

WEST NEWBURY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Historic Sites Survey Table of Contents  
Cherry Hill Street

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# FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form Number

1

0160 0000  
00050

Newburyport

WNB.11  
WNB.427

**Town/City:** West Newbury

**Place:**

**Address:** 6 Cherry Hill Street

**Historic Name:** Thomas C. and Sarah Thurlow House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1881

**Source:** Marriage Date; Visual Assessment

**Style/Form:** Stick Style

**Architect/Builder:** Not Known

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: granite block, brick

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards, Board-and-batten / Wood trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** barn/carriage house (concurrent with house)

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): N/A

**Condition:** Excellent

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 2.05 acres

**Setting:** Located on a short connector street between two cross-town thoroughfares, near the northern end of Indian Hill Reservoir. Surrounding development is semi-rural, with heterogeneous suburban housing interspersed with open fields and woodlands.

## Photograph



Southwest and façade (southeast) elevations.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:** West Newbury Historical Commission

**Date:** June 2023

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

WEST NEWBURY

**6 CHERRY HILL ST**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

6 Cherry Hill Street is a suburban Victorian estate situated on the northwest side of Cherry Hill Street. The house and carriage house stand on the east side of a relatively generous, rectangular lot that slopes gently up from the street. The land immediately surrounding the house is maintained chiefly in lawn, with shrubs and ornamental trees around the perimeter of the house and occasional mature trees. Square granite posts constructed of granite block flank the entrance to a paved driveway on the west side of the house. A paved drive to the east of the house extends to a period carriage house and, on its east side, is lined with a dry-laid stone wall and tall hedge.

The approximately T-shaped house consists of a front-gabled wing on the west and a cross-gabled ell extending to the east. A decorative chimney with paneled brick and clay chimney pots perches on the ridgeline of the front wing. Walls are sheathed with clapboards and trimmed with flat sill boards, corner boards, and string courses. Diagonal stick-work ornaments the panels between the first and second stories on the southwest elevation's bay window and a flat bay on the façade. The half-stories are sheathed with board and batten siding (which on the façade and northeast elevations has circular lower ends). Roof eaves are ornamented with simply sawn, exposed rafter ends at the horizontal eaves; decoratively sawn verge boards on the gable ends; and fanciful carved trusses at the west and south gable ends. Windows typically have 1/1 sash and flat trim and occur singly and in pairs. Most of the window openings are rectangular; several are lancet-shaped.

The façade (southeast elevation) of the house has a cross-gabled wing at the west, featuring an angled bay window with bracketed shed roof on the first floor, paired windows with cornice molding at the second story, and a lancet window in the half-story. The entrance porch in the center of this elevation is sheltered by a long, shed roof that extends down from the main roof slope and is supported by a square corner post and carved brackets. The single-leaf door is framed by flat casing and features glazed and wood panels trimmed with band molding and bulls-eye corner blocks. The façade of the side wing has paired windows on the first and second stories, joined by X-shaped wall trim.

The side (northeast) elevation of the east wing has a rectangular bay window with a shed roof on the first floor, paired windows with cornice molding on the second story, a triangular window in the half-story, and a clipped-gable roof. The long, left side (southwest elevation) of the house has a one-story, shed-roofed porch towards the front of the first floor, with X-shaped balusters, a square corner post with curved brackets, and a trussed end. A cross-gabled pavilion towards the back has a two-story angled bay window with a hip roof and X-shaped wall trim between the first and second story windows. A rear ell is not clearly visible from the public way. It has a 2½ story gabled section and a 2-story shed-roofed extension with a modern deck on top.

A carriage house (WNB.427) is located to the north of the house and is not clearly visible from the public way. The rectangular building has a clipped gable-end with decoratively sawn vergeboards facing the street (southeast elevation). A large cross-gable towards the back of the long, southwest elevation surmounts a group of paneled and glazed doors.

Exceptionally well preserved and well maintained, 6 Cherry Hill Street is a rare example of the Stick Style in West Newbury and an unusual and sophisticated display of high-style design in this style in the region. Notable architectural features include the building's large size, dynamic massing, rich combination of materials and details, extant and relatively intact Stick-Style carriage house, and historic gate posts at the south driveway entrance.

## INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WEST NEWBURY

6 CHERRY HILL ST

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## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The house was likely constructed circa 1881 for Thomas Chase Thurlow (1832-1909),<sup>1</sup> two years after he married Sarah Kimball Hathaway (1845-1927)<sup>2</sup> in 1879.<sup>3</sup> Thomas C. Thurlow worked as a nurseryman in the family business that came to be known as Cherry Hill Nurseries. Thurlow's father, George Thurlow (1805-1879)<sup>4</sup> established the business in 1832.

Thomas and Sarah Thurlow's son, Winthrop Hale Thurlow (1887-1967),<sup>5</sup> inherited the house from his parents and lived here with his wife, Helen Odiorne Huntress Thurlow (1897-1989). The couple married in 1921. Winthrop Hale Thurlow worked as treasurer of the family business and became known for developing original peony lines with his brother George Chase Thurlow (1881-1952). (See 5 Moulton Street, WNB.157.) The couple had three children: Winthrop (1923-1934), Ruth Huntress Thurlow (1925-2011), and Thomas Chase Thurlow (1933-1999). The property remains in the Thurlow family at the time of writing.

Cherry Hill Nurseries

In 1832, George Thurlow (1805-1879)<sup>6</sup> established the company that became Cherry Hill Nurseries. "According to an early catalog, [Thurlow] planted seeds obtained from 'cider' or natural apples. The little trees that grew from these he budded and planted...[H]e started selling trees to his neighbors because he had budded more than he needed."<sup>7</sup> By 1857, Thurlow's orchard included 4,000 Baldwin apple trees.<sup>8</sup> George Thurlow began adding other fruit trees, including cherry, plum, pear, and peach before transitioning over to ornamental trees, shrubs and smaller fruit-bearing shrubs such as currant, strawberry, raspberry, and blackberry. Thomas Chase Thurlow (1832-1909)<sup>9</sup> joined the business in 1856 and introduced Norway spruce into the catalog.

After Thomas Chase Thurlow's death in 1909, his sons Winthrop Hale Thurlow (1887-1967)<sup>10</sup> and George C. Thurlow (1881-1952)<sup>11</sup> carried on the business and incorporated the endeavor as T. C. Thurlow's Sons, Inc. They were succeeded by George's son, G. Harold Thurlow. In the 1910s, David Stranger came to work for the Thurlow brothers and worked his way up in the business. (See 66 Indian Hill St., WNB.26.) In 1930, the business was renamed to Thurlow's and Stranger, Inc.<sup>12</sup> After Stranger's death in 1938, the business was returned to family control under the supervision of G. Harold Thurlow.

Peonies were a specialty of the nursery. Thomas Chase Thurlow began to collect and study peonies around 1880.<sup>13</sup> "For many years these colorful plants attracted hundreds of visitors in early summer" and if one called ahead, the nursery would send a carriage to collect visitors from the trolley stop.<sup>14</sup> "Until World War II, each season there would be a special peony exhibit on the ground floor of the main office."<sup>15</sup> Winthrop Hale Thurlow, Thomas Chase Thurlow's son, "continued their cultivation...the nursery did its own crossing of peonies, raising them from seed and creating new varieties... By 1906 there were more than 600 varieties and in the 1920s the nursery had a new planting of 10,000 roots each year."<sup>16</sup> Cultivation of peonies was discontinued in 1968.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27373183/thomas-chase-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27375480/sarah-kimball-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Follansbee and Wild, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27382992/george-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44473480/winthrop-hale-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27382992/george-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Janes, "A business..."

<sup>8</sup> Poore, p. 244.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/27373183/thomas-chase-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44473480/winthrop-hale-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44472878/george-chase-thurlow>. Accessed April 20, 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Thurlow, "Cherry Hill Nurseries."

<sup>13</sup> Janes, "A business..."

<sup>14</sup> Babendreier, "Cherry Hill Nurseries."

<sup>15</sup> Janes, "A business..."

<sup>16</sup> Janes, "A business..."

