

FORM A - AREA

Assessor's Sheets

USGS Quad

Area Letter

Form Numbers in Area

77 & 82

Boston N.

AL

1369-1409

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

**Town:** Lexington**Place (neighborhood or village):** North Lexington**Name of Area:** The Grove**Present Use:** Residential**Construction Dates or Period:** 1962-1965**Overall Condition:** good**Major Intrusions and Alterations:** additions**Acreage:** approx. 30 acres**Recorded by:** Lisa Mausolf**Organization:** Lexington Historical Commission**Date (month/year):** April-July 2000

(See continuation sheet for more detailed map.)

AREA FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Describe architectural, structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

The Grove is a development of approximately forty contemporary style houses constructed between 1962 and 1965 off Burlington and Grove Street in the northern part of Lexington, just south of the Rt. 95/128 corridor. The development includes houses on Diamond Street which is accessed off Grove Street, on Angier Road (off Burlington) and on North Emerson Road which spans from the end of Diamond to the end of Angier. Five additional houses are located on White Terrace, a small side street which ends in a cul-de-sac off the west side of Diamond Road. Two houses in the development actually front Grove Street while another is located on Burlington Street. All but possibly two of the houses are examples of the award-winning, split-level design known as the "Peacock Farm" house. Each house was individually sited to reflect the contours of its particular site. Most of the houses retain a wooded setting although in a few cases the lots have been cleared. With the exception of the rise in elevation toward North Emerson Rd., most of the development consists of fairly level lots averaging 30,000 square feet. With the exception of the Colonial-style houses at **367, 369 and 371 North Emerson Road** (all built in 1984) there has not been any infill construction within the neighborhood, resulting in considerable cohesiveness.

As originally constructed, each of the houses in the development contained roughly 1,800 square feet. The three-level interior was designed to divide functions with three bedrooms and bath on the top level, the living room, dining room, kitchen and main entrance on the middle level and a playroom, utility room and/or garage (convertible to two additional bedrooms) on the lower level. The houses are all capped by a low pitch roof with one slope longer than the other. The broadly overhanging eaves display exposed beams. The houses are sheathed in stained vertical cedar siding. Fenestration consists of horizontal bands of windows which include single-pane glass as well as casement units with clerestory windows tucked under the eaves.

Over the years, a number of the houses have been enlarged. Among the more dramatic additions are those at **7 Diamond Road** (1990, B.D. Nayak of Braintree, architect) and **5 Angier Road**. More typically, additions consists of a rear addition which is largely screened from view. Few of the houses originally incorporated a lower level garage. As a result, the addition of garages or carports, either detached or attached to the side or offset in front, are the most common alteration/addition. Almost every house retains its vertical cedar siding; the single exception noted was **7 Diamond Road**. Among the least altered in the development are the houses at **2, 3 & 7 Angier Road; 9, 11, 15 & 17 Diamond Road, 11 Diamond Road; and 3 White Terrace**. Two of the houses appear to display a form which differs from the conventional "Peacock Farm" house. These houses, **8 Diamond Road and 352 North Emerson Road**, were either built according to a different design or have been so altered that their original form is no longer discernible.

Lexington has approximately ten developments of Contemporary style houses (see also **Areas S, AK, AM, AN**) including The Grove. Such a concentration of contemporary houses is rare in the state and these developments constitute some of Lexington's most significant architectural resources.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this area relates to the historical development of the community.

The Grove is one of approximately six areas in Lexington developed with a split-level dwelling which was known as the "Peacock Farm" house. In addition to the **Peacock Farms** development [**Area S**] (1950s), the other areas included **Rumford Road [Area AM]** (1959); **Glen Estates [Area AK]** (1960-6); and on **Turning Mill Road [Area AN]** in North Lexington. Other communities featuring the same house design were built in Wayland and Newton. The Grove followed on the heels of the success of Peacock Farms which met national acclaim in 1956-7 including first prize in the national "Homes for Better Living" contest sponsored by the A.I.A., a First Award from House and Home magazine and exhibited in the National Association of Home Builders' Hall of Fame in Washington.

