CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING, PRESERVATION, & ZONING DIVISION (PPZ)
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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

Site: 25 Atherton Street

Case: HP26-000072

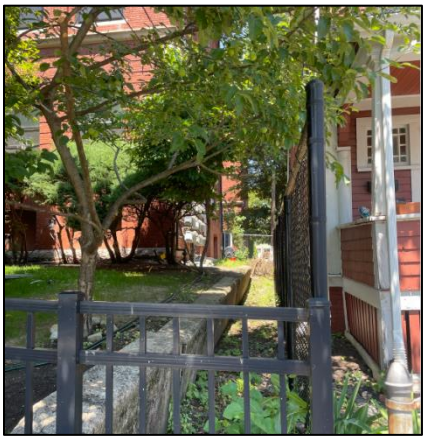
Applicant: Matthew Boyes-Watson

Owner: Carr Schoolhouse Condo Trust

Legal Ad: *The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by installing a heat pump on the side elevation of the existing building.*

HPC Meeting Date: November 17, 2026





Above: View of side yard where heat pump will be located



Above: View of front yard up close

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 subject is the c.1898 Martin W. Carr School, a three-story, hip-roofed brick building in the Renaissance and Colonial Revival architectural style. The heat pump is proposed to be placed in the right elevation of the building, which is visible from the public way.

The Form B for this building is attached with further historical and architectural information.

Proposal: The following scope is under the purview of the HPC.

- The Applicant seeks to install a heat pump, model MXZ-4D30NL28,600 BTU/H Heat Pump Outdoor Unit, at the right elevation of the building

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. The portions of the regulations that are most applicable to the proposed alterations are discussed below.

B.7. Utility Equipment

The most relevant portion of the Design Guidelines is as follows:

Section II, B. Roofs, item 7 read as follows:

7. *Utility equipment, such as television antennae, air conditioners, solar collectors and other mechanical units should be restricted to the rear of the property or on portions of the roof that are not visible from a public way. If no other placement is possible, air conditioning and other cooling units on street facades should be of the slim-line type or set flush with the surface of the building and painted the same color as the window trim.*

Because the proposed alteration –the heat pump instillation – is visible from the Atherton, the HPC has purview over these alterations.

Applicant Proposal: The Applicant proposes to install a heat pump, model MXZ-4D30NL 28,600 BTU/H Heat Pump Outdoor Unit, to the right elevation of the building. The heat pump is visible from the public way on Atherton Street.

Below is an image of the proposed heat pump:

Date: November 17, 2026
Case: HP26-000072
Site: 25 Atherton Street

MXZ-4D30NL
28,600 BTU/H HEAT PUMP OUTDOOR UNIT

MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

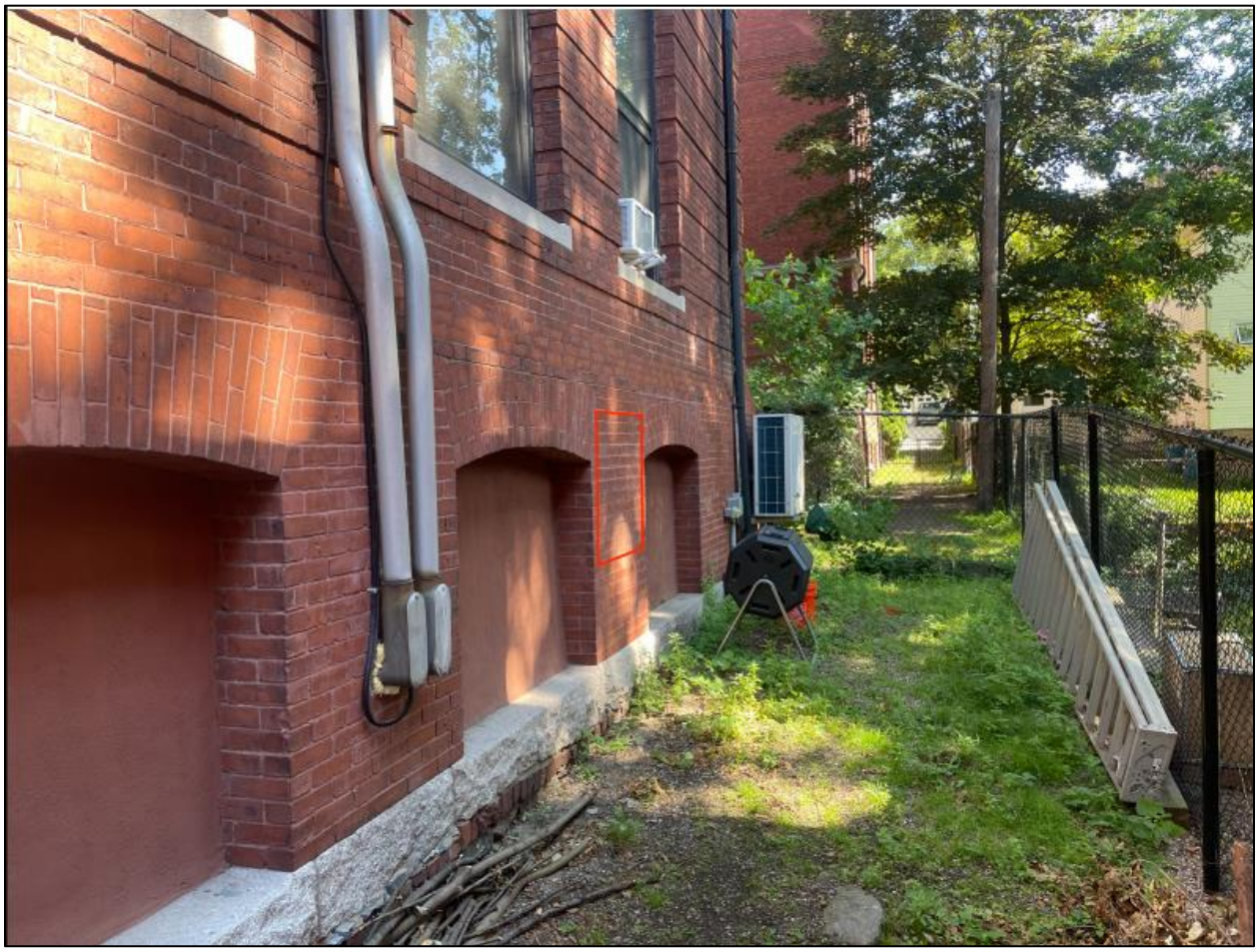
Job Name:
System Reference: Date:



GENERAL FEATURES

- Compact, small chassis
- Compressor overcurrent detection
- Compressor thermal protection
- Fan motor overheating/voltage protection
- Freeze-prevention base pan heater equipped as standard
- High-pressure protection
- Prolonged heating over an extended duration
- Quiet outdoor unit operation as low as 52 dB(A)
- Rated for 2,000 hours spraying time per ASTM B117 Standard
- Variable speed INVERTER-driven compressor
- Blue Fin anti-corrosion treatment applied to the outdoor unit heat exchanger for increased coil protection and longer life

Below is the proposed location of the heat pump:



Preservation Planning Assessment:

The HPC Design Guidelines states that mechanical equipment should be, "be restricted to the rear of the property or on portions of the roof that are not visible from a public way. If no other placement is possible, air conditioning and other cooling units on street facades should be of the slim-line type or set flush with the surface of the building and painted the same color as the window trim" Here the proposed heat pump is visible from the public way. However, the proposed location for the heat pump does not necessarily detract from the overall historic appearance of the building and no historic elements are proposed to be removed to make room for the heat pump.

I. FINDINGS & VOTE

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

II. 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. 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. Failure to seek approval for changes may delay final sign-offs/Cos.
4. The heat pump shall match the colors and specifications submitted by the Applicant.
5. The Applicant shall contact Preservation Planning a minimum of 15 business days prior to arranging for a final inspection from ISD. Preservation Planners or their designee shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that it was executed in accordance with the Certificate of Appropriateness.

   Contact shall be made at the following email address ONLY:

   historic@somervillema.gov

   The Applicant must provide before and after photos of the project area in the email as .JPG attachments.

   The attachments *cannot* be embedded in the body of an emai

Attachment B

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System
Scanned Record Cover Page



Inventory No:	SMV.70
Historic Name:	Carr, Martin W. School
Common Name:	Carr School
Address:	25 Atherton St
City/Town:	Somerville
Village/Neighborhood:	Spring Hill;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	1898
Architectural Style(s):	Classical Revival; Colonial Revival;
Architect(s):	Gould, Aaron H.;
Use(s):	Apartment House; Public School;
Significance:	Architecture; Community Planning; Education; Politics Government;
Area(s):	SMV.O, SMV.AQ, SMV.AY
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register Individual Property (07/05/1984); Preservation Restriction (12/20/1984); Local Historic District (03/11/1985); Nat'l Register MRA (09/18/1989); Nat'l Register District (09/18/1989);
Building Materials:	Roof: Slate; Wall: Brick; Granite; Stone, Cut; Wood; Foundation: Granite; Stone, Cut;
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.

The MACRIS database and scanned files are highly dynamic; new information is added daily and both database records and related scanned files may be updated as new information is incorporated into MHC files. Users should note that there may be a considerable lag time between the receipt of new or updated records by MHC and the appearance of related information in MACRIS. Users should also note that not all source materials for the MACRIS database are made available as scanned images. Users may consult the records, files and maps available in MHC's public research area at its offices at the State Archives Building, 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, open M-F, 9-5.

Users of this digital material acknowledge that they have read and understood the MACRIS Information and Disclaimer (http://mhc-macris.net/macrisdisclaimer.htm)

Data available via the MACRIS web interface, and associated scanned files are for information purposes only. THE ACT OF CHECKING THIS DATABASE AND ASSOCIATED SCANNED FILES DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU ARE REPRESENTING A DEVELOPER AND/OR A PROPOSED PROJECT THAT WILL REQUIRE A PERMIT, LICENSE OR FUNDING FROM ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY YOU MUST SUBMIT APROJECT NOTIFICATION FORM TO MHC FOR MHC'S REVIEW AND COMMENT. You can obtain a copy of a PNF through the MHC web site (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) under the subject heading "MHC Forms."

