



70 TAPLEY STREET
SPRINGFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS 01104

Preliminary Report
for the proposed

Colony Hills Local Historic District

Springfield, Massachusetts



Prepared for the Springfield City Council by the
Springfield Planning Department
September 18, 2015

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I. Summary Sheet

Chairperson: Ralph Slate

Staff: Alvin Allen

Address: Springfield Historical Commission
70 Tapley Street
Springfield, MA 01104

Telephone: (413) 787 – 6020

Commissioners: Ralph Slate, Chair
Thomas Belton, Vice Chair
Marjorie Guess
My-Ron Hatchett
Robert McCarroll
Benjamin Murphy
Vincent Walsh
Steven Shultis, Alternate

**Date of Public
Hearing:** October 15, 2015

**Expected Date of City
Council Vote:** November 16, 2015

**Number of Properties
Included in the
Proposed Local
Historic District
Expansion:** 27 houses; 4 lots

Conclusion of the Preliminary Study Report: To protect the architectural integrity of Colony Hills and to guide any future development, it is in the best interest of the area that a local historic district be created.

II. Introduction

The Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40C, is the Commonwealth's enabling statute for creating local historic districts. Local historic districts are the mechanism by which municipalities can designate and protect areas of architectural and historical significance. Within a local historic district, no exterior architectural feature that is visible from a public street, park or water body can be altered without first receiving permission from the local historic district commission. The level of protection provided by a local historic district is much greater than that provided by inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Although being on the National Register is a formal recognition of property's historical significance and can offer limited review of projects funded or assisted by federal, state, or CDBG funds, the property itself is not protected from change if work is done exclusively with private funds. The local historic district provides greater protection and review for properties and has this power as a result of a town or city council vote.

Local Historic Districts were first established in Massachusetts in 1955. There are now more than 200 local historic districts in over 100 municipalities in the Commonwealth, including six in Springfield. Neighboring municipalities with local historic districts include West Springfield, Longmeadow, Chicopee, and Holyoke.

In 1972, the Quadrangle-Mattoon historic district was the first local district established in Springfield. Over the next six years, five other districts were created, protecting more than 1,200 properties. Three districts expansions have also taken place. Local historic districts can be credited with protecting many of the city's significant residential structures, maintaining community character, preserving important architectural treasures, and adding to the quality of residents' lives.

III. Methodology

The Springfield Historical Commission was established in 1972 when the city's first local historic district was created. It has both the powers of a Local Historic District Commission and a Historical Commission.

The Forest Park neighborhood was surveyed in 1999. Consultant Bonnie Parsons felt that the Colony Hills area was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Over the past few decades, a house in Springfield and one in Longmeadow were constructed in styles not compatible with Colony Hills. Even worse, two years ago, the early twentieth century Bourne estate, from which much of Colony Hills was developed, was demolished in the Longmeadow side of the neighborhood and its land subdivided into lots for McMansions.

The move to create a Colony Hills Local Historic District is a result of a request from the owners in the area. Below is a time line of activity:

November 2008 Colony Hills representatives contacted SHC regarding possible designation as a LHD. Since the area crosses municipal lines, a similar contact was made with Longmeadow officials.

December 2008 SHC representatives met with Colony Hills representatives on site.

January 2009 SHC representatives met with MHC and Colony Hills representatives to tour area.

January 2009 SHC representatives attended informational meeting for both Springfield and Longmeadow owners and spoke about how LHDs are administered in Springfield.

Spring 2009 Colony Hills folks sent out informational packet and questionnaire to all owners. Response of Springfield owners was more than 50%, and 79% of respondents favored protecting Colony Hills.

May, 2009 Colony Hills representatives met with full SHC and request beginning of Preliminary Report. SHC voted to begin.

IV. Significance

Colony Hills is an intact development carried out under the direction of the influential Olmsted Brothers firm. It is significant as a well preserved example of a carefully planned residential neighborhood for Springfield's affluent and influential residents. The area contains examples of Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival styles popular in the second quarter of the twentieth century in their finest local expressions, documenting

both the aesthetic preferences of Springfield's elite in this era and the ways in which those preferences were interpreted by some of the region's most prominent architects.

Colony Hills was developed under the guidance of Springfield attorney Charles Parson, who would also live in the area. The area borders Forest Park to the north. Approximately one quarter of it is in Springfield and the remainder in Longmeadow. The Olmsted Brothers acted as consultants and modeled the development in part on Roland Park in Baltimore MD, another Olmsted project. Rectangular, graded lots were avoided in favor of more natural settings. Streets were curved, trees arranged in natural clusters rather than rows, and small triangle parks placed in intersections. Sidewalks were not cut to a standard grade but instead followed the terrain. Roads and sidewalks were narrower than the norm while tree belts were wider.