☒ Recommended as a National Register District. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

As part of the Peacock Farm development, Cambridge architect Walter Pierce was commissioned by developers Harmon White and Edward Green to design a house which would meet the needs of the young professional buyers they hoped to attract. The resulting design, known as "the Peacock Farm house" contained 1,825 sq. ft. including garage and sold for just over \$20,000. For an extra \$1,500 buyers had the option of adding two bedrooms and a bath in the basement garage space and a separate garage outside the house. Most apparently opted for the living space rather than the basement garage.

Like Peacock Farms, The Grove was developed by Edward Green and Harmon White (Green and White). The original plan for the subdivision (originally known as Pine Ridge) was submitted in 1959 and was finally approved in 1961 after some neighborhood opposition. The majority of the houses were constructed between 1962 and 1964 by Benjamin Franklin Homes of Newton (who also constructed the other four developments of Peacock Farm houses). The last houses to be constructed in 1964 and 1965 are found on North Emerson Road and owners were given the option for a slightly larger house.

The construction of Contemporary-style developments in Lexington in the late 1950s and early 1960s coincides with the trend of outward movement from Boston to the surrounding suburbs. Route 128 was opened in 1951 and in the years that followed many new jobs were created at the various companies that were established in proximity to the highway. In 1950 Lexington's population stood at 17,335; by 1960 it was 27,691, a 60% increase in ten years. The town's farmland, in this case - the Johnson Farm, found new value as residential subdivisions.

The "Peacock Farm" house prototype was popular with young professional buyers and the early ownership of the Grove houses reflects this. Directories indicate that within the subdivision, the original households were for the most part comprised of male breadwinners and their spouses who are listed as housewives. The typical residents who moved to the Grove in the early 1960s were in their thirties and many had recently moved to Lexington from various locations in Massachusetts and across the nation. Scientists, professors and engineers predominated. Unlike some other local developments of the period, a community pool was never constructed in the Grove. Today, almost forty years later, approximately fourteen houses in the neighborhood are still owned by their original owners.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey of Lexington, Book 1, 1984 [Area S, Peacock Farm].
House and Home, October 1956, June 1957.
Information from resident Jane Eastman, July 2000.
Lexington Assessors records.
Lexington Building Department Records.
Lexington Planning Board records.
Middlesex County Register of Deeds, Plan Recorded Nov. 3, 1961, Book 9925, Pg. 508.
Seney, Noel. "A Split-Level that Makes Sense", *Better Homes and Gardens*, May 1960.
Time, May 20, 1957.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
LexingtonProperty Address
The Grove
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DISTRICT DATA SHEET
AREA AL
"THE GROVE"