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

This file was accessed on: Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 4:16 PM

Attachment B

F0R1B - BUILDING

NRmra / DIS - 9/18/89 (1C)
NRIND - 7/5/84
NR update
AR - 12/20/84
TD - 3/11/85 (1C)
PL SPRINGHILL
USUS BOSTON
SECT B

Area	no.
AY, O, AQ	

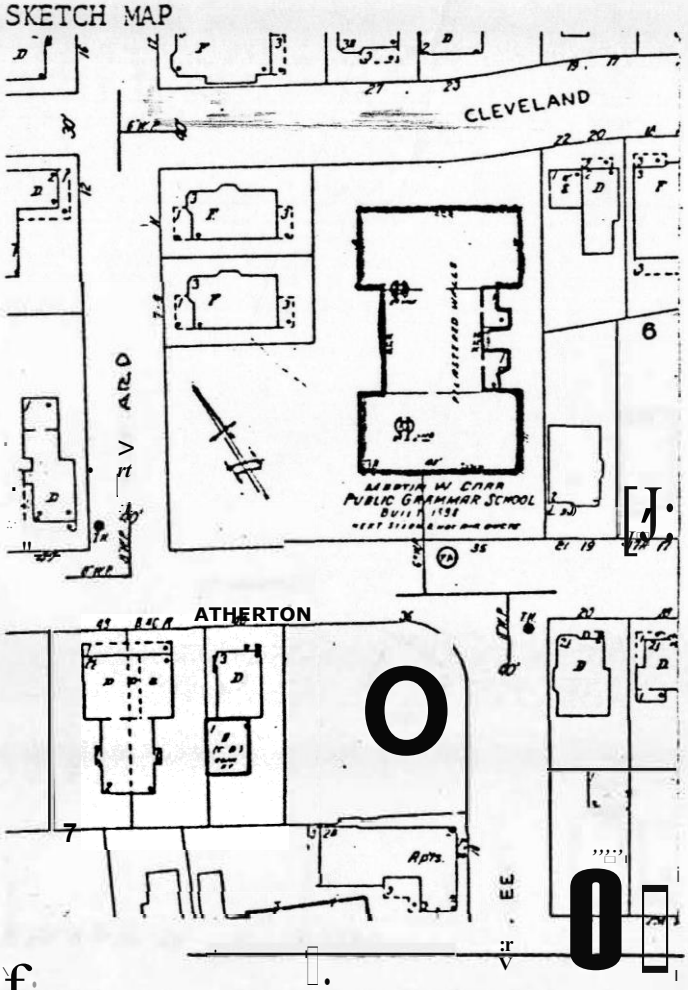
update

MASSACnUSETTS HISTORICAL C0?-1ISSION
94 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Photos Attached Separately.

PHOTO (3:x:3" or 3x5", black & white)
Staule to left side of form
P.hoto number

SKETCH MAP



Recorded by C.-z-llie

Organization Landscape Research

Date 1982 - 11/84

Town Somerville

Address 35 Atherton Street

Historic Name Martin w. Carr School

Use: Original s c h o o J

Present residence/aoartments

Ownership: CTl Private individual
Private organization

Public

original owner City of Somerville

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1898

Source

Style Renaissanc and Colonial Revival

Architect Aaron H. Gould

Exterior wall fabric

Outbuildings

Major alterations (with dates)

Moved Date

Approx. acreage Less than 1 acre

Setting Residential

., C.

(Staple ada tio□al sheets hde)

Attachment B

5M\J .,70

ARCHIT-ECTURA.t s-rGKIFiCANCE- -(describe important architectural features and - evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

The Martin W. Carr School of 1898 is a handsome institutional example of Renaissance and Colonial Revival Style architecture. The three-story brick building faces south on Atherton Street, two short blocks from the busy arterial of.Somerville Avenue. At the north the school is bounded by Cleveland St., and at the west by Harvard St. The freestanding building is situated on a level .68 acre site on the southern slope of Spring Hill and is set back approximately 50 feet from Atherton Street. (See

Architectural Significance - continued)

.HISTORICAL SIG;\IFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to t-he development of the comml.lllity)

The Martin W. Carr School possesses integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and association. It is a well-designed and preserved example of Renaissance·and Colonial Revival institutional architecture, and *is* the only surviving work of local architect Aaron H. Gould in Somerville. Built on the site of the earlier Spring Hill Primary School (1850) and the First Baptist Church (1852), it has associations with the development of the Spring Hill area, one of Somerville's earliest residential subdivisions (1847-). As an imposing public building, it reflects the expansion of City facilities to meet the strong population growth at the turn of the century. Thus, the Carr School meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

The Carr School was opened in 1898 to serve as a 14-room grade school. Two additional rooms were devoted to manual training facilities used by upper grades. The Carr was the first H-plan school in Somerville. This modern plan allowed maximum light and air into the classrooms. Gould's Ellis School (1898) and the Kelley School (1902, razed) both in Cambridge, evidence the H-plan and similar exterior treatment. Although originally considered spacious, the School Report of 1901 noted that the building was already becoming serioudly crowded. When opened, the Carr was one of 24 schools in the city and accomodated 700 pupils. Somerville's schools served a population which rose from 40,152 in 1890 to 61,643 in 1900.