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In 1966, the corporate name was changed to Cherry Hill Nurseries, Inc., reflecting the name by which the business was already known. G. Harold Thurlow's sons, John and Richard, took over the business from their father. John's wife, Ellen, worked here as well, and had responsibility for all container plants, while John had responsibility for all in-ground plantings.<sup>17</sup> "The fruit trees, small fruits and perennial flowers were gradually phased out after World War II... [By the 1980s,] business... [was] limited to wholesale, with the nursery concentrating on evergreen trees and shrubs, including rhododendrons, and deciduous trees and shrubs such as lilacs, azaleas, cotoneasters and many varieties of maples and flowering crabs."<sup>18</sup> Cherry Hill Nurseries closed in 2000.

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<sup>17</sup> Babendreier, "Cherry Hill Nurseries."

<sup>18</sup> Janes, "A business..."



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Southwest and façade (southeast) elevations.



Detail of cross-gable on façade.



Façade (southeast) elevation and northeast elevation of east wing.

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Stone gate posts at south driveway entrance.



Carriage house: southeast elevation.



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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

WNB.11  
WNB.427**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    ☐ DCriteria Considerations: ☐ A    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☐ D    ☐ E    ☐ F    ☐ GStatement of Significance by Stacy E. Spies, Historic Preservation Consultant*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The Thomas C. and Sarah Thurlow House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level for its association with the family-owned Cherry Hill Nurseries and the agricultural history of West Newbury. Thomas C. Thurlow's father, George Thurlow, began growing and selling apple trees in 1832. George Thurlow began adding other fruit trees, including cherry, plum, pear, and peach, before transitioning over to ornamental trees, shrubs and smaller fruit-bearing shrubs such as currant, strawberry, raspberry, and blackberry. George Thurlow's son, Thomas C. Thurlow, joined the business in 1856 and introduced Norway spruce into the catalog. Peonies were a specialty of the nursery. Thomas C. Thurlow began to collect and study peonies around 1880. His sons, Winthrop Hale Thurlow and George Chase Thurlow, created new varieties of peonies and by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the nursery offered more than 600 varieties that attracted hundreds of visitors each summer. By the 1920s, the nursery had a new planting of 10,000 roots each year. Winthrop and George Thurlow carried on the family business as T. C. Thurlow's Sons, Inc. They were succeeded by George's son, G. Harold Thurlow. In 1966, the corporate name was changed to Cherry Hill Nurseries, Inc., reflecting the name by which the business was already known. G. Harold Thurlow's sons, John and Richard, took over the business from their father. Fruit trees and perennial flowers were gradually phased out after World War II. By the 1980s, the wholesale business concentrated on evergreen and flowering trees and shrubs. Cherry Hill Nurseries closed in 2000.

The house is also recommended as eligible under Criterion C as a locally-unusually example of a high-style Stick Style house. The house is a rare example of the Stick Style in West Newbury and an unusual and sophisticated display of high-style design in this style in the region. Notable architectural features include the building's large size, dynamic massing, rich combination of materials and details, extant and relatively intact Stick-Style carriage house.

The period of significance is circa 1881 through 2000, beginning with the building's construction date and ending with the closure of Cherry Hill Nurseries.

The house is in excellent condition and retains a high level of integrity. The house retains integrity of location, design, feeling, materials, setting, association, and workmanship. Information on the integrity of the interior and the nature and extent of modern alterations would be needed to confirm this recommendation.



# FORM B – BUILDING

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0170 0000  
00040

Newburyport

WNB.12

**Town/City:** West Newbury

**Place:**

**Address:** 37 Cherry Hill Street

**Historic Name:** Nathaniel and Priscilla Ordway House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1760

**Source:** Deed

**Style/Form:** Colonial-Italianate

**Architect/Builder:** Not Known

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboards and trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** barn (ca. 1973)

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Italianate alterations (raised roof, corner pilasters and fascia, entrance hood and portico (late 19<sup>th</sup> c) – rear addition (late 20<sup>th</sup> c) - replacement window sash (late 20<sup>th</sup> – early 21<sup>st</sup> c) – solar panels on roof (L 20<sup>th</sup> – early 21<sup>st</sup> c)