Assessors	Resource	Address	Style	Date	MHC#
77/164	James & Esther Bouras House	2 Angier Road	Contemporary	1963	1369
77/163	Italo & Caroline Servi House	3 Angier Road	Contemporary	1963	1370
77/165	Kenneth & Noleine Purser House	4 Angier Road	Contemporary	1963	1371
77/162	Paul & Joy Blackburn House	5 Angier Road	Contemporary	1962	1372
77/166A	James & Calista West House	6 Angier Road	Contemporary	1962	1373
77/161	Frederick & Frances Matthews House*	7 Angier Road	Contemporary	1962	1374
82/93	Alan & Beverly Wernick House	8 Angier Road	Contemporary	1962	1375
82/92	William & Betty Daly House	10 Angier Road	Contemporary	1962	1376
77/160	Harvey & Margaret Mansfield House	11 Angier Road	Contemporary	1962	1377
77/146	Harold Mindell House	96 Burlington St.	Contemporary	1960	1378
77/172	Melvin & Marilyn Tracey House	3 Diamond Rd.	Contemporary	1963	1379
77/171	Irwin & Diane Miller House*	5 Diamond Rd.	Contemporary	1963	1380
77/170	Jaime & Nelly Carbonell House	7 Diamond Rd.	Contemporary	1963	1381
77/178	Channing & Harriet Morrison House*	8 Diamond Rd.	Contemporary	1964	1382
77/169	Joseph & Myrna Fox House*	9 Diamond Rd.	Contemporary	1962	1383
77/179	Harold & Barbara Wachman House*	10 Diamond Rd.	Contemporary	1963	1384
77/168	Alfred & Doris Schneider House	11 Diamond Road	Contemporary	1962	1385
82/99	Irving & Phyllis Lessin House	12 Diamond Road	Contemporary	1963	1386
82/98	William & Kathleen Talley House	15 Diamond Road	Contemporary	1962	1387
82/100	Willard & Jane Eastman House*	16 Diamond Road	Contemporary	1962	1388
82/97	Robert & Betty Tegen House	17 Diamond Road	Contemporary	1962	1389
82/101A	Gerald & Natalie Mosby House	18 Diamond Road	Contemporary	1962	1390
77/145	Martin & Margit Landahl House	5 Grove Street	Contemporary	1961	1391
77/144	Sydney & Irene Koren House	11 Grove Street	Contemporary	1961	1392
82/83B	Yu-Chi & Sophia Ho House*	351 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1393
77/159	Matthew & Joyce Crimmins House*	352 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1394
82/91	Frank & Edith Sandy House*	353 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1395
82/90	Mario & Noris Grignetti House	355 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1964	1396
82/89	Arthur & Marise Gottlieb House	357 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1397
82/94	Chester & Nancy Zaneski House	358 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1962	1398
82/88	Irwin & Sandra Macey House*	359 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1399
82/95	John & Jean Hatfield House*	360 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1962	1400
82/87	Bernard & Charna Levine House*	361 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1401
82/96	Gordon & Constance Lawson House	362 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1962	1402
82/86	Joel & Marianne Yancey House	363 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1403
82/85	Theodore & Ellen Andersson House*	365 North Emerson Rd.	Contemporary	1965	1404
77/173	Shelden & Dorothy Sarnevit	2 White Terrace	Contemporary	1963	1405
77/177	Eugene & Nancy Isotti House	3 White Terrace	Contemporary	1962	1406
77/174	Richard & Virginia Strauss House*	4 White Terrace	Contemporary	1963	1407
77/176	Albert & Bernice Dean House	5 White Terrace	Contemporary	1963	1408
77/175	Samuel & Vivian Bram House	7 White Terrace	Contemporary	1962	1409

* Still owned by members of original family in 2000.

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18 Diamond Road



7 White Terrace

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351 North Emerson Road



353 North Emerson Road

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7 Diamond Road



White Terrace

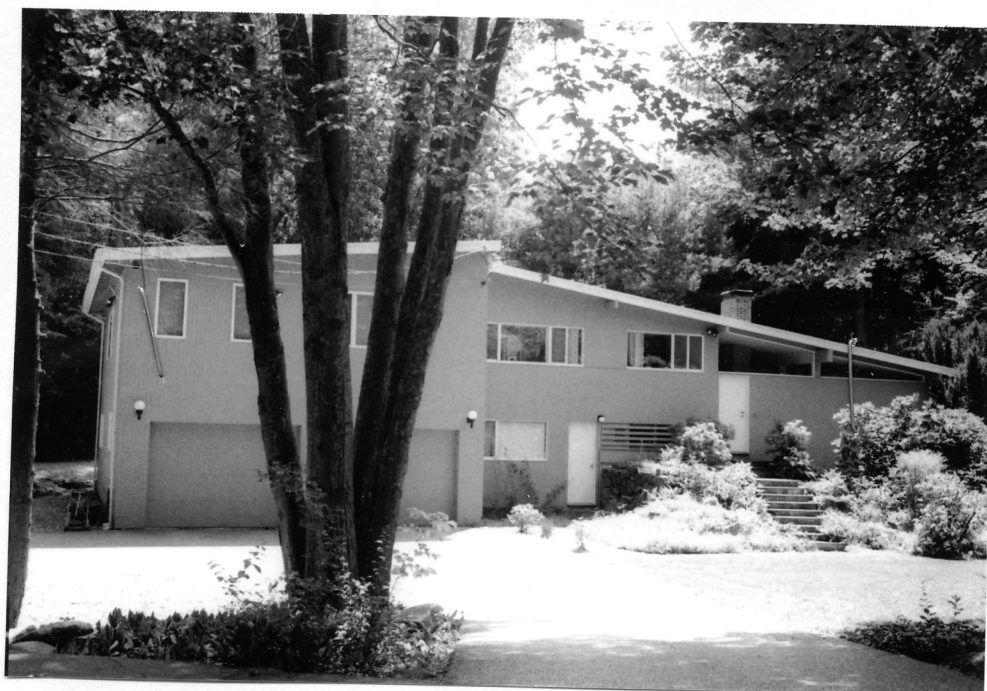
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Massachusetts Historical Commission
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Community Property Address