Martin W. Carr (1829-1902), for whom the building is named, was president of H. W. Carr and Company, a Somerville jewelry manufacturing firm with a national market. Carr served as an alderman. and as a member of the School Committee. He resided on Craigie Street, at the edge of the Spring Hill neighborhood.

(See Historical Significance - continued)

BIBLIOG Ph and/or REFERENCES

Samuels, Edward A. Somerville: Past and Present.
Somerville Annual Report. 1898-1901.
Zellie, C. Beyond the Neck: The Architecture and Development of Somerville, M.

Attachment B

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

At pr s nt, the school is surrouded by an asphalt playgr nd at he west. (Photo 1).
To the east, along Atherton, isa densely-built block of one and two-fm ily houses.

In e diately to the orth, south, and-west is a relativ ly intac esidentia neighbo hood stylish mid-nineteenth century single-family houses and later two-family and apartn ent buildings. From chool site and from inside th building there re excell nt view of Cambridge to the south, particularly of the towers of Memorial Hall nd the surrouding buildings at Harvard University.

The H-shaped plan is symme r cally org niz d with two classroom wings flanking a central hall and two-story grand staircase. Basement to third-story stairs are located at the north and outh ends of the central hall. The bu lding rests on a ru ticated granite sill and buttressed basement walls which rise to the first brick belt courses of the first Btory. The bas ment is it by simple segmenth arched windows. The chool is finished entirely with red brick laid in CO4 on running bond. Granite trim is used at the entrances, at window sills, and in o e continous belt course betwee the second and thi d stories. Second and third story windows are grouped in arcades, and contain eight over eight sash. At the firs story, twelve dentical b i k belt courses rusticate the surface and accentuate the brick voussoirs of the recta gular windows. Third story windows are unifonly round-a ch d, with d ep brick surrounds. The hip roof i slate-covered and a single chim ey rises from the north wing. The wooden cornice has a continous treatment of dentils and modillions. (Photo 2 and 3).

At the s uth, th ma n facade has a central ntry pavilion trim ed in granite and flanked by shallow, paired pilasters. (Photo 4). The double entry is lit by a traceried fanlight a a king rect ngular windows. The entrance is pa ned by g anite panel inscribed w th ,lartin W. Carr". There are two simple rondels in the spandrels. A ove the pavilion rise a pair f rectangular wind ws and prominent Pa ladian-motif window. Th s third ory wi dow organizes the rest of the facade. and is flanked by arcades containing diree round-arched windows.

west fa ad , facing the playground, opens to the grand st ircase at the c ntral hall. The entry echoes the treatment of the main facade. The central portion of the elevation is organized by a prominent arcade; t h e upper story is lit by Pallad an-motif windows which contain sash-with heavy mullio ns. This treat ent gives the building a second facade, oriented to the playground rather than the street.

T north elevation has a similar entry treatment as the south and west facades, without the prominent third story Palladian-motif window. Wo slightly projecting classroom and stair bays are lit b round-arched and rec angula windows. The east elevation, nearly abutting the property line, has a coal shute at grade and no entry. The fenestration r fl cts the treatment of the rest of the school, and a s l e n d e r Palladian-motif window serves to light the landing of the grand staircase. (Photo 5).

Inside, at the first l vel, four clas rooms open to the spacious ha l which runs parall l to Harvard Street. The central grand stair is the focus of this well-lit space. It rises only to the s cond lev l, springing from two andings at the mezzani e level. Circulation between the second and third levels is provided by the end stairs. Throughout the inter or, in cla srooms and cor idors, the or ginal four-foot ongue and groove wainscotting survives intact. Other interior finishes including stair rails and panelled posts and window arrldoor trim are also in near-original condition.

e basement was never occupied.

Attachment B

SMV.70

HISTO□!Cl'.L SIGl;I?ICAl□CE (Continued)

The immediate area was platted in the mid-nineteenth century as a railroad cor:1r.1uter's neighborhood, intended primarily for Bosfo□ businessmen. The°-earr School was~ among the last additions to the area. The Gothic Revival, Greek Revival, Italianate, and Second L'":lpire Style single-fa.'Tli.ly houses which surround the school site are testament to Sp::::.-ing Hill's early period of significa.llce. Opposite the school to the south is the "Round House" built by inventor Enoch Robinson in 1856.