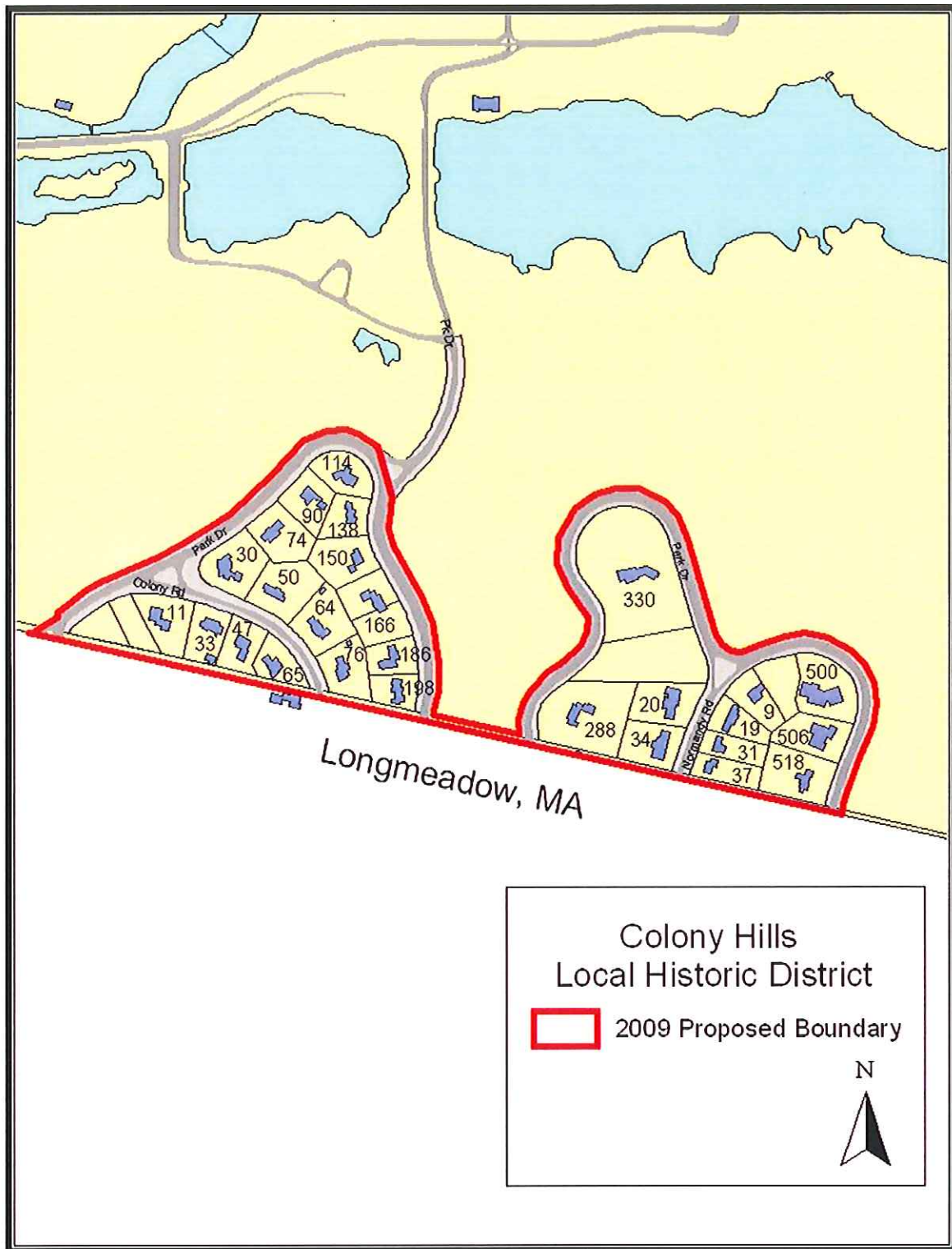
Limited design restrictions were placed on houses to insure architectural harmony. Garages were required to be placed so they were less visible from the street. Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival were the most prevalent styles. Prominent regional architects designed many of the houses, some of which were awarded the annual Samuel Bowles Architectural Competition. The Hartford firm of Smith & Bassette, which designed numerous public buildings including the Connecticut State Office Building, designed four homes on Colony Road and four on Park Drive. Morris Maloney, who also designed many Springfield schools, designed 186 Park Drive. Max Westhoff, who specialized in upscale homes and Colonial Revival buildings such as the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, designed 330 Park Drive, one of the largest houses in Springfield. Merle Lincoln of Hartford, Samuel Glaser of Boston, and also Karl Putnam of Northampton designed homes as well as Springfield architects James Fitzsimmons, Burton Geckler, and Wallace Dibble.

Colony Hills attracted residents from the highest levels of Springfield's business community, including Margaret and Wilbur Young (owners of Absorbine Jr.), Morris Metcalf (treasurer of American Bosch), William Fletcher (vice president of Garrettson-Ellis Lumber Company), Charles Bellamy (partner in Tiff Bros. Brokerage).

V. Justification of the Boundaries

Colony Hills was developed straddling the line between Springfield and Longmeadow. The proposed local historic district includes all properties within Springfield. It is bounded by Longmeadow on the south and Forest Park on all other sides.

