windows, Doric corner boards, front door with the multi-paned lights, pilasters and entablature and chimney were retained. Details from the original building were replicated on the addition.

### Historical Significance

Enos Taft, who built the house and owned much of the surrounding farmland, was descended from Robert and Sarah who came to Mendon in 1679 after the end of King Philip's War and settled on 80 acres which included Lake Nipmuc (referred to as Taft Pond on the Massachusetts State map). In 1680, at the first town meeting since the abandonment of the town, Robert Taft was among those chosen as Selectmen for the town of Mendon. Enos fought in the Revolutionary War as one of the Three Month Men and is buried in Old Cemetery in Mendon Center. President William H. Taft, a descendent of Robert and Sarah, visited Mendon in 1910. He later became the tenth Chief Justice of the United States, the only person to have served in both of these offices. This period in Mendon's history was characterized by population growth (1,555 in 1790 to 3,152 in 1830) and the continued predominance of farming. Prominent Mendon residents Benjamin Davenport and Welcome Staples were also owners of the house.

### References:

Massachusetts Historical Commission 1989 MEN Form No. 204.  
Annals of the Town of Mendon John G. Metcalf pp.80, 340.  
Worcester County, Mass. Land Deeds.



## 26 Washington Street c. 1915-1930



This residential home is situated currently on approximately less than a one-acre lot. It is a Craftsman Bungalow style house with a one car detached garage.

### Architectural Significance

It is a Craftsman Bungalow style house with a one car detached garage.

### Deed Research

A tract of land was owned by Mabel Holbrook who was a descendent of one of Mendon's earliest settlers. Mabel Holbrook sold this parcel of land to George Hemond in January 1925. In March of 1925 the land with buildings was transferred from George Hemond to L. Nelson and Grace Robbins.

### Historical Significance:

This is a "hip block" form house of the 1920's. It is a one-story dwelling with a brick basement. It provides physical evidence documenting Mendon during the 1920's and may have been part of the Eben Taft farm during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This period in the town's history was characterized by population growth after five decades of decline. By 1940, it reached the level of population present in 1860. Population growth was undoubtedly tied to the improvement of local roads as auto highways. The trend toward recreational cottage development continued at Nipmuc Pond. Mendon villages housing stock was augmented by the construction of a few Craftsman and Tudor Revival dwellings. Manufacturing was virtually non-existent at this time and many of Mendon's residents commuted to Milford and other towns for work.

### References

J.G, Metcalf, Map of Mendon, 1831; Town of Mendon Deed Research; Massachusetts Historical Commission documentation of historic homes in Mendon. Massachusetts Historical Commission 1989 MEN Form No. 205.



27 Washington Street



## 28 Washington Street c. 1910-1930



This residential home is situated on a lot of land less than one acre. It is a Craftsman bungalow style of house with a detached one car garage.

### Architectural Significance

It is a Craftsman Bungalow style house with a one car detached garage.

### Deed Research

In 1925 a parcel of land was owned by Mabel Holbrook who was a descendent of one of Mendon's earliest settlers. Mabel Holbrook sold this parcel of land to George Hemond who in turn then sold it to Ernest and Florence Wiggins. The land was then sold back to George Hemond before being bought by Freeland Hovey. All these transactions took place in 1925 and included the land with the buildings.

### Historical Significance

This parcel of land may have been part of the large acreage once owned by Eben Taft. This house is moderate significance of an example of early 20<sup>th</sup> c. cottage-scale Craftsman style housing similar to summer house construction. By the 1910's and 20's Mendon was more accessible via automobile as the result of local and regional highway improvements. This house lot may have been part of the original Enos Taft farm during the 1830's and 1840's. Then, by the 1870's it may have been part of the Kirby, Wilbur, Aldrich or Newgent holdings. This house is a physical link of Mendon growth after 50 years of

decline. By 1940 the town reached the level of population that was present in 1860. Population growth was undoubtedly tied to the improvement of local roads as auto highways. The trend of recreational cottage development continued at Nipmuck Pond. Mendon's housing stock was augmented by the construction of a few Craftsman and Tudor Revival dwellings.

### References

J.G, Metcalf, Map of Mendon, 1831; Town of Mendon Deed Research; Massachusetts Historical Commission documentation of historic homes in Mendon. Massachusetts Historical Commission 1989 MEN Form No. 206.