Lexington The Grove

Area(s)

Form No.

AL

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

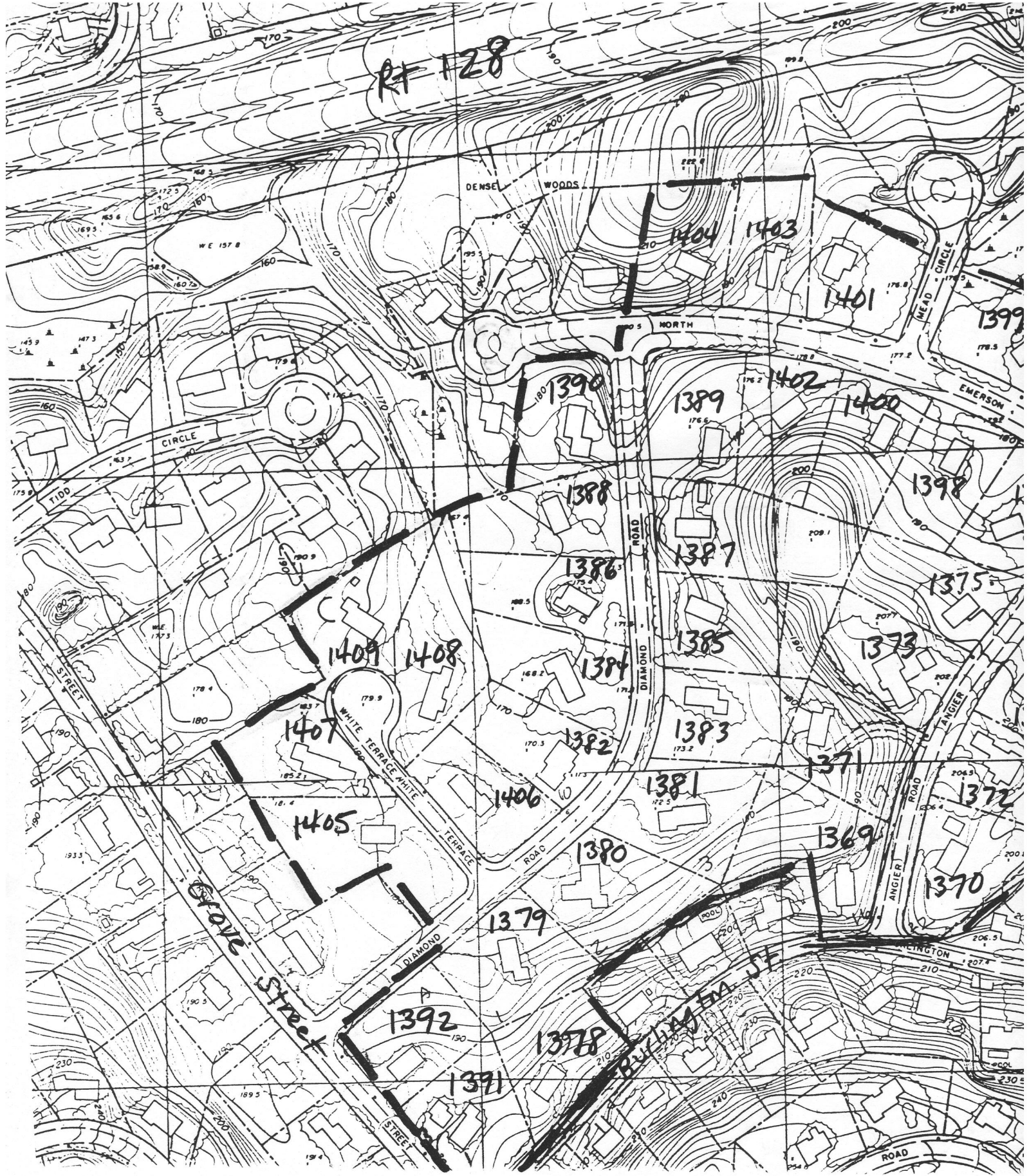
Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☒ G