VI. Map of the Proposed District



VII. Property Street Address Index

Street & Parcel #	Inv.#	Address	Historic Name	Year Built	Style	Architecture
03050-0038	SPR.4146	11 Colony Road	Riziero Scibelli House	1950	Colonial Revival	Burton Edward Geckler
03050-0004	SPR.4147	30 Colony Road	Hyman Freedman House	1947	Colonial Revival	Walter Crabtree, Jr. (Hartford)
03050-0033	SPR.4148	33 Colony Road	Mrs. Wilber F. Young House	1922	Colonial Revival	Smith & Bassette
03050-0028	SPR.4149	47 Colony Road	John Mitchell House	1929	Colonial Revival	Karl Putnum
03050-0009	SPR.4150	50 Colony Road	Charles H. Parsons House	1924	Tudor	Smith & Bassette
03050-0014	SPR.4151	64 Colony Road	Mr. & Mrs. William C. Bemis	1924	Tudor	Smith & Bassette
03050-0023	SPR.4152	65 Colony Road	Charles J. Bellamy House	1925	Tudor	Smith & Bassette
03050-0019	SPR.4153	76 Colony Road	Melvin Holstein House	1946	Colonial Revival	O Hermes
09490-0002		SES Park Drive			Vacant Lot	
09490-0004		SS Park Drive			Vacant Lot	
09490-0008	SPR.4154	74 Park Drive	Bruce Pirnie House	1925	French Eclectic	Wallace Dibble
09490-0012	SPR.4155	90 Park Drive	Morris Metcalf House	1922	Garrison Colonial	Smith & Bassette
09490-0016	SPR.4156	114 Park Drive	Hermann Waker House	1928	Tudor	Smith & Bassette
09490-0020	SPR.4157	138 Park Drive	Neil Chapin	1926	Tudor	Hanson & Schultze
09490-0024	SPR.4158	150 Park Drive	William A. Fletcher, Jr.	1923	Colonial Revival	Smith & Bassette
09490-0032	SPR.4159	166 Park Drive	Mildred Block House	1939	Colonial Revival	Merle H. Lincoln (Hartford)
09490-0036	SPR.4160	182 Park Drive	T. J. Sullivan, Jr. House	1924	Tudor	Morris W. Maloney
09490-0040	SPR.4161	198 Park Drive	Samuel Shaine House	1937	Tudor	Samuel Glaser (Boston)
09490-0050	SPR.4162	288 Park Drive	George W. Ellis House	1930	Colonial Revival	Smith & Bassette
09490-0060	SPR.4163	330 Park Drive	Burbank House	1929	Tudor	M.H. Westhoft
09490-0070		SES Park Drive			Vacant Lot	
09490-0075		SS Park Drive			Vacant Lot	
09490-0080	SPR.4164	500 Park Drive	Max Katz House	1959	Contemporary	Richard Sharpe
09490-0085		506 Park Drive	Alexander Samol	2002	Ranch	
09490-0090	SPR.4165	518 Park Drive	James H. Quinn	1942	Colonial Revival	E.P. Dorgan
09100-0016	SPR.4166	9 Normandy Road	Justin Cohen House	1953	Tudor/Ranch	(Leroy Constr. Co.)
09100-0014	SPR.4167	19 Normandy Road	Richard Kinsler House	1937	Contemporary	
09100-0008	SPR.4168	20 Normandy Road	Rosalind Katz House	1961	Contemporary	F.J. Liberatori
09100-0012	SPR.4169	31 Normandy Road	Philipp Deselets	1942	Colonial Revival	None Listed
09100-0004	SPR.4170	34 Normandy Road	Aaron Posnick House	1957	Contemporary	James Fitzsimmons
09100-0010	SPR.4171	37 Normandy Road	Philipp Deselets	1942	Colonial Revival	None Listed
Total number of properties to be included in Colony Hills Historic District:						31

VIII. Recommendations for the Ordinance or Bylaw

The new district will be added to existing Springfield Ordinances. Colony Hills will have some of the exemptions as many current historic districts overseen by the Springfield Historical Commission: temporary structures, small signs, at grade sidewalks and driveways, exact reconstruction following disaster, screen windows and doors, window air conditioners.

IX. The Ordinance

Proposed Ordinance

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, 1986, AS AMENDED BY CHAPTER 2.46 ENTITLED "SPRINGFIELD HISTORICAL COMMISSION"

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Springfield, as follows:

"Chapter 2, section 2.46.030, of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Springfield, as amended, entitled "Historic district – Establishment" be amended by the addition of the following section:

Subsection "I":

"There is established under the provisions of and in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, so-called, as mentioned in this chapter, the Colony Hills Historic District as shown on the map, labeled Exhibit 27-2G, entitled "Colony Hills District;" said map to be considered part of this chapter.

Exemption from Controls:

1. Temporary structure or signs, subject to such conditions as to duration of use, location, lighting, removal and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify;
2. Terraces, walks, driveways, and sidewalks provided that any such structure is substantially at grade level;
3. Storm windows, screens, window air conditioners, antennae, and similar appurtenances as decided by the Commission.
4. Signs of not more than one (1) square foot in area in connection with use of a residence for a customary home occupation, or for professional purposes, provided only one (1) such sign is displayed in connection with each residence and, if illuminated, are illuminated only indirectly;
5. The reconstruction, substantially similar in exterior design, of a building, structure or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.

