



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ALTERATION OF A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LHD) PROPERTY
STAFF REPORT

Site: 56 Bow Street

Case: HPC.ALT 2022.77

Applicant: Ashley Blum & Mike Bittarelli

Owner: Same as Applicant

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to Install a window well.*

HPC Meeting Date: March 07, 2023



The purpose of a staff report is to provide the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with a professional assessment of alteration proposals made for Local Historic District (LHD) properties. These assessments are based on the Historic District Ordinance (HDO) in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 40C, and the associated Design Guidelines. A Staff Report is not a determination/decision and does not represent findings. A staff report does not constitute authorization in any form.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Subject Property: The locus is the c.1874 wood-frame structure and known as the Dr. Arnold Couch House. This property is located within the Prospect Hill neighborhood. A full description of the property is provided in the attached Form B survey held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

Proposal: The Applicant proposes the following:

- a. Install one vinyl window, below grade on the right elevation;
- b. Install terraced vinyl window well below grade;
- c. Install one brick an above grade stone capped brick surround above vinyl window well.

II. FINDINGS

The HPC must make findings based on the Historic District Ordinance (HDO) in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 40C, and associated Design Guidelines. Applicable regulations are discussed below.

The applicable Somerville LHD Design Guidelines is *C. “Windows & Doors”*

Due to the change of exterior features the HPC has purview over this work.

Applicant Proposal

The Applicant is proposing to alter an existing window opening measuring approximately 37” wide and 24” high to 34.5” x 52”. The current window is a vinyl pivot window, the proposed replacement will be a Harvey vinyl casement window. The proposed casement window would then open into a, below grade, terraced vinyl window well. To cover the vinyl window well from view the applicant proposes installing an above grade stone capped brick surround. The surround would have two or three courses of brick above grade. The top of the window and the brick surround will be visible from the right-of-way.



Above: Current photo of the extant window proposed to be altered



Above: Proposed vinyl window well



Above: Proposed stone capped brick surround

Preservation Planning Assessment:

The most relevant portion of this Design Guideline is as follows:

Retain original and later important door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.

The proposed work does not comply with the above referenced section of the Design Guidelines as it will remove an existing window opening to be replaced with a larger window; however, the existing window does not meet egress requirements and the extant window is a replacement window and not original to the building.

The proposal for a vinyl window is not consistent with the materials that would have been used for windows for a building constructed in 1874. Wood windows would be a more appropriate material for a building of this style and age.

Should the HPC vote in favor of altering a window opening and installing a window well Preservation Staff recommends the following conditions be included in addition to those listed in Section IV 'Recommended Conditions' below.

1. The replacement window shall be made of wood or aluminum clad wood.
2. Replacement windows shall not present a warped or mirrored reflection.
3. Replacement windows shall not be tinted.

HPC Determination:

- The HPC must determine if, based on a review of the documentation presented, the proposed project complies with the Design Guidelines
- The HPC must structure their motion to include their own specific findings on the proposed project.

III. VOTE

When bringing the matter to a vote the HPC must state their findings and reasons on why they take their position.

IV. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Preservation Planning recommends the following conditions be attached to any Certificate of Appropriateness that the HPC might grant for this project:

1. The Applicant/Owner shall file the Certificate with the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) by uploading it to the CitizenServe permitting portal with their application for zoning compliance/building permit.
2. This Certificate is valid for one year. If work has not commenced within one year of the HPC's date of determination, this Certificate shall expire, and the Applicant shall re-apply for re-issuance of this Certificate. Provided that no changes have been made to the proposal, this shall be a Staff-level re-issuance of the Certificate.

3. The replacement window shall be made of wood or aluminum clad wood.
4. Replacement windows shall not present a warped or mirrored reflection.
5. Replacement windows shall not be tinted.
6. Any changes to this proposal made prior to the commencement of work or in-the-field changes shall be submitted to Preservation Planning for their review to determine if the changes come under the purview of the HPC.
7. A written narrative or descriptive checklist identifying the completion or compliance with permit conditions must be submitted to the Inspectional Services Department with a copy to preservation Planning at least fifteen (15) business days in advance of a request for a final inspection.
8. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning at historic@somervillema.gov a minimum of fifteen (15) business days prior to final ISD walk-through so that Preservation Planning or their designee can confirm if the project was completed according to HPC approvals.