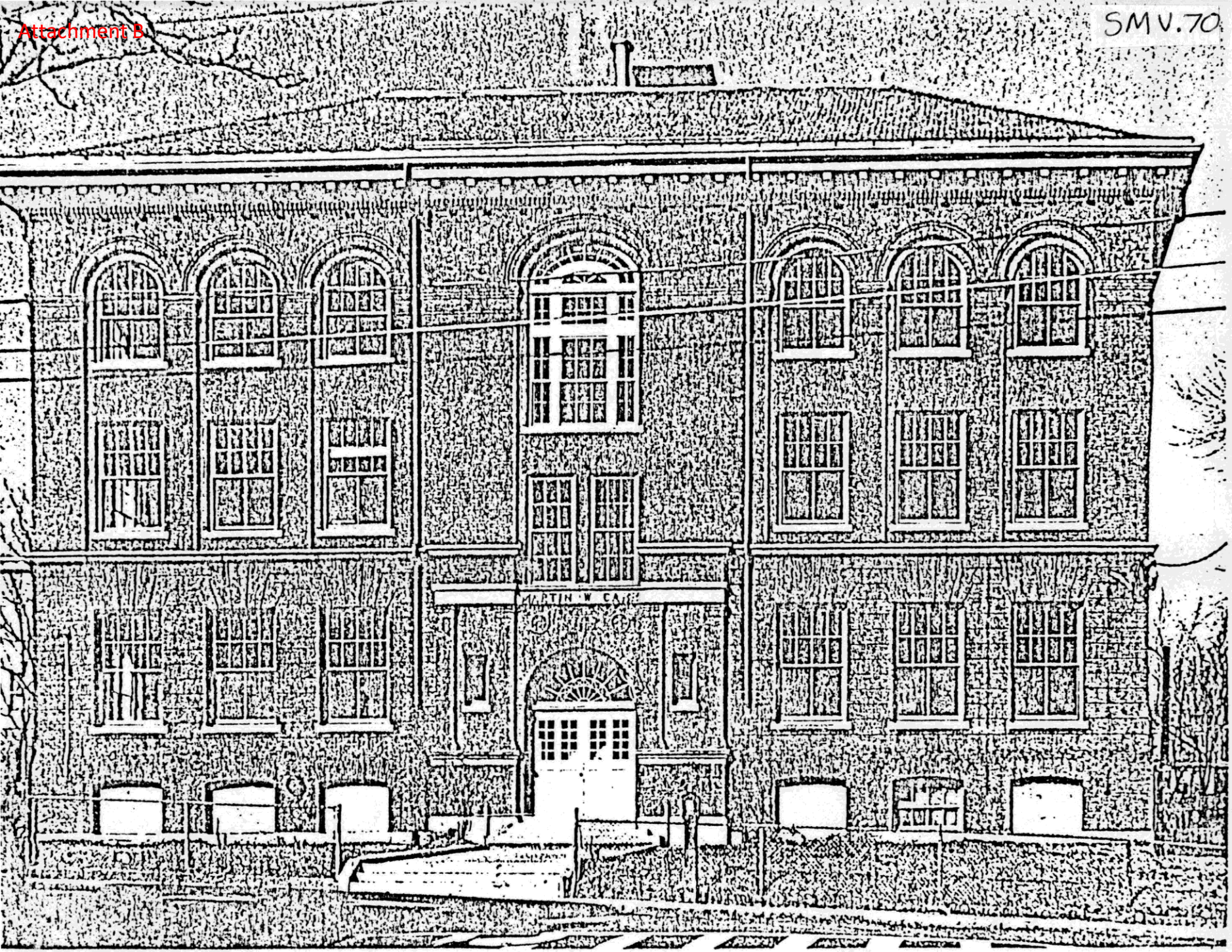
Sonerville experienced rapid residential development and industrial expansion at the turn of t:;e century. Significant as a manufacuring and food processing center, the extension of streetcar service from Boston increased its popularit:ras a commuter suburb. The turn cf the cent··ry brought a substantial number of-two -' c{rid three:..fami.ly houses and a significant increase in public building, particularly schools. The Carr School is one of the few unaltered survivors of this period.

The City's earliest public buildings of architecturitl significance included the Latin High School (1871) by Samuel J.F. Thayer; the Central Engine House (1871) by Shepherds. Wood.cock, and the Police Station (1874) by G.A. Clough. Designed in Victorian Gothic Style, with steep roofs capped by iron cresting, all have been razed or altered. The razed Romanesque Revival Public Library (1884) by George F. Loring was the major public building of the 1880s. Renaissance Revival and Queen Anne Style designs were favored by the architects of Sonerville's public comraissions of the 1890s, notably the now-altered English High School (1895) by Hartwell and Richardson.

Aaron H. Gould (1865-19) was born in Nova Scotia. Trained as a carpenter, he worked on rge hotel and residential projects in Maine and in the South before moving to Sonerville ";_J the 1890s. He resided at 50 Columbus Avenue, in a Colonial Revival house of his own design, and maintained an office ·there and at 42 Court Street, Boston. Gould was responsible for major public projects in Somerville including the now-razed Central Fire Station (1895) and the City Stables and Water Department (1898). Among unexecuted proposals of note is the Somerville Armory Plan (1886), a monumental structure with crenellated towers which would have re-used a portion of the Victorian Gothic Style Fire Station of 1871. Gould also did a substantial amount of work for the City of Cambridge during this period; the North Cambridge Fire Station(1896) is an extant example of his work there.