X. Inventory Forms

Please see the Appendix.

XI. Digital Photographs

Please see the Appendix.

XII. Appendix

Springfield Historical Commission Application Procedures

Applications for certificates can be obtained from the Historical Commission in the Planning Department, 70 Tapley Street and can now be downloaded from the Springfield Planning Department web site. Fill out the application and return it with supporting information to the Historical Commission. The application must include:

1. Address of property to be altered
2. Name of owner of property
3. Address of owner of property
4. Written description of the proposed change (if a change of siding is requested, fill out the reverse side of the application sheet.)
5. The reason for a Certificate of Hardship (if that is being requested)

Additional required information:

1. Drawings for alterations and/or additions to existing structures, or for new constructions. Drawings shall be plans or elevations drawn to scale with sufficient detail to show the architectural design of buildings, including proposed materials, textures and colors. Samples of materials or colors, and the plot plan or site layout, indicating all improvements affecting appearances such as walls, walks, terraces, plantings, accessory buildings, signs, lights, and other elements, shall also be included.
 2. Photographs required with application to demolish existing structures. Applicant shall submit photos showing all sides of property and contiguous properties on either side and across the street.
 3. Photographs required with application for new construction. Applicant shall submit photos adjoining properties on either side and across the street.
 4. Photographs required with application for repair, alterations, and/or additions to existing structures. Applicant shall submit photos of all sides of structure to be affected by proposed action.
-

What happens after the application had been returned to the Commission?

Once the Commission receives an application form, it follows the procedures as required in Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40C, Section 11:

a. Public Hearing

The commission shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing on any application and shall give public notice of the time, place and purpose thereof at least fourteen (14) days before said hearing in such manner as it may determine, and by mailing, postage prepaid, a copy of said notice to the applicant, to the owners of all adjoining property and other property deemed by the commission to be materially affected thereby as they appear on the most recent real estate tax list of the board of assessors, to the Historical Commission of the city or town, to any person filing written request, to be renewed yearly in December, and to such other persons the commission shall deem entitled to notice.

As soon as convenient after such public hearing but in any event within sixty (60) days after filing of the application, or lesser period as the ordinance or by-law may provide, or within such further time as the applicant may allow in writing, the commission shall make a determination on the application. If the commission shall fail to make a determination within such period of time the commission shall thereupon issue a Certificate of Hardship.

A public hearing on an application need not be held if all persons entitled to notice thereof waive such hearing in writing. In addition, a public hearing on an application may be waived by the commission if the commission determines that the exterior architectural feature involved or its category or color, as the case may be, is so insubstantial in its effect on the historic district that it may be reviewed by the commission without public hearing on the application, provided, however, that if the commission dispenses with a public hearing on an application, notice of the application shall be given to the owners of all adjoining property and other property deemed by the commission to be materially affected thereby as above provided and ten days shall elapse after the mailing of such notice before the commission may act upon such application.

b. Notification of Decision

The Commission must take action on an application within sixty (60) days or a Certificate of Hardship will be issued. The original Notice of the decision shall be forwarded to the City Clerk and copies shall be distributed to the Planning Department and the property owner.

Colony Hills Photographs

Slide ID	Photograph Description
CH 1	11 Colony Road
CH 2	30 Colony Road
CH 3	33 Colony Road
CH 4	47 Colony Road
CH 5	50 Colony Road
CH 6	64 Colony Road
CH 7	65 Colony Road
CH 8	76 Colony Road
CH 9	9 Normandy Road
CH 10	19 Normandy Road
CH 11	20 Normandy Road
CH 12	31 Normandy Road
CH 13	34 Normandy Road
CH 14	37 Normandy Road
CH 15	74 Park Drive

Colony Hills Photographs Continued...

Slide ID	Photograph Description
CH 16	90 Park Drive
CH 17	114 Park Drive
CH 18	138 Park Drive
CH 19	150 Park Drive
CH 20	166 Park Drive
CH 21	186 Park Drive
CH 22	198 Park Drive
CH 23	288 Park Drive
CH 24	330 Park Drive
CH 25	500 Park Drive
CH 26	506 Park Drive
CH 27	518 Park Drive

FORM A - AREA

Assessor's Sheets

3050,9490
9100

USGS Quad
Springfield

Area Letter
SPR.BW

Form Numbers in Area

Massachusetts Historical Commission
State Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town Springfield

Place (*neighborhood or village*) _____

Forest Park

Area Colony Hills

Use residential

Construction Dates or Period 1925-59

Condition excellent

Structures and Alterations none

More than 100 acres

by Marla Miller/Bonnie Parsons

Organization Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Date (*month/year*) September, 1999



Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating properties within it. Circle and number properties for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Attach a continuation sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.

See attached.

AREA FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *see continuation sheet*

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

An exclusive residential subdivision located adjacent to Forest Park and designed by the Olmsted Brothers' prominent landscape architecture firm, Colony Hills features large lots, curvilinear streets, ornate street lights, benches and wide tree belts with ornamental plantings. The development, which straddles the Springfield-Longmeadow town lines, includes a mile of frontage on the ravines of Forest Park. Only roughly one quarter of the development lies in Springfield, with 27 lots laid out on the Springfield side of the line, and the remaining 85 in Longmeadow.