Statement of Significance by: Lisa Mausolf

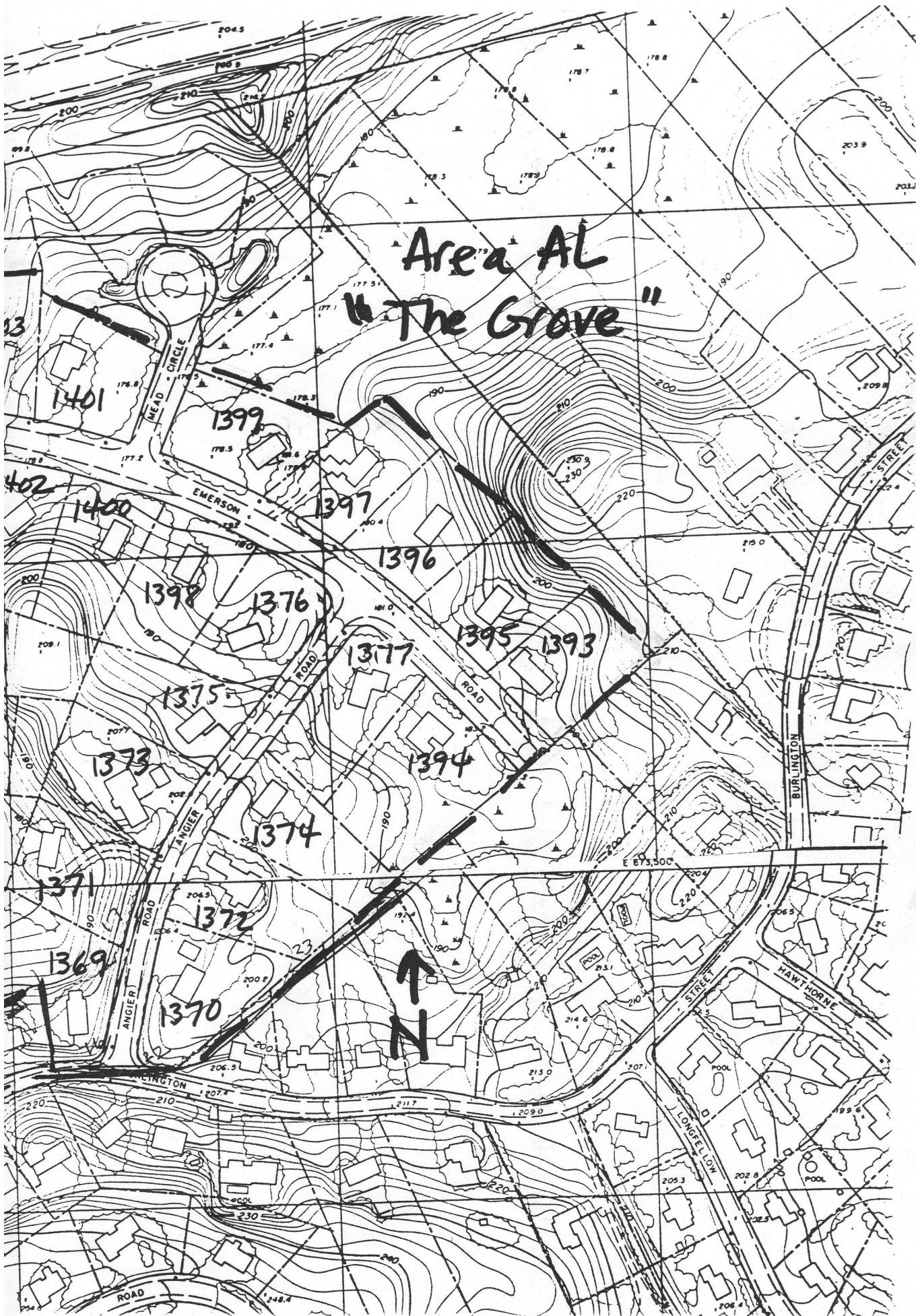
Justify criteria that are checked in the above sections:

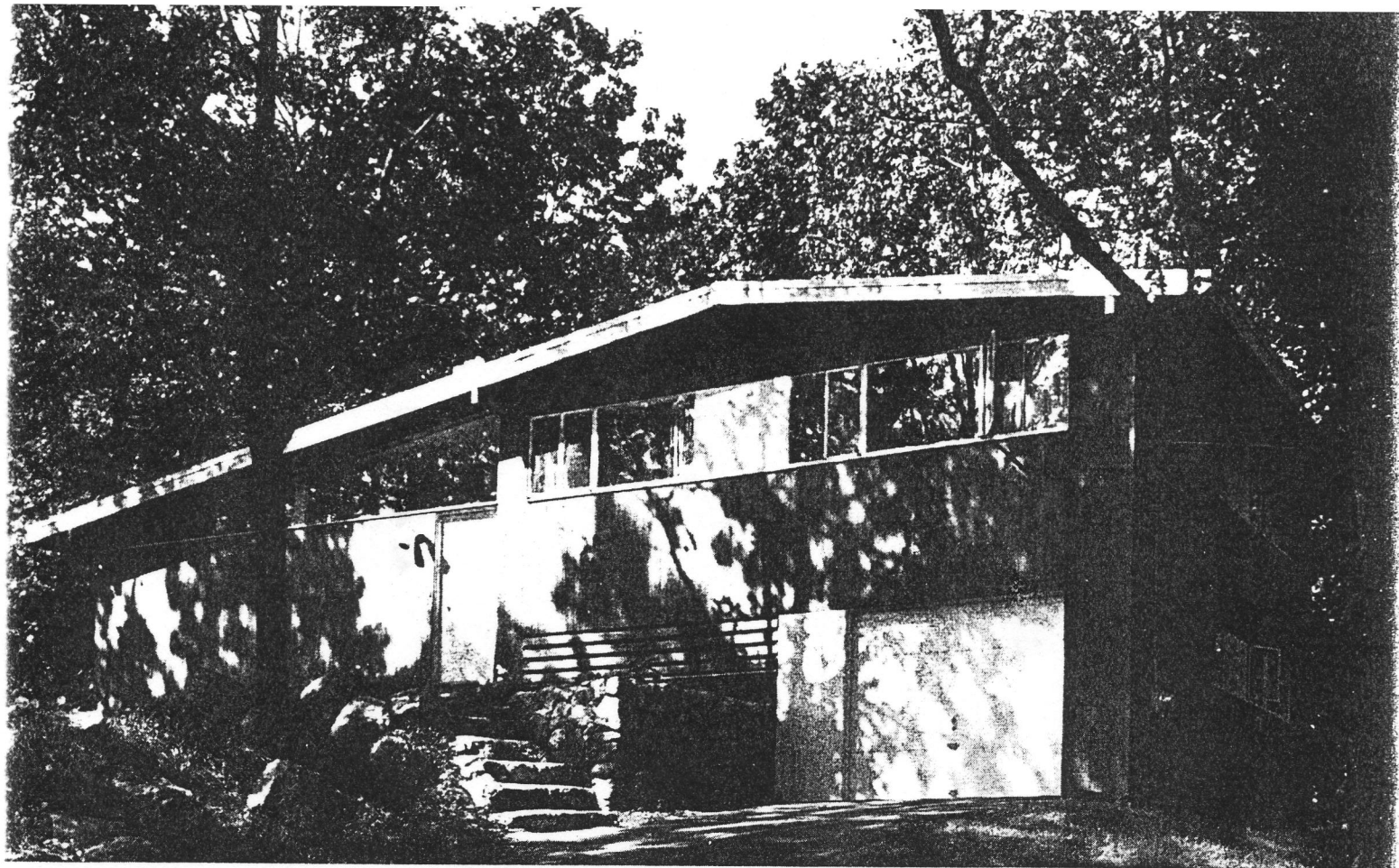
The Grove subdivision should be evaluated for National Register eligibility as it turns 50 years old. The area is potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as an intact example of an early 1960s subdivision of award-winning, split-level residences known as the "Peacock Farm" house, named after the Lexington neighborhood where the houses were first constructed in the 1950s. The Grove is the last of five areas in Lexington developed with this type of dwelling giving the town a concentration of these Contemporary-style houses which is without parallel in the region or the state.