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★ REVIEWS

ScapeWEL® STANDARD SIZES AND MOD

Well Model Number	Number of Tiers (steps)	Inside Width	Projection from Foundation	S
4048-42	2	42"	41"	
4048-54	2	54"	41"	
4048-66	2	66"	41"	
4862-42	3	42"	49"	
4862-54	3	54"	49"	
4862-66	3	66"	49"	

*Extensions are only available for 3-tier window well mod

Note: The distance from the outside of the foundation w

ps://buymbs.com/images/VARIANT/medium/Bilco/ScapeWel3Tier.jpg)

(/images/Bilco/BR26

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1/5

Bilco ScapeWEL Polyethylene Window Well

☆☆☆☆☆ [Write a review](#) Available in 6 Options. Pricing may vary.

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Choose Your Window Well

4862-54 / Three-Tier



4862-54

Manufacturer Part Number: W4862-54N

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Description

The Bilco ScapeWEL Polyethylene Window Well is an egress well system that adds natural daylight and ventilation to basement rooms. The wells are available in a Two Tier (48" Height) and Three Tier (62 inch Height) with widths of 42, 54, and 66 inches. The ScapeWEL has a side and step panels that simply snap together on the job site. Bilco window wells are designed with an open bottom so that they drain freely.

Each ScapeWEL module is high density polyethylene molded construction that will never rust, rot or change color and is UV-stabilized for long life. The planter design is an attractive driftwood color that can be landscaped with flowers or plants for additional visual enhancement. ScapeWEL Egress Well Systems allow occupants to escape quickly and easily from lower level living areas in the event of an emergency.

If the top step of the ScapeWEL is inverted, it is due to excessive soil pressure from wheeled equipment near the step. This creates a line of pressure, therefore causing this problem. To fix this problem, dig out the soil behind this step and the step will slowly return to its original curvature. Replace and compact soil as required.

Please Note: Bilco recommends that the ScapeWEL be used with the ScapeWEL Cover. (/p-6018.aspx) This cover will help protect your well from leaves, snow, and other debris.


Features

- 5 -Year Warranty
- High Density Polyethylene
- Heavy duty molded panels feature a structural foam core for added strength and rigidity
- Panels are can be snapped together by one person on the job site


Specifications

- Satisfies IRC 2012 Building code requirements for emergency egress in finished basement areas
- Made in the USA


Helpful Documents



Window Well FAQ's
(/Images/Bilco/Window-Well-FAQS.pdf)



ScapeWEL Dome Cover Installation
(/Images/variant/medium/Bilco/6017/install/variant/medium/Bilco/6017HowToInstall.pdf)

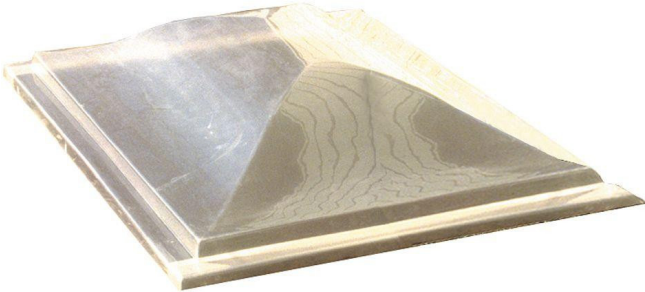


How To Size a ScapeWEL
(/Images/variant/medium/Bilco/6017HowToSize.pdf)

★
REVIEWS


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WARNING: California's Proposition 65

Related Products



(/p-6018-bilco-scapewel-polycarbonate-clear-cover.aspx)

Bilco ScapeWEL Polycarbonate Clear Cover (/p-6018-bilco-scapewel-polycarbonate-clear-cover.aspx)



(/p-6019-bilco-scapewel-high-density-polyethylene-deep-well-extension.aspx)

Bilco ScapeWEL High Density Polyethylene Deep Well Extension (/p-6019-bilco-scapewel-high-density-polyethylene-deep-well-extension.aspx)




- (/p-6015-bilco-stakwel-54-in-x-21-in-polyethylene-window-well-modular-design.aspx)