Two architectural styles prevail in Colony Hills: Tudor and Colonial Revival. The majority of homes that overlook Forest Park are in the Tudor style, with Colonial Revival styles more popular on interior streets. Of the section surveyed, those dwellings situated along Normandy Street comprise a more modest row of houses, which are typically also of a later date than those on either Park Drive or Colony Road.

Several substyles within the Colonial Revival aesthetic are found throughout Colony Hills, and include references to Georgian, Neo-classical, and Dutch Colonial design. The houses in this development would support an interesting study of the classic mid-eighteenth-century scrolled-pediment Connecticut Valley doorway – one of the region's most distinctive architectural features -- as it was reinterpreted and applied in a wide array of scales and manners in first half of the twentieth century. Among the houses in this survey, houses with scrolled pediments include 20 Colony Road; 47 Colony Road; 64 Colony Road, 76 Colony Road, and 288 Park Drive.

More generally, Karl Putnam's design for the Mitchell House at 47 Colony Road, unanimously awarded first prize in Springfield's 1930 Bowles competition for houses "unrestricted as to cost," provides an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style as it was implemented in Colony Hills. Judges cited the "pleasing proportion and mass" of the two-story, five-by-four-bay brick house. The hip-roof house boasts a massive center chimney, balanced by the bold, well-executed Connecticut Valley doorway, its scrolled pediment, and fluted pilasters all in keeping with the best of this regional style. Contrast is provided by a two-story clapboarded ell, terminating in the house's garage, that extends to the rear. The ell is lit on the second floor by four gabled dormers. Interior woodwork incorporated architectural fragments in paneling and wainscoting: Bowles judges noted that "the owners found a fine pair of pine pilasters in an old farm house also old pine doors and these have been used in making the fireplace mantel, doors for wainscot paneling, etc." All of this old wood conveyed "a mellowed feeling which could only be had with age."

The majority of the houses in Colony Hills were designed by the architectural firm of **Smith and Bassette**, partners who worked heavily in both the Colonial Revival and Tudor styles. Examples of their work include 33 and 64 Colony Road, as well as 90, 150 and 288 Park Drive. The latter is an especially well-executed example of Colonial Revival design. This two-and-a-half-story, five-by-two-bay house boasts one of the better interpretations of the traditional Connecticut Valley doorways, its fluted pilasters, rustication, scrolled pediments, rosettes and double-leaf door all of a reasonable scale and proportion. Windows are 6/6, while three small gabled dormers light the uppermost floor. Dentils accentuate the roofline. Large chimneys are present on each end, while a single-story wing extends on the south side. A one-and-a-half-story wing, lit by a single dormer, extends to the north. Finally, a large, one-and-a-half-story gambrel roof addition, lit by a row of four dormers, extends perpendicularly to the rear, housing the family's four-bay garage.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community Property Address

Massachusetts Historical Commission
 State Archives Building
 220 Morrissey Boulevard
 Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Springfield Colony Hills

Area(s) Form

SPR.BW

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued.

At 33 Colony Road, a two-story five-by-two-bay side-gabled brick house (also designed by Smith and Bassette) employs half-moon lunettes flanking massive interior end chimneys. Three segmentally arched dormers occupy the slope of the roof. A semi-circular portico is supported on Doric columns, while an elliptical fanlight lights the entrance hall. Windows are 6/6; with long shutters on ground floor to convey the illusion that the windows are full-length. A row of dentils ornaments the cornice line. A more eclectic interpretation is the house at 64 Colony Road: This two-story, three-by-two-bay Garrison house employs the usual overhang and pendants, but the main block is also flanked by gambrel-roofed wings, each set back and topped with shed-roof dormers in the Dutch Colonial style. Other Colonial Revival features include dentils at the cornice line, the scrolled-pediment doorway (which dominates a projecting gable entry pavilion), and quarter-round lunettes on side elevations. At 90 Park Drive stands a large, three-by-two bay garrison house, its broad overhang ornamented by large pendants. In addition a row of dentils accentuate the roofline, while the entrance is flanked by four fluted pilasters and half-length sidelights, all beneath a broad entablature.

More modest examples of the Colonial Revival include those houses at 518 and 534 Park Drive, among the later examples in Colony Hills. Ironically, later Colonial Revival houses were smaller and simpler, and so closer in scale to their early American prototypes. In the latter case here, this three-by-two-bay, center-chimney one-and-a-half-story Neo-colonial home draws on a decidedly less grandiose vision of colonial history than many of the similarly-inspired houses in Colony Hills. The scale of the house is comparatively smaller, the diminutive main block flanked by two small one-by-one-bay single-story additions, the northernmost leading to a story-and-a-half garage sited perpendicularly to the house. Although a well-executed Greek Revival-style surround with three-quarter sidelights commands attention, the pair of gabled dormers on the house's main block and a small hip-roof dormer above the southern addition are both simply, even plainly detailed.

