

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

10B 39

Georgetown

GEO.83

Town/City: Georgetown

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Elm Street Area

Photograph



View from E

Address: 33 Elm Street

Historic Name: Thomas D. & Caroline L. Barter House

Uses: Present: residence

Original: residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1855

Source: town maps; Essex County deeds

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Sun porch added to north side

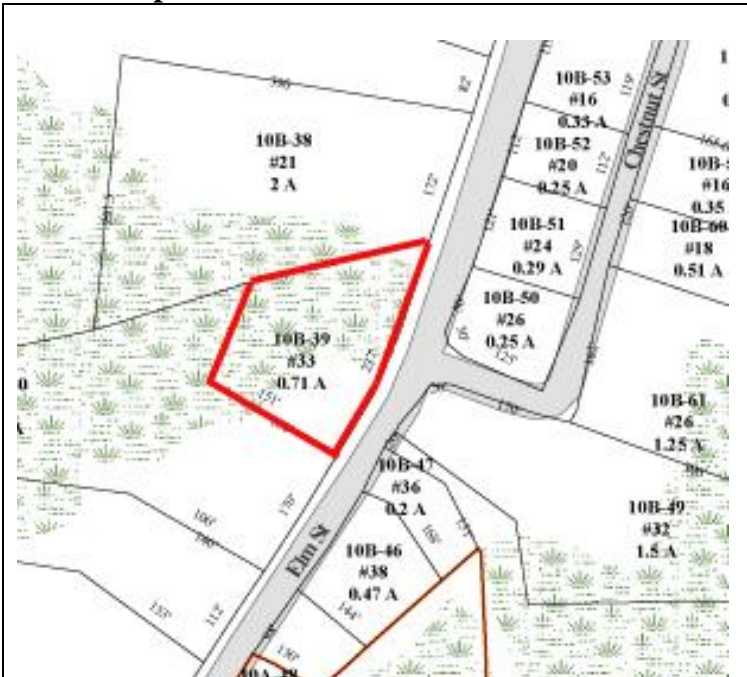
Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.71 acres

Setting: This property is on the west side of Elm Street opposite its junction with Chestnut Street and is surrounded by mixed hardwoods and softwoods. Elm Street is primarily residential.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson

Organization: Georgetown Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): January 2010

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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:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Thomas D. & Caroline L. Barter House is a two-story wood frame single dwelling with wood clapboard siding and a front gable roof. It is situated at the east or street side of a 0.71-acre lot on the west side of Elm Street at the point where Chestnut Street intersects and unusually close to its neighbor to the south (35 Elm St.), from which the small lot appears to have been subdivided. The house is oriented to Elm Street and flanked by a limited side and rear yards. The north and west sides of the parcel are characterized as wooded wetland.

The form of the house follows the conventional townhouse form with a three-bay façade containing an entrance on the right side. The doorway has an architrave composed of molded boards and square paneled corner blocks; and probably was further distinguished by a porch. The corners of the building are finished with wide paneled pilasters similar to those on Adams Hall (5 Elm St.). What likely a full pediment with Greek entablature has been concealed by later shingles in the front gable. The front half of the north wall is windowless because of the stair contained within; the south wall has four bays of windows on both stories. Original six-over-six sashes appear to be preserved. A large, tall brick chimney is centered in the roof. The house is built on the edge of a small elevated site above the adjoining wetland, and the basement of the house is exposed and constructed of wood frame on the rear (west) end of the building. A smaller, one-story ell is appended to the rear, and a sun porch has been added to where the two sections are joined on the north side and an entrance to the ell is located.

The Thomas D. & Caroline L. Barter is a distinctive example of Greek Revival-style domestic architecture in the town. Its two-story, three-bay front façade topped with a pedimented gable end is characteristic of the type. Built ca. 1837, the house is essentially intact and distinguished by original materials and an entrance with a modest Greek Revival-style architrave. It is a key contributing component of a historic district on Elm Street.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

According to local histories, aside from the road (now Massachusetts Route 133) connecting Georgetown to its parent Rowley to the east and Andover on the west, Elm Street is one of the oldest streets in Georgetown, having been opened to "public travel" about 1686.¹ At that time between ten and twenty families lived in what was known as Rowley second (or west) parish or New Rowley. Beginning in the 1650s Rowley proprietors began to make land grants in the town's western reaches; in 1666-67, the town laid out three thousand acres in the area and granted John Spofford the job of penning cattle "the young cattle of the towne" where they had "been herded this last yeare." Pen Brook is named for these pens, which stood west of Elm Street. In 1732 families in the area successfully petitioned to form the Second Church of Rowley (ultimately Georgetown's First Congregational Church) and built a second meetinghouse at the junction of Elm and East Main Streets in 1769. In 1838 the General Court of Massachusetts incorporated Georgetown, which embraced most of the second parish.²

By 1800, according to a map showing the town center at that time, various branches of the Nelson family owned large tracts embracing both sides of Elm and Chestnut Street and both sides of Main Street in this section. All of these branches descended from Thomas Nelson (1615-about 1648), who was among the twenty families who had come to the New World in the winter of

¹ See, for example, Benjamin F. Arrington, ed., *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1922), 146.

² Thomas Gage, *The History of Rowley* (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1840), 31-32, 320, 324, 326, 329.