Bilco StakWel 54 Inch x 21 Inch Polyethylene Window Well - Modular Design (/p-6015-bilco-stakwel-54-in-x-21-in-polyethylene-window-well-modular-design.aspx)
- (/p-6030-bilco-55-inch-x-72-inch-ultra-series-polyethylene-basement-door.aspx)

Bilco 55 Inch X 72 Inch Ultra Series Polyethylene Basement Door (/p-6030-bilco-55-inch-x-72-inch-ultra-series-polyethylene-basement-door.aspx)


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4 Questions \ 4 Answers

 WRITE A REVIEW

 ASK A QUESTION

Reviews (0)

Questions (4)



BE THE FIRST TO WRITE A REVIEW



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Reseller Info (t-resellerinfo.aspx)

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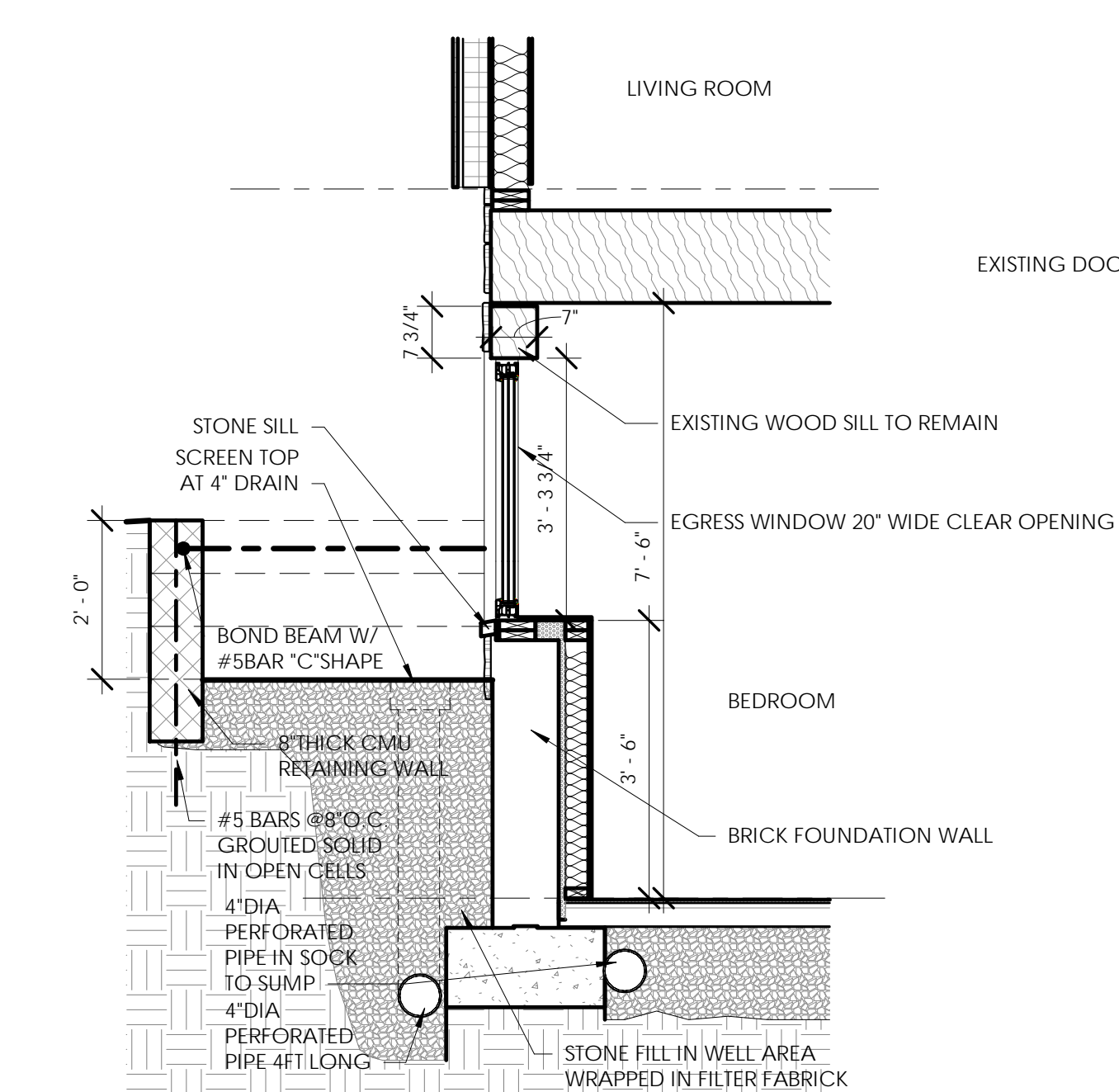
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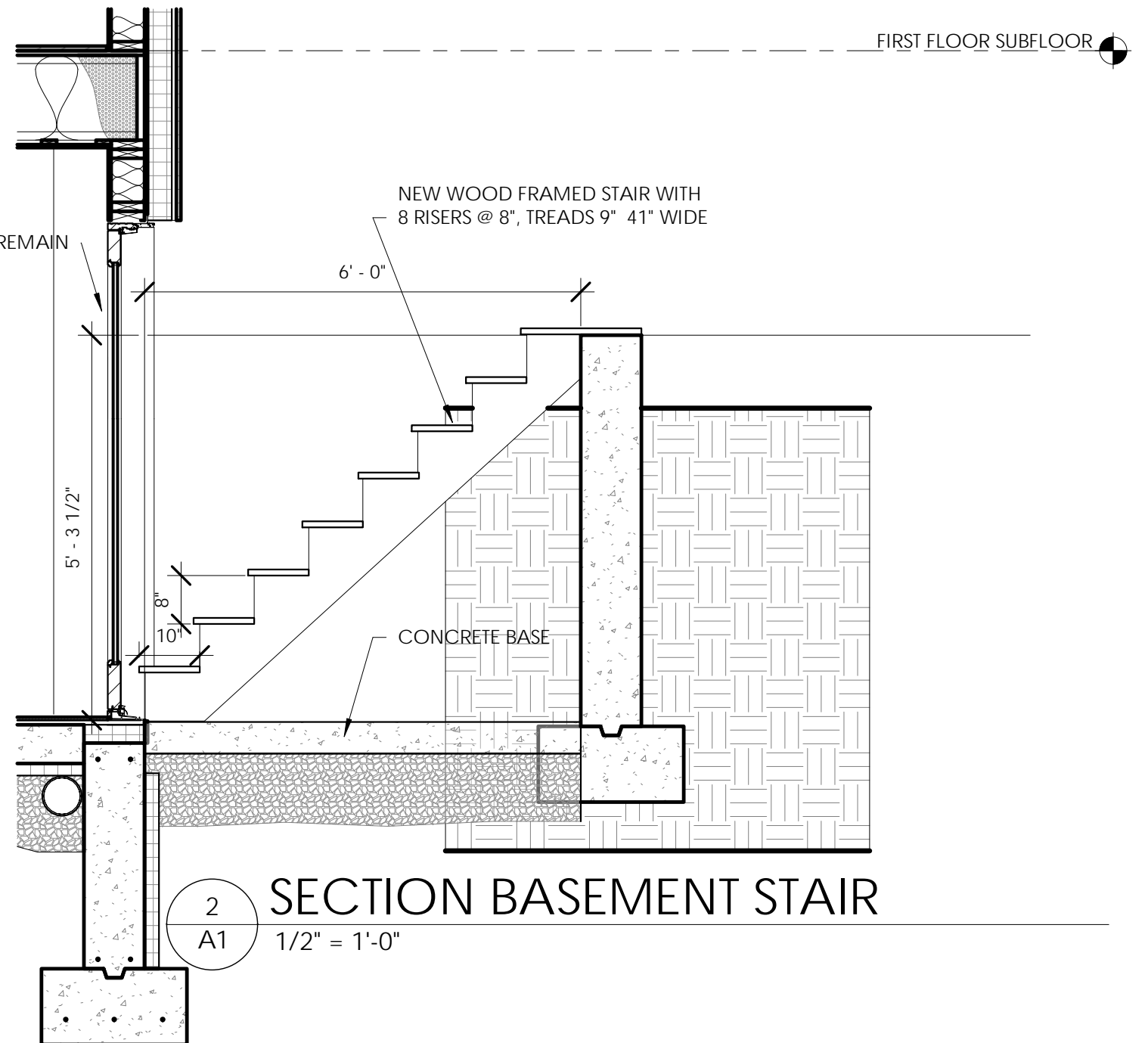
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PROPOSED WINDOW WELL & EGRESS DOOR