**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 4.00 acres

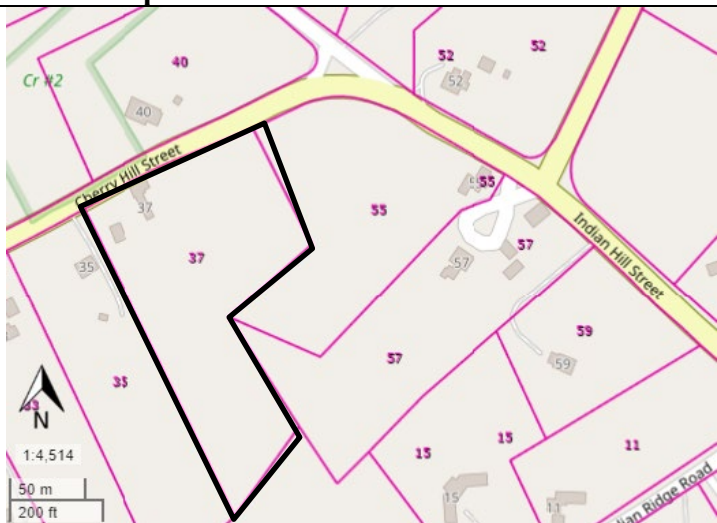
**Setting:** Located on a short connector street between two cross-town thoroughfares, at the northern end of Indian Hill Reservoir. Surrounding development is semi-rural, with heterogeneous suburban housing interspersed with open fields and woodlands.

## Photograph



Northeast and façade (northwest) elevations.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero

**Organization:** West Newbury Historical Commission

**Date:** June 2023

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.**Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.***ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

37 Cherry Hill Street is located on the south side of the road on a large, L-shaped lot that extends nearly to Indian Hill Reservoir. The house and barn are set at the western corner of the parcel, among largely open fields. A dry-laid fieldstone wall lines the eastern portion of the street frontage. The house stands on a slight rise behind a modest setback that is maintained in lawn with scattered shrubs and trees. The terrain is rolling, and slopes down around three sides of the house. A barn stands to the southwest of the house. A U-shaped, gravel driveway accesses the west side of the house and the barn.

The house consists of a main block oriented parallel to the street and a set of rear ells. Walls are sheathed with wood clapboards, trimmed on the main block with paneled pilasters and a high fascia board with bed molding. Windows typically occur singly and have replacement sash with flat casings.

The five by one bay main block measures 36 feet long by 18 feet deep and rises 2½ stories from a granite block foundation to a side-gable roof with strong gable returns. A low chimney rises from the rear slope at the western end. The façade (northwest elevation) has a center entrance consisting of elaborate, double-leaf doors, flat trim, and a hip-roofed hood supported by oversized carved brackets and a fancifully carved entablature. The doors feature arched glass panels framed by carved pilasters and a molded extrados above heavily-ornamented, horizontal wood panels. Second-story windows on the façade have a narrow cornice molding. The side elevations have a half-story window opening with a heavily molded, round-arched frame surrounding a 9-light rectangular sash and solid wood in the arched top.

The gabled rear ell rises two stories and is flush with the southwest elevation of the main block; the second story windows are set tight to the eaves. A small chimney rises from the midpoint of the west slope of the roof, near the ridge. The ell's southwest elevation has four irregularly spaced window bays. An Italianate entry has been added to the doorway in the northernmost bay of the ell. This entrance has segmentally-arched, multi-pane openings—one on each short side and two on the longer, southwest face—with decoratively carved extrados, dentil molding on the flat fascia and a shallow hip roof. The rear of the ell is clad with wood shingles; two widely-spaced windows are visible at the second story. A utilitarian addition made to the back of the ell is 1½ stories high with a gable roof, a shed-roofed dormer at the front, exterior chimney at the rear, and irregular, multifarious fenestration. It is clad with wood shingles at the back; the front is not clearly visible from the public way.