Attachment B

SMV.70



Attachment B

F')RM B - BUILDING

Form no. 1 70

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

0

Town Somerville

28 Atherton Street

>ric Name Martin W. Carr School

Original ! school

Present vacant

rship: 0 Private individual
Private organization

Public City gf □g□erville

Original owner

1

or geographical
Indicate north.

Source m=a□pa□n=d□ee□d□r□c□o□rd□s

Style Renaissance Revival

Architect Aaron Gould (Boston)

Exterior wall fabric brick and granite

Om:buildings

Major alterations (with dates)

Moved Date

Approx. acreage less than one acre

Setting urban residential

f:::0-'*VI [?] NF

Recorded by Carole Zellie

Organization Landscape Research

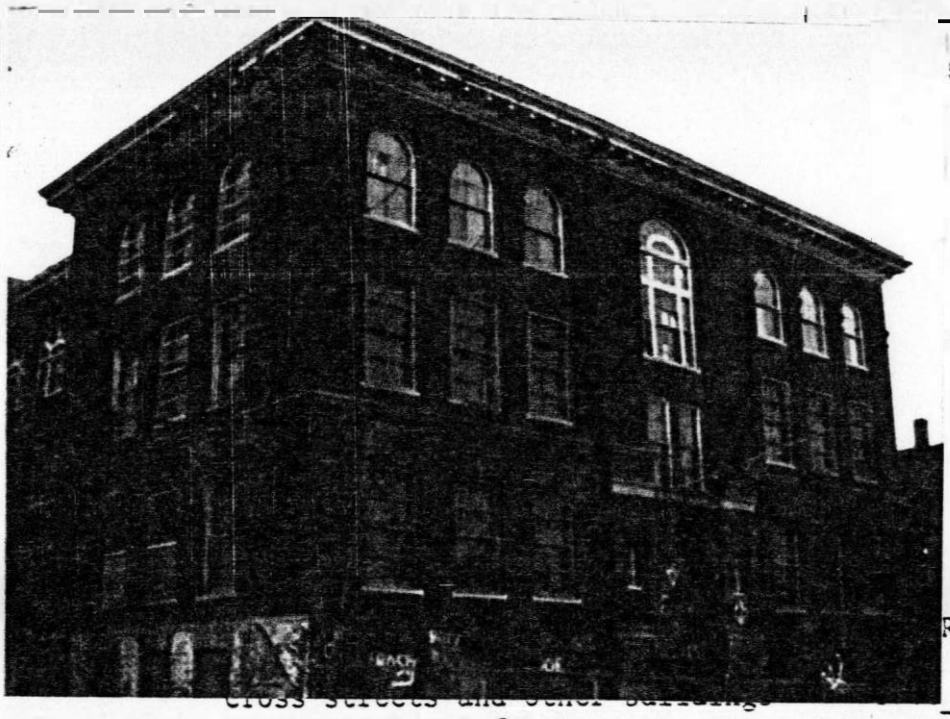
Da-ce 1-10-82

NRMCA1/NRDIS - 9/18/89
(1C)
NRIND - 7/5/84
PR - 12/20/84

Area
Spring Hil

A4, AQ,

(Stapl'e additional sheets h)



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RIPTION:

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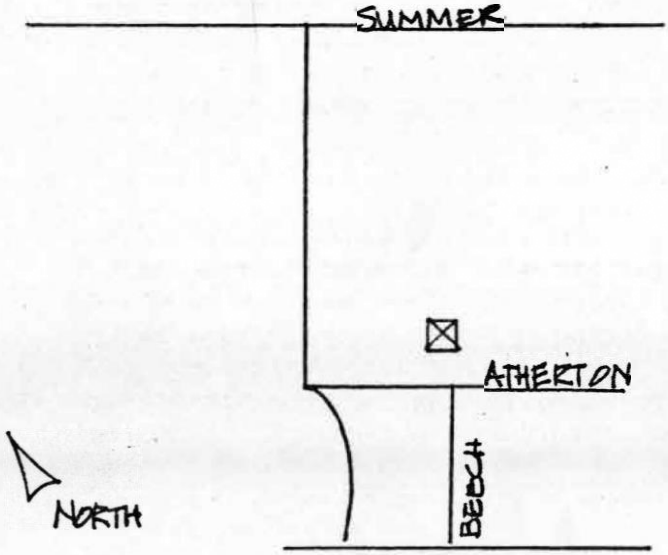
cross streets and other buildings
features.