56 BOW STREET
SOMERVILLE, MA

BASEMENT

Project number 22156
Date OCT. 6, 2022
Drawn by CL/KL
Checked by SK

A1

Scale 1/2" = 1'-0"

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SMV.31
Historic Name:	Couch, Dr. - Arnold House
Common Name:	
Address:	56 Bow St
City/Town:	Somerville
Village/Neighborhood:	Prospect Hill;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	C 1874
Architectural Style(s):	No style;
Use(s):	Nursing Home; Single Family Dwelling House;
Significance:	Architecture; Health Medicine;
Area(s):	SMV.A
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (03/26/1976); Local Historic District (03/11/1985);
Building Materials:	Wall: Asbestos Shingle; Wood;
Demolished	No



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

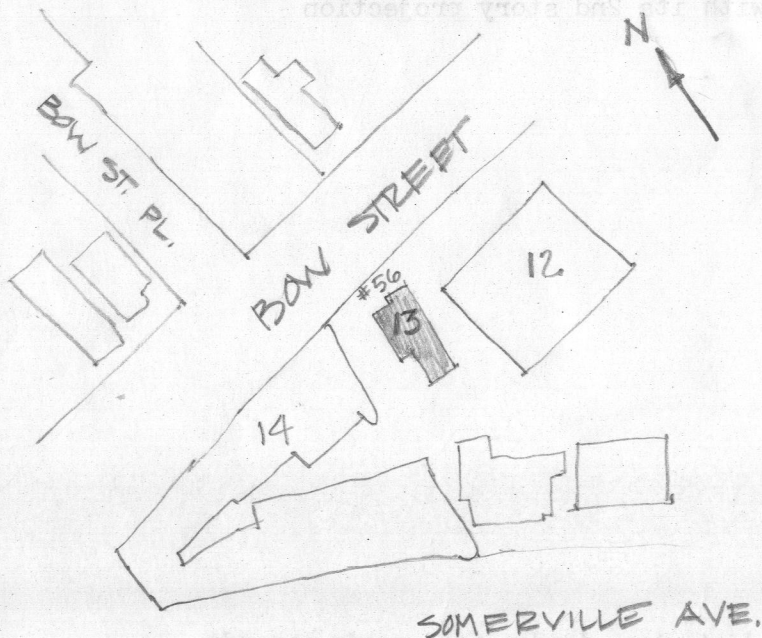
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FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston



4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____

MHC Photo no. _____

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JUL 1975

MASS. HIST. COMM.
(over)

3/26/76 NR Bow Street H.D.

In Area no.

Form no.

(A)

31

1. Town Somerville

Address 56 Bow Street

Name Arnold Residence

Present use Residence

Present owner Mr. and Mrs. William D. Rafferty (Edith D.)

3. Description:

Date before 1874

Source 1874 map

Style worker's cottage. Italianate-Bracketed derivative

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric asbestos shingles
orig.: clapboard

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features roof
side overhang, round gable window, side entry, front gable roof

Altered front entry added Date prob. 20th cent.

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size:

One acre or less X Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 20' on Bow St.

Approximate distance of building from street 15'

6. Recorded by Aron Faegre Lisette Ellis

Organization Somerville Historical Commission

Date 24 June 1975

7. Original owner (if known) Dr. Couch

Original use residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates rest home before present owner

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science/ invention	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/ humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Community development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

#56 Bow Street is an example of a worker's cottage derived from the Italianate-Bracketed Manner. It is a simple side-hall front-gable cottage, devoid of embellishments at windows and corners, lacking even bracketed detail. This derivative style, with its "unembellished functionalism", made two concessions to current architectural fashion: the side overhang and pitch of roof, and the rounded gable window, both of which are Italianate details. This style was often found in worker's houses in the latter part of the 19th century. (The entire porch with its 2nd story projection is a later addition.) *

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

* Old Cambridge, Cambridge Historical Commission, M.I.T. Press Cambridge, Mass. 1973 p.100
Hopkins, G.A., publisher. Atlas of the City of Somerville. 1874