The Grove exhibits integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The aspects of integrity which are most important to the neighborhood include setting, design, and materials. Critical elements include the relationship between the houses and their surrounding and the unique way in which each dwelling is oriented to make the most of the site and its natural topography. The wooded setting adds to the character of the neighborhood and harmonizes well with the natural stained siding which predominates on the houses. Although the siting of the houses varies considerably, all of the houses are built according to the same basic plan and retain a distinctive, asymmetrical gable roof with broadly overhanging eaves, fenestration which includes horizontal bands of windows as well as clerestory units and vertical cedar siding. Although a number of the houses in the neighborhood have been enlarged over the years, the area continues to exhibit a distinctive character.

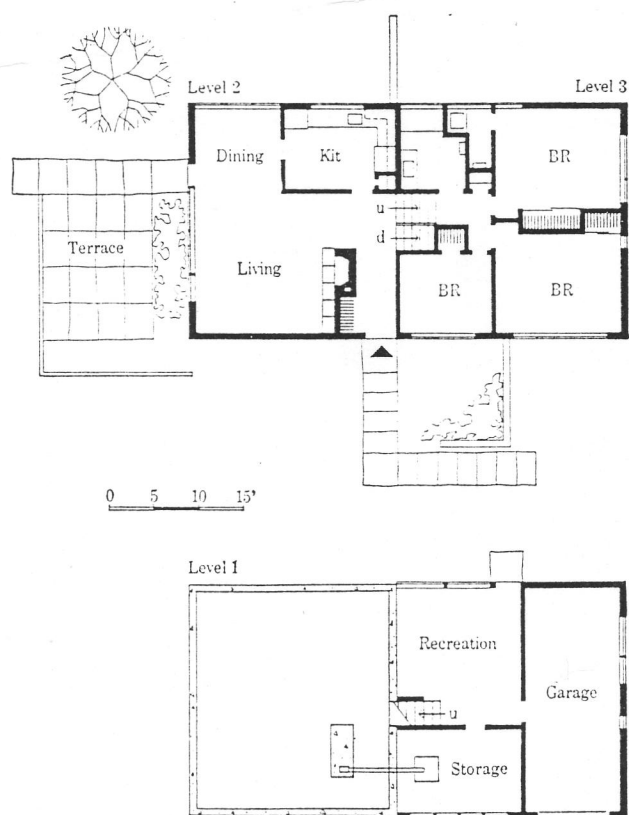


Area AL "The Grove"





FRONT ELEVATION. *Jury's comment:* "The well-integrated facade makes the house look considerably larger than it really is. The site planning is excellent, especially the large lot (125' frontage)."