## #31 Washington Street c.1910



### Architectural Significance

Architecturally, #31 is of significance as a c. 1905-1920 Craftsman style wood frame house.

The Craftsman style was an architectural movement which occurred primarily between 1900 and 1920. It was a backlash against Victorian architecture that featured over-the-top ornamentation and decoration made accessible by new technologies. The Craftsman movement emphasized the beauty of natural materials and forms which were hand-worked. The homes were single family, 1 ½ story small to medium sized buildings which showed the beauty of simplicity and modesty in architecture. The emphasis was on horizontal lines with low- pitched gable triangular roofs extending beyond the exterior

walls. The spacious porches included thick, tapered columns and the siding was wood painted in earthy tones.

Particularly noteworthy are its encircling verandah and distinctive Jerkin-head gables profiles at the front and sides. Its significant landscape features include mature trees and an enclosure for horses. The house possesses a four-square form. Its 3x3 bay main block has a center hall plan. The main façade is sheathed with shingles. Its side and rear facades are similarly sheathed. Its windows are 6/1 wood sash. This house rises 1&1/2 stories from a brick(?) basement to an asphalt shingle covered jerkin head or clipped gable roof. In terms of out buildings, this property has a large modern stable and smaller stall on the premises.

### Historical Significance:

#31 Washington Street is of moderate historical interest as an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Craftsman house which is emblematic of Mendon's return to population growth during the early 1900's. It was built in c.1905-20. During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century this lot was part of Enos Taft's farm. By the 1870's this house lot may have been part of a T. Nugent property. The house provides a physical link documenting Mendon during the period 1870-1915. This period in the town's history was characterized by a marked decline in population from 1,175 in 1870 to 933 in 1915. Mendon remained heavily rural and underwent few structural changes. The Taft Public Library, originally, the Union Chapel, was constructed at the Town Center in 1898. Recreational cottage development began at Lake Nipmuc c.1880. The introduction of streetcar service from Uxbridge via Mendon to Hopedale/Milford in 1901 sparked more cottage and Craftsman style house development. Mendon's manufacturing continued to decline. The last town center shoe factory was taken down in 1888.

### References:

Deeds from Worcester County Land Records

The Spruce [www.the-spruce.com](http://www.the-spruce.com). House Beautiful Nov. 21, 2018

Massachusetts Historical Commission 1989 MEN Form No. 204



**Washington Street – Stone Walls and Scenic Vista Photos**









**#6 Bates Street c.1780 – Jotham Hayward House**







### Architectural Description

This one and one-half story center chimney house is typical of altered, early Capes found scattered through the outlying areas of Mendon. This example has a five- bay main façade and originally had symmetrical end facades and originally had symmetrical end facades associated with the type. Later additions have produced irregular façade treatments. A one story, three bay rear left wing has altered the roofline somewhat and a screen porch has been added to the right gable end. The main house is plain, as are most early Mendon capes. The windows are a 6/1 wooden sash and the front main entrance 19<sup>th</sup> century door has an oval light. The foundation is granite.

### Historical Significance

In 1818, John Hayward, "In consideration of five hundred dollars paid by my son Jotham Hayward of Mendon a certain tract of land situated and lying in Mendon...." In 1840, Jotham leased a portion of his land to the Mendon 4<sup>th</sup> School District for the building of a school. He sold his land and dwelling to John Howe in 1845.

The Haywards settled in Mendon in the 1600's and were involved in town government during the 1700's. In 1712, William Hayward was among those chosen as a Selectman and Assessor. Samuel Hayward was promoted to second lieutenant in 1760 for his loyalty, courage and good conduct.

### Setting

This building is located on the easterly side of Bates Street about 200 ft. from the intersection of Cape Road (Rte. 140). The area is densely settled, with buildings dating from early 19<sup>th</sup> to present 20<sup>th</sup> century in close proximity. Also located on the property, about 10 ft. from the house is a garage (c. 1920) and to the east about 100 ft. and bordering Cape Road is a small office (c. 1930). The lot is bordered by the remains of fieldstone walls.

### Reference

Worcester County, Mass. Registry of Deeds

J.G. Metcalf, Map of Mendon, Mass. Worcester County, 1831