Attachment B

SMV.70

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFIC;NCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

The Carr School is the only nineteenth century school oE architectural significance which remains in Somerville. The Renaissance Revival design was executed in red_ brick with granite sills. At the south elevation, round-arch windows are grouped in arcades to flank the round-arched central entry, The modillioned cornice is wood; the roof retains its original slate treatment. These materials are characteristic of the public schools of the 1880s and 1890s, two decades which produced handsome designs by Boston architects Loring and Phipps and Aaron Gould. Aaron Gould designed many public buildings for the City of Somerville, including the Cit y Stables Central Ftre House, and the Colson Hotel, A native of Maine, he was

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE texpla1n the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

Carr School served an area of Somerville long-known as Spring Hill, Spring Hill a long, narrow drumlin, is the site of the city's earliest residential subdivision, platted by George Brastow in 1847 to served the early rail commuters of the town. The Carr School is situated on one of the original streets of this subdivision, and is surrounded by a variety of Creek Rev:illal and Italianate houses of architectural significance, including the 1856 Round House built by inventor Enoch Robinson. Prior to the construction of the Carr Schoool and the_adjacent playground dating from 1910, the site was occupied by the First Baptist Church(l852) and the Spring Hill Primary School(l850).

The Carr School is named for Martin W. Carr, one of the founders of the Carr Jewelry Company of Somerville. He was active in numerous fraternal organizations and held several city offices including alderman,

a resident of Somerville.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

E.A. Samuels,
Somerville Past and Present, p. 507. (1897)

Attachment B

FORM B - BUILDING

Area	Form no.
Spring Hill	70

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

PHOTO (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
Staple to left side of form
Photo number

Town Somerville

Address 5 Atherton Street

Historic Name Martin W. Carr School

Use: Original school

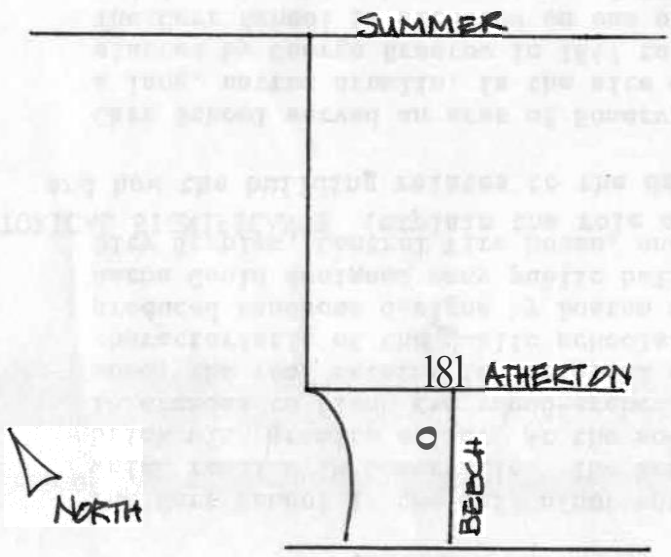
Present vacant

Ownership: ☐ Private individual
Private organization
Public

Original owner

SKETCH MAP

Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings or geographical features. Indicate north.



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Recorded by Carole Zellie

Organization Landscape Research

Date 1-10-82

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1898

Source map and deed records

Style Renaissance Revival

Architect Aaron Gould (Boston)

Exterior wall fabric Brick and granite

Outbuildings

Major alterations (with dates)

Moved Date

less than one acre

Approx. acreage

Setting urban residential

(Staple a□d5.tic,□al sheets : -:,.-.□)

Attachment B

SMV. 70

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE(describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