PLAN. *Jury's comment:* "The house has excellent circulation between living-dining and bedroom levels. The plan permits very economical plumbing." (Floor area is 1,860 sq. ft. including garage.)

FIRST AWARD

Class B—\$15,000 to \$20,000

CITATION: "An excellent solution of the entire problem: site planning, arrangement of interior circulation, and treatment of the facade."

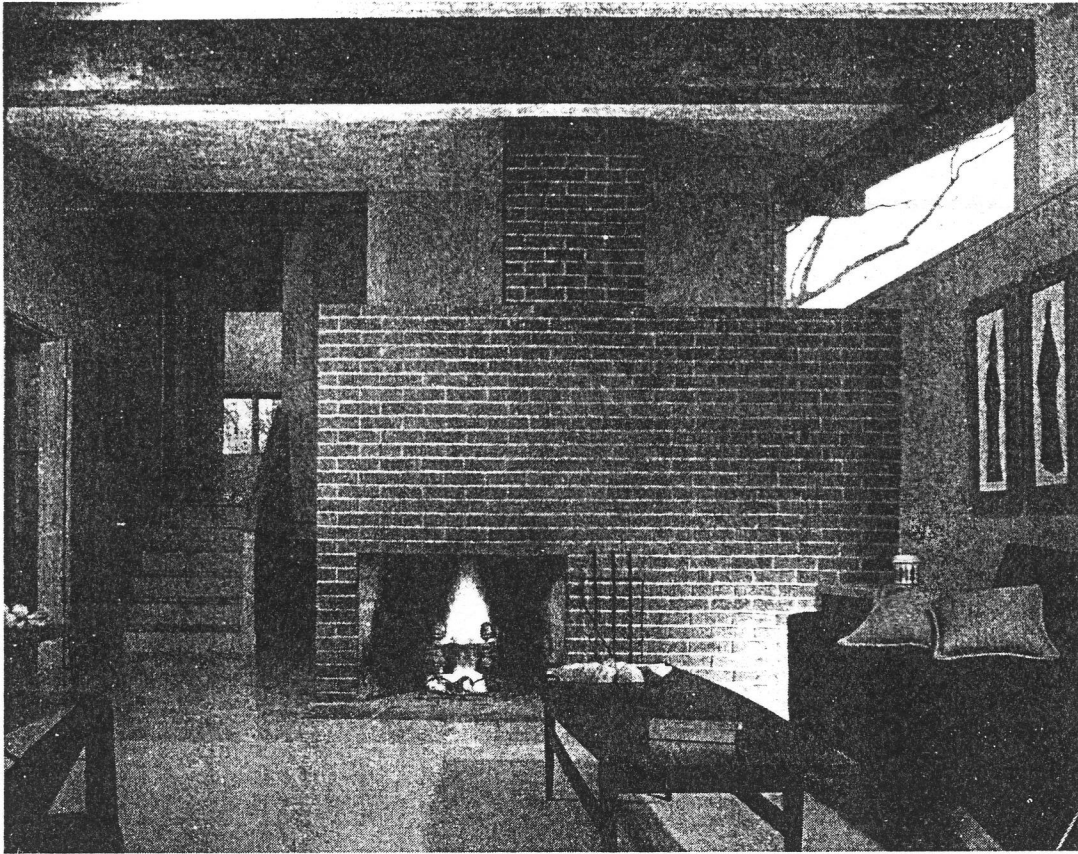
BUILDER: Edward Green & Harmon White

ARCHITECTS: Compton & Pierce

LOCATION: Lexington, Mass.

This house was one of the 57 houses for '57 published in H&H last October.

*House + Home June 1957
pp 142 -*



Photos: Robert D. Harvey Studios

FIREPLACE WALL. *Jury's comment:* "We call particular attention to the way the fireplace is used to give privacy for entry without reducing the sense of space in the living room." (You enter the house from behind the fireplace at the right end.)

LIVING ROOM, below, as seen from the stairway at the fireplace wall.