Measuring 24 feet wide by 34 feet deep, the ca. 1973 barn rises 1½ stories to a front gable roof; no gable returns. Walls are sided with vertical wood boards. The symmetrical façade (northwest elevation) has two bays on the ground floor that appear to be boarded-in doors. The half-story contains double-leaf, vertical-board doors with flat trim. The left side (northeast elevation) has a single-leaf, vertical-board door towards the front and a larger door opening at the back that features wood trim for a sliding door apparatus, a modern single-leaf French door, and vertical board infill. The right side (southwest elevation) is blank.

Well preserved and well maintained, 37 Cherry Hill Street is a remarkable example of a Colonial-period farmhouse vibrantly updated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Notable features include its prominent setting along the road, L-shaped massing, Colonial-era fenestration, and intense Italianate trim at the corner pilasters, entrances, and round-arched attic windows.

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**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

The house was likely constructed circa 1760, shortly after Nathaniel Ordway, "Gentleman," purchased land here from blacksmith Nathan Allen.<sup>1</sup> This appears to be Nathaniel Ordway (1695-1765),<sup>2</sup> who married twice and had four children. Nathaniel Ordway married Priscilla Morse (1697-1735)<sup>3</sup> in 1718. The property was likely passed down through the family to Nathaniel's son, David Ordway (1745-1826)<sup>4</sup> and then to David's son, Isaac (ca. 1785-1842), and then to Isaac's son, Thomas Greenleaf Ordway

Census records indicate that the property was farmed by several generations of the Ordway family through the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Historic maps place farmer Thomas Greenleaf Ordway (1818-1890)<sup>5</sup> at this location by 1856. Ordway lived here with his wife, Martha Elizabeth Poore Ordway (1824-1893).<sup>6</sup> The couple were married in 1844 and had one child, Isabella (known as Belle). In 1885, Isabella "Belle" Greenleaf Ordway (1851-1888)<sup>7</sup> married Marcellus James (1851-1945)<sup>8</sup> and it was likely around this time that the house was updated with Italianate designs. The couple had one son, Thomas Ordway James (1888-1966).<sup>9</sup> Marcellus and Thomas James farmed the property.

The house remained in the James family until 1950, when Thomas O. James sold the house and 92.25 acres of land to Hervey C. and Lillian Brown.<sup>10</sup> Hervey C. Brown, known as Harvey, worked as a welder in Lynn before moving to West Newbury. Hervey Brown's estate sold the property in 1961.<sup>11</sup>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

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<sup>1</sup> Essex County Registry of Deeds Book 105, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55056375/nathaniel-ordway>. Accessed May 15, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/177501408/priscilla-ordway>. Accessed May 15, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55054633/david-ordway>. Accessed May 15, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39898042/thomas-greenleaf-ordway>. Accessed May 12, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39896599/martha-elizabeth-ordway>. Accessed May 12, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39901834/belle-ordway-james>. Accessed May 15, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39888372/marcellus-james>. Accessed May 15, 2023.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/40349272/thomas-ordway-james>. Accessed May 15, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Essex County Registry of Deeds Book 3801, p. 448.

<sup>11</sup> Essex County Registry of Deeds Book 4831, p. 71.



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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Façade and southwest elevations (main block and ell).



Southwest elevations (main block and ell).



Detail of main entrance.



Detail of side entry vestibule.



**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

WEST NEWBURY

**37 CHERRY HILL ST**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

WNB.12



View of house and barn, looking east.



Barn: Façade (northwest) and southwest elevations.

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**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   ☐ DCriteria Considerations: ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D   ☐ E   ☐ F   ☐ GStatement of Significance by Stacy E. Spies, Historic Preservation Consultant*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

37 Cherry Hill Street is recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level. Census records indicate that the property was farmed by several generations of the Ordway family through the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Well-preserved and well-maintained, 37 Cherry Hill Street is a remarkable example of a Colonial-period farmhouse vibrantly updated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Notable features include its prominent setting along the road, L-shaped massing, Colonial-era fenestration, and intense Italianate trim at the corner pilasters, entrances, and round-arched attic windows. The house retains integrity of location, design, feeling, materials, setting, association, and workmanship. Information on the integrity of the interior and the nature and extent of modern alterations would be needed to confirm this recommendation.