Tudor or English Cottage style

Highly regarded for their picturesque appearance, Tudor and/or English Cottage architectural styles were especially popular in finer housing developments of the 1920s and 30s. Colony Hills contains many examples of this aesthetic, from the landmark Burbank House to more modest examples.

The Burbank House at 330 Park Drive occupies far and away the largest and most prominent lot in Colony Hills. Sited on three acres at a point where Forest Park Drive curves back on itself after extending into Forest Park, the immense house commands attention. Architect Max Westhoft, who specialized in expensive residences and designed a number of houses along Longhill Street as well, designed the brick Tudor home. The façade of this two-and-a-half story side gabled house (sheltered beneath an irregular slate roof) is dominated by two prominent cross-gables, the larger, topped with decorative half-timbering, occupying the center bay while two smaller companion gables ornament the east wing. Fenestration is, typically, irregular. Casement windows are generally grouped into strings of three or four, while the center bay is lit by a large

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community Property Address

Massachusetts Historical Commission
 State Archives Building
 220 Morrissey Boulevard
 Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Springfield Colony Hills

Area(s)	Form
	SPR.BW

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued

semi-hexagonal single-story bay window. Three interior chimneys are all large and elaborate, with patterned brickwork, stone bands and coping. An additional one-and-a-half-story wing housing a three-bay garage extends southeasterly from the main block of the house and is lit by two hip-roof dormers. The rear façade of this landmark example features a Renaissance-inspired door surround and loggia, overlapping gables, and a projecting oriel window on the second floor.

The English style stucco, brick and half timber Parsons House at 50 Colony Road, designed by Smith and Bassette and awarded third prize in the Bowles competition of 1926, is another well-executed example of the Tudor style in Colony Hills, more typical than that of the Burbank House yet still among the more elaborate examples built in Colony Hills. The two-story, five-by-three-bay home has a hipped roof, an unusual choice among Tudor. Only about one quarter of the surface area is clad in brick, the remainder being stucco. The ivy-covered center bay, flanked by eight-pane windows grouped into strings on the ground floor and paired above, is dominated by a projecting cross gable with decorative half timbering above the ground floor. Decorative strapwork stretches across one ground-floor window. A loggia is present on the house's west end, and a single-story sunroom on the east.

A more typical example of the Tudor or English Cottage Style as it was implemented in this section of Colony Hills is that at 138 Park Drive. This two-story, stucco-clad, cross-gabled house is five bays across, its façade dominated by a large, rusticated, stone-trimmed ogee-arched entrance and two-story oriel with casement windows. Tall, narrow windows with multipane glazing occur both singly and, on the ground floor of the projecting gabled and on the second-story overhanging gable, in bands of three and four. A large exterior chimney is present on the eastern end of the house; the opposite chimney is interior, with the single-story garage extending westward.

Contemporary

Among the most striking dwellings in this section of Colony Hills is the contemporary house of Max Katz at 500 Park Drive, built over three adjoining acres and overlooking Forest Park. Born in Hartford in 1901, Katz was president of State Line Potato Chips Company, a member of the board of directors at Beth-EL Temple, and active in Springfield's Jewish community. He and Norwichtown architect Richard Sharpe elected to depart dramatically from the general tone of the neighborhood, erecting a low-lying, flat-roofed V-shaped house in the **International Style**. Wall surfaces are painted brick and vertical wood siding, the latter echoed on the facade in bands of tall, narrow windows. Windows on side elevations are smaller, oriented horizontally and placed near the roofline, while the rear of the house features large expanses of plate glass.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community Property Address

Massachusetts Historical Commission
 State Archives Building
 220 Morrissey Boulevard
 Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Springfield Colony Hills

Area(s)	Form
SPR.BW	

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

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

"Constant improvement of the Colony Hills Building Plan has made this system the most complete of its kind ever offered the house-seekers of Springfield and Longmeadow." So began the promotional tract published by the Colony Hills Trust in 1928. In order to relieve families from the "many and tedious details incidental to building," developers of Colony Hills offered one-stop shopping for prospective residents. With the purchase of a lot, organizers helped homebuyers sketch out their needs, which were then submitted to the development's architects. The price quoted included the land and house (both the design and construction fees) as well as subcontracts like heating and plumbing, grading and loaming, and landscape gardening.

Colony Hills was developed under the guidance of Springfield attorney Charles H. Parsons, who himself resided at 50 Colony Road. Other principals in the Colony Hills Trust, formed on May 25, 1921, included Elisha H. Brewster, also an attorney, and William H. Parks, president of the Eastern States Refrigerator Company. Initial plans were filed at the Registry of Deeds on November 29, 1921 (Book O pp. 70-71.)

Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts acted as consultants on the development, modeling Colony Hills in part on Roland Park in Baltimore, another Olmsted project. Promoters of the Maryland development asserted that, in order to accommodate "the expression of the individual tastes and preferences of those desiring to build, ...architects to be employed by them should be allowed, in the selection of types of architecture and of building materials, the widest latitude consistent with the attainment and preservation of an effect of general harmony - it being clearly recognized that such harmony many readily exist whether neighboring houses are similar or in different architectural style." The same theory was initially espoused at Colony Hills, in part, the developers claimed, because Springfield property at the turn of the twentieth century was difficult to sell if the prospective buyer feared onerous restrictions. However, by 1925, developers were theorizing that "the home seeker demands the highest and most detailed restrictions as part of his right," and the "widest latitude" was somewhat narrowed, as design restrictions were introduced in favor of greater aesthetic harmony. Moreover, since women were "more sensible and artistic" than men, "the Trustees of Colony Hills know that if they can have the women of the tract love it and be proud of it as their neighborhood, the future of the district will be assured." Colony Hills "was planned and built, therefore, primarily for women and children."

To create this appealing atmosphere, developers eschewed the "antiquated methods" of rectilinear, graded lots in favor of more natural settings. Streets were curved, trees arranged in natural clusters rather than rows, and small parks installed. Sidewalks were not cut to a standard grade, but instead rose and fell with the terrain. Rather than the standard thirty-foot roadways and seven-foot sidewalks, Colony Hills roads were just twenty feet across, and the sidewalks four and a half, with a large, 13 ½' tree belt contributing a more park-like appearance. However, in spite of developers' assertions that variety in style did not necessarily undercut a neighborhood's overall visual harmony, some restrictions were in fact imposed. At certain landscaped

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Springfield Colony Hills

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, continued

intersections, Colony Hills imposed a building plan on the surrounding lots that required abutting houses to be in the English Cottage style.

When a given house was completed (several of the house designs were awarded prizes in the annual Samuel Bowles Architectural Competition) a landscape architect from the Olmsted Brothers firm arrived to determine which trees would stay and which would be removed, while designing a planting plan for additional trees and/or shrubbery. Since "automobiles have spoiled the front porch as a place to sit at one's ease," patios migrated to the garden sides of houses, while servants quarters and kitchens were oriented toward the street. Garages, "a heritage from the smelly barns of horse days," were not permitted unless they were close by or attached to the house and did not open toward the street.

As might be expected in such a development, residents tended to be drawn from the highest echelons of Springfield's business community, and included the presidents and vice-presidents of many local firms and industries, as well as a number of physicians and attorneys. In 1930, Margaret and Wilber F. Young, president of W.F. Young, Inc. (manufacturers of "proprietary remedies") lived at 2 Colony Road (today 33 Colony Road). Attorney John Mitchell with his wife Lucy resided at 47 Colony Road, across the street from developer Charles Parsons (50 Colony Road) and beside Edith and Charles Bellamy (65 Colony Road), the latter a partner in the Tift Bros. Brokerage firm. Nearby, at 90 Park Drive lived Morris Metcalf, the treasurer of the American Bosch Magneto Corporation, Ruth and Neil Chapin (an officer of the Third National Bank & Trust Co.), Rebecca and William Fletcher, Jr., vice-president of the Garrettson-Ellis Lumber Company, Nellie and George F. Smart, assistant treasurer and general manager of the F.E. Kempton Company, and the family of real estate developer Daniel E. Burbank. As time went on, other lots were developed by similar households: 74 Park Drive by the family of Elsie and William Granfield, Springfield District Court Justice; 114 Park Drive by Hermann Waker, vice-president and treasurer of the (by-then) United American Bosch Corporation; and 288 Park Drive by Charlotte and George Ellis, a woolen manufacturer from Monson.

Colony Hills has continued to attract Springfield families of greater means. By 1986, only one house in Colony Hills, 198 Park Drive, continued to house its original occupants, the family of Samuel Shaine. In the 1980s, the neighborhood was inhabited by a population consistent with its origins, including attorneys, businessmen, religious leaders, and other figures of political, economic, social and cultural influence. These included John Robinson, a division president for the Longview Fibre Company (50 Colony Road), Sinai Temple rabbi Herman Snyder (47 Colony Road), and Ruben Enterprises president Merwin Rubin (30 Colony Road). Writer Joseph Deloso occupied the landmark Tudor mansion at 330 Park Drive, while Federal judge Frank Freedman lived at 9 Normandy Road.

Architects:

Architects outside Springfield designed the majority of the homes in this section of Colony Hills. Many of these (33, 50, 64 and 65 Colony Road, and 90, 114, 150 and 288 Park Drive) were designed by the

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, continued

prominent Hartford firm of **Smith & Bassette**, among the most prestigious Hartford firms in the interwar period. Roy Bassette (1881-1965) graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1908. Harry Hillard Smith (1871-1948) was educated at MIT. In 1910 the two men formed a partnership that lasted some thirty years. The firm designed several prominent public buildings, including the State Office Building and the Steiger Building in Hartford. The firm also renovated Hartford's Old State House. The building types for which the pair is best known, however, are the Colonial and Georgian Revival homes they built in this part of New England. Smith had participated in the design of a home of this sort while working for William C. Brocklesby. After 1915, Smith & Bassette dominated this field. A large collection of the firm's drawings, documenting some 500 projects, is housed at the Connecticut Historical Society.

Other Connecticut architects include Hartford's **Merle H. Lincoln**, who designed the house at 166 Park Drive, and **Walter Crabtree, Jr.** of the same city, who designed the house at 30 Colony Road. Boston architect **Samuel Glaser** designed the Samuel Shaine House at 198 Park Drive.