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1638 with the Puritan cleric Ezekiel Rogers (1590-1666). With Rogers most of these families settled at Rowley, incorporated in 1639.

In 1800 the land on which 33 Elm Street is sited appears to have belonged to Aaron Nelson (1740-1804) who, unlike most of the other landowning Nelsons in this area, descended from the immigrant Thomas's son Captain Philip Nelson (1636-91). Philip Nelson, Aaron Nelson's great-great grandfather, graduated Harvard in 1654 and received a large grant of land in the second parish in the 1660s, Philip's son Joseph Nelson (1682-1744) is believed to have been the first Nelson to have settled in what is now Georgetown. Aaron Nelson's land on the west side of Elm Street was apparently owned by his grandson Charles (1803-74) at the time 33 Elm Street was built, though a large tract on the same side of the street had also passed down to Lieutenant Jonathan Nelson (1772-1852), one of Aaron Nelson's ten children. Charles Nelson, a lifelong farmer, apparently lived on Elm Street for at least part of his life, but the location of his house is not yet known.

The 1856 map of Georgetown labels the occupant of 33 Elm as "W. Oliver," about whom nothing is so far known. The 1872 map identifies the property with Thomas D. Barter, a shoemaker, whose wife, Caroline L. Barter, of Hampstead, New Hampshire purchased the property in 1866 from Charles Nelson.³ The Barters appear to have come to Georgetown a year or two after their purchase, for their son Alfred was born in New Hampshire in 1867. In Georgetown by 1870, the household included Thomas, a native of Boothbay, Maine, Caroline, born in Plaistow, New Hampshire, three-year-old Alfred, and Alfred and Aliana Webster, both born in New Hampshire, who may have been Caroline's parents. In February 1872 Caroline Barter obtained a mortgage from the Georgetown Savings Bank, which in turn sold it to the hostler Jophanus Adams, who lived at 5 Elm Street. Judging from their enumeration in the census, the Barters continued to live in the house until at least 1880, when Thomas is listed in the census as a retail shoe dealer. In June 1882 Jophanus Adams conveyed the property as part of a larger parcel to Anna M. Parker.⁴ The 1884 map labels the property "D. Parker," but who he was cannot be determined from censuses, directories, and vital statistics.

Anna M. Parker, from neighboring Bradford at the time of this purchase, was the daughter of David and Judith Merrill Ambrose and was born in Newbury, Massachusetts, about 1847 and married Herbert A. Parker (later known as Alison H. Parker) in 1868 in Haverhill. Parker was born about 1839 in Groveland; his father Henry was also a shoemaker. By 1885 Alison Parker is shown as a grocer doing business on Elm Street, but because street numbers did not exist at the time it is not possible to say if he operated the store from his home. The couple had one daughter, Marion, born in 1885. By 1899, the year he died, he was working as a piano salesman. In 1907 Anna Parker married again, to the New Hampshire-born widower Alphonso D. Taylor. The Taylors continued to live on Elm Street for several more years. In 1907 her sister-in-law Catherine S. Parker of Groveland (her first husband's sister) sold an eight-acre tract, including this property, to Anne Raycroft Pedder of South Braintree that embraced all of the parcels that are now 33 to 47 Elm Street.⁵

Anne R. Pedder was the wife of James Pedder, a house carpenter born in England about 1865 who had come to the United States with his wife in 1885 or 1886. The family was certainly living at 33 Elm Street by 1917, when their son James registered for the draft. By 1920 the Pedders owned three houses, including 35 Elm next door, and two barns. The family still lived at 33 Elm in 1942, when James Pedder Jr. again registered for the draft, but in 1946 the Pedders sold the property to W. Robert Jeans, the current owner.

³Charles Nelson to Caroline L. Barter, 1 August 1866, SED 708:164.

⁴Barter to Georgetown Savings Bank, 4 February 1872, SED 847:124; Jophanus Adams to Anna M. Parker, 14 June 1882, SED 1085:124.

⁵Catherine S. Parker to Anne Raycroft Pedder, 20 September 1907, SED 1891:189. See also "Plan of Land in Georgetown, Mass. as Surveyed for Harold F. Nunan," 18 September 1976, Southern Essex Registry of Deeds Plan Book 140 plan 31, which shows the preexisting subdivision of this eight-acre tract and Nunan's further subdivision.

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- Biographical Review, Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens of Essex County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Boston Biographical Review Publishing Co., 1897.
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MAPS

- "Map of the Centre of Georgetown in 1800." In Perley, Sidney H., "Centre of Georgetown in the Year 1800." *The Essex Antiquarian: A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the Biography, Genealogy, History, and Antiquities of Essex County, Massachusetts* 2, 7 (July 1898): 201.
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[Delete this page if no Criteria Statement is prepared]

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Individually eligible ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district
☒ Contributing to a potential historic district ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ **A** ☐ **B** ☒ **C** ☐ **D**

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

Statement of Significance by _____ Neil Larson and Kathryn Grover _____
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Thomas D. & Caroline L. Barter is a distinctive example of Greek Revival-style domestic architecture in the town. Its two-story, three-bay front façade topped with a pedimented gable end is characteristic of the type. Built ca. 1837, the house is essentially intact and distinguished by original materials and an entrance with a modest Greek Revival-style architrave. It is a key contributing component of a historic district on Elm Street.

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View from NE



View from SE