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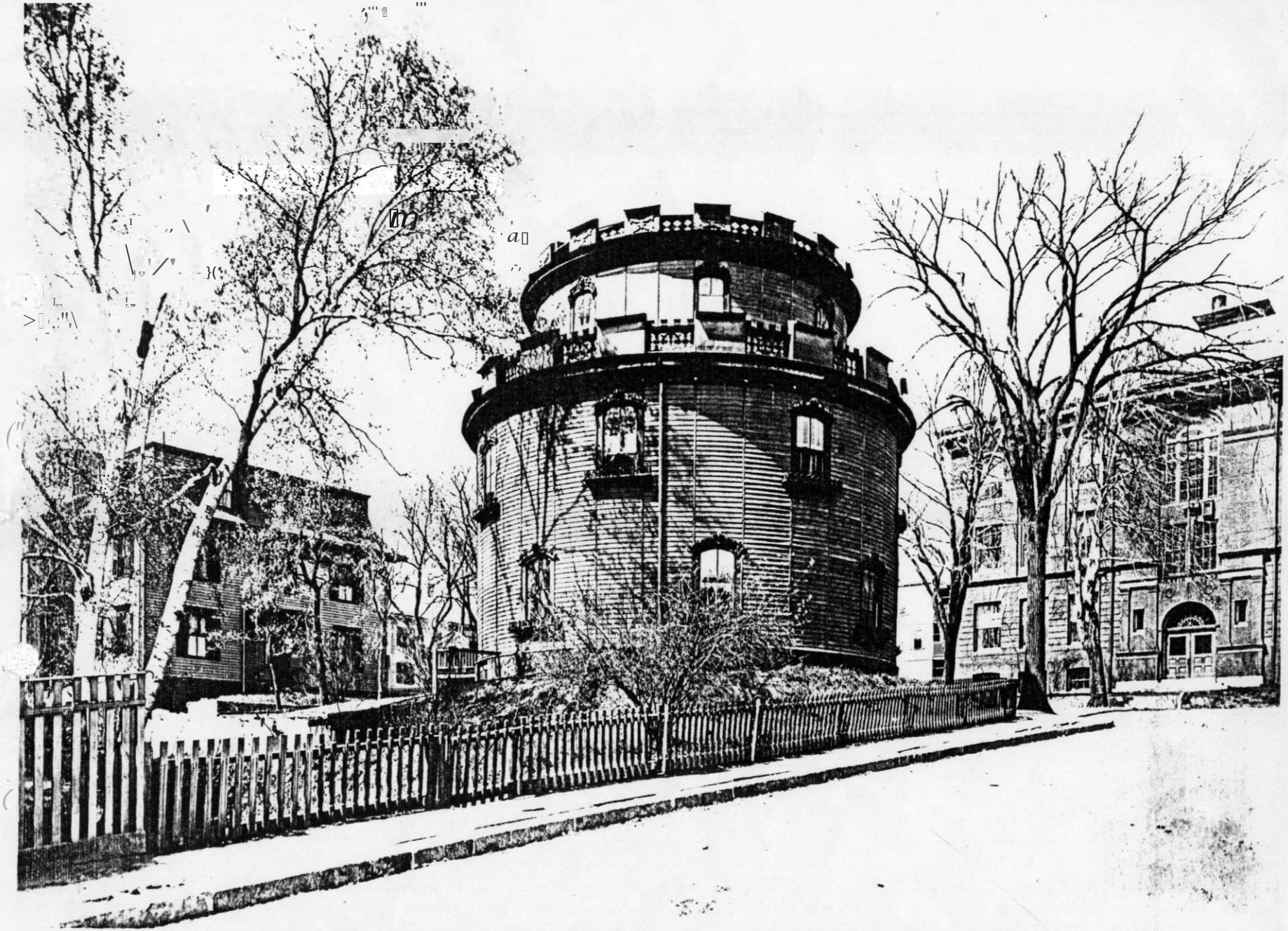
E.A. Samuels,
Somerville Past and Present, p. 507.(1897)

Attachment B

SMV:70



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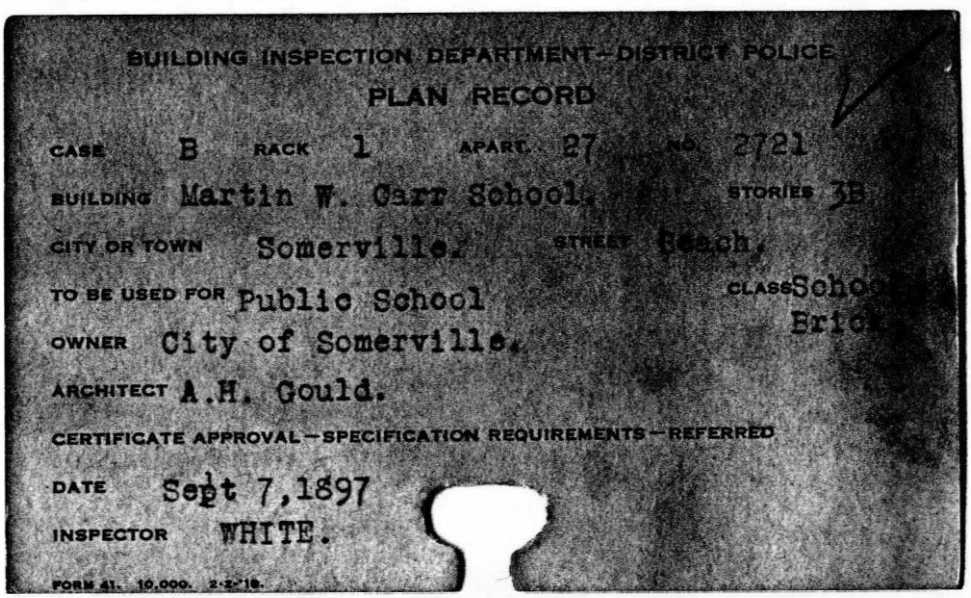
Attac.hment B.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town: Somerville Property Address: 35 Atherton

Area(s): SMV Form No.: 170

MAssAcHusErrs HrnToRICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTOI'I, MASSACHUSETTS 02125



BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT—DISTRICT POLICE
PLAN RECORD

CASE B RACK 1 APART. 27 NO. 2721

BUILDING Martin W. Carr School. STORIES 3E

CITY OR TOWN Somerville. STREET Beach.

TO BE USED FOR Public School CLASS Schoo Brick

OWNER City of Somerville.

ARCHITECT A.H. Gould.

CERTIFICATE APPROVAL—SPECIFICATION REQUIREMENTS—REFERRED

DATE Sept 7,1897

INSPECTOR WHITE.

FORM 41. 10,000. 2-2-'18.