Local architects, however, also designed several homes in this neighborhood. **Karl Putnam** (1883-1965), architect of 47 Colony Road, was a Northampton architect and Associate Professor of Architecture at Smith College. The son of Roswell Putnam, a well known turn-of-the-century Northampton architect, Putnam was educated at the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University, and worked in the office of Edward Tilton in New York before returning to Northampton and taking over his father's practice in 1910. Putnam was an authority on 18th and early 19th-century New England architecture, having made measured drawings of many Connecticut River Valley houses, and worked on the restoration of others. In 1929 he was made an associate professor of architecture at Smith College, where he developed the first course on the principles of architecture for the Cambridge School of Architecture, then part of Smith. He maintained an active private practice, designing the Smith College Quadrangle with John Ames of Boston as well as many residences in the region. Clients included Smith College, faculty of Smith and Amherst Colleges, and prominent families in business and politics, many of whom chose Putnam for his academically-correct approach, as here, to Colonial Revival style architecture.

Morris Maloney (1895-1963), architect of 186 Park Drive, was one of Springfield's leading architects in the mid-twentieth century. Maloney was born in Springfield, the son of Patrick J. Maloney, a heating engineer born in Blackpool, England. He completed his architectural training at Columbia University, and joined the Springfield firm of Fred T. Ley in 1916. In 1921, he launched his own firm, and won several contracts to design schools around the city. Schools designed by Maloney include the John J. Dugan School, Mary O. Pottenger, Memorial, De Berry, Balliet, Bowles, Brookin's, Robert O. Morris, Frederick Harris, Dorman, and Sixteen Acres, and additions to Frederick Harris and Sixteen Acres. In 1934 he was chosen to design the Springfield City Home. He also designed state, county and federal buildings, and a number of private

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residences. He designed to state-aided housing projects in Springfield, Robinson Gardens and Reed Village. He also designed the Longmeadow Town Hall and the dining commons at the University of Massachusetts.

James Fitzsimmons (1909-1976), architect of 34 Normandy Road, was born in Springfield in 1909, and studied at the Pratt Institute and Fairleigh Dickinson University. An architect and watercolorist, Fitzsimmons was employed for nine years as an architect at the University of Connecticut, but this former president of the Artists' Guild of Springfield was perhaps better known for his paintings which won numerous local and regional awards. **Burton Edward Geckler** (1881-1961), architect of 11 Colony Road, was an architect in Springfield for more than fifty years. Born in Orange in 1881, he received his degree in architecture from MIT in 1905. Associated with John W. Donahue from 1905 to 1932, Geckler designed the Holy Family Church, Our Lady of Hope Church, and Holy Cross in Holyoke, as well as several parochial schools. Geckler also designed the downtown building known as "95 State Street."

Wallace Dibble (1889-1969), architect of 74 Park Drive, was born in 1889. He graduated from Columbia University's School of Architecture, and, following employment in various New York firms, opened offices in Springfield in 1924. Dibble's significant designs include the G & C Merriam Co., the Agawam High School, and the parish house of the First Church of Christ in Longmeadow. **E.P. Dorgan** (1890-1967), architect of 518 Park Drive, specialized in residential and light industrial design. Born in Warren in 1890, he moved to Springfield in 1907. Dorgan's most significant designs include several buildings for the Catholic Diocese, including Our Lady of Fatima Church in Ludlow, and the convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur of Sacred Heart Church. However, he also worked with Springfield's most active builders and contractors in the 1920s and 1930s, designing houses for developments such as Entry Dingle Heights in an addition to many homes throughout both Springfield and Longmeadow.

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Springfield City Directories

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Western Massachusetts, Vol. 4, pp. 223-24

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

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Community

Property Address

Forest Park

Colony Hills

Area(s) Form No.

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible only in an 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 _____
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

Springfield's Colony Hills, an intact development carried out under the direction of the influential Olmsted Brothers firm, is eligible for the National Register as part of a district encompassing the development in both Springfield and Longmeadow. Colony Hills is significant as a well-preserved example of a carefully planned residential neighborhood for Springfield's most affluent and influential citizens. As such, the area contains examples of the Tudor and Colonial Revival styles so popular in the second quarter of the twentieth century in their finest local expressions, documenting both the aesthetic preferences of Springfield's elite in this era and the ways in which those preferences were interpreted by some of the area's most prominent architects.

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



11 Colony Road



30 Colony Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



33 Colony Road



47 Colony Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



50 Colony Road



64 Colony Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



65 Colony Road



76 Colony Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



288 Park Drive



330 Park Drive

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



37 Normandy Road



34 Normandy Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



31 Normandy Road



20 Normandy Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



19 Normandy Road



9 Normandy Road

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



500 Park Drive



506 Park Drive

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



518 Park Drive



198 Park Drive

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



186 Park Drive



166 Park Drive

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



150 Park Drive



138 Park Drive

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



114 Park Drive



90 Park Drive

Neighborhood: Forest Park
Local Historic District: Colony Hills



74 Park Drive