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for Landscape Preservation

Cultural Landscape Report for John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site



We looked around . . . and found [a house] we both liked and decided would suit our needs. . . . It would have blended perfectly into most of the main streets of America.

Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy,
Times to Remember

Cultural Landscape Report for John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

Site History

Existing Conditions

Analysis and Evaluation

Treatment

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Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
National Park Service, Boston, Massachusetts, 2012

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FOREWORD

"We were very happy here, and although we did not know about the days ahead, we were enthusiastic and optimistic about the future."

At the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site one can hear these poignant words of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, recorded in 1969 in fond recollection of her family's six years spent in their first home at 83 Beals Street from 1914 to 1920. Here, Joseph P. Kennedy and his wife Rose founded their family, with three of their first four children born in the house, including John in 1917. Outgrowing the 83 Beals Street home, the Kennedy's remained in the same pleasant neighborhood until 1927, welcoming three more of their nine children.

Indeed, their home is knit within the fabric of that early twentieth century middle-class suburban development, most of which survives with remarkably little change since the Kennedys first moved here almost a century ago. One can understand Rose Kennedy's words in that context—that her family's happiness "here" includes the neighborhood that was an integral part of their lives. Rose wrote of her daily walks with the children, of daily visits to the nearby St. Aidan's church, of regular trips to stores at Coolidge Corner, and of the children's pranks growing up as they raced their bikes along the streets and played in the yards.

This cultural landscape report contains extensive photographs and detailed drawings that carefully document the evolution of the property at 83 Beals Street as well as the surrounding neighborhood. The report also recommends treatments that will serve the operational needs of the park while retaining the historic character of the landscape.

Our sincere thanks to the authors from the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation for preparing this excellent and interesting report. It is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of the site. Thanks are due also to the many park staff and other professionals who assisted during its preparation. This document will provide lasting guidance for the treatment of this significant property, which will help ensure that it is maintained in perpetuity for future generations to understand, appreciate, and enjoy.

Myra F. Harrison
Superintendent

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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At the Olmsted Center Timothy W. Layton, Historical Landscape Architect; Adrine Arakelian, Conservation Associate; and Margie Coffin Brown, Senior Project Manager authored the report. Additional contributors included Landscape Architect Intern Cassandra Bosco, Conservation Associates Jaclyn Johnson, Matthew Morgan, and Leanne Wells, and Resource Assistant Aaron Ahlstrom. Historical Landscape Architects Jeff Killion and Stephanie Nelson, and Conservation Associate Brona Keenan provided review comments. Robert Page, Director, and Charles Pepper, Lead for Preservation Maintenance and Education, provided overall project guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

Located in a quiet residential neighborhood in Brookline, Massachusetts, the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site preserves the birthplace and childhood home of the country's thirty-fifth President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917–1963). Modest in size, the two and one half-story Colonial Revival house at 83 Beals Street was built in 1909 and purchased by Joseph and Rose Kennedy in 1914. Four of their nine children lived in the house, including John, before the Kennedys moved to a larger home on nearby Abbottsford Road in 1920. Seven years later the Kennedy family left Brookline and relocated to New York.

The landscape of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's formative years extends beyond the small one-tenth acre house lot at Beals Street. Daily walks were part of the Kennedy family routine; thus the surrounding neighborhood became an integral part of raising the Kennedy children. Key sites in Brookline associated with the daily life of the Kennedys included the homes of neighbors and friends, the tree-lined streets, the nearby retail area at Coolidge Corner, Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, the Edward Devotion School, and the Noble and Greenough/Dexter School site.

Elected as the thirty-fifth President in 1960, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was the nation's youngest president, a decorated World War II veteran, and the first Roman Catholic to serve as president. As a gesture of civic pride, the Town of Brookline erected a bronze plaque in 1961 in front of the Beals Street home to commemorate his birth at the site. Tragically, however, the street became a place of public mourning following the assassination of Kennedy on November 22, 1963. Rose Kennedy, working through her nephew, subsequently repurchased the property in 1966 and refurbished the home to reflect her remembrances at the time of John's birth in 1917. The Kennedys donated the property to the American people in 1967 and formally dedicated the site in May 1969, with the legislated purpose to preserve and interpret the birthplace and childhood home of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. The site was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1964, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966, and authorized as a national historic site in 1967.

PROJECT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this cultural landscape report (CLR) is to document the physical evolution of the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site, hereafter Kennedy National Historic Site, landscape during periods of development and

to provide recommendations for the treatment, use, and interpretation of the landscape. The report begins with a detailed history of the evolution of the surrounding Coolidge Corner neighborhood, the immediate residential setting of Beals and Stedman streets, and the site itself. This comprehensive history is followed by documentation of the existing conditions and an analysis and evaluation of the integrity of the Kennedy National Historic Site in relation to both the Kennedy tenure in the 1910s and the later memorial period in the 1960s. The report concludes with recommended treatment actions to preserve the historic character of the landscape. The report is organized into four chapters:

1. Site History documents the history of the landscape from Native American habitation of the area, through the Kennedy ownership periods, to present. A narrative of the evolution of the site is supplemented with historic maps and photographs. The chapter is subdivided into six historical periods with associated period plans presented at the conclusion of each period.

2. Existing Conditions describes the landscape and is organized with a hierarchy of characteristics and features including spatial organization, topography, circulation, views, vegetation, and small-scale features. Photographs and existing conditions plans supplement the narrative.

3. Analysis and Evaluation summarizes existing National Register Documentation for the birthplace and analyzes and evaluates the condition of each feature and its contribution to the significance of the landscape. Photographs supplement narrative descriptions.

4.Treatment presents a framework based on the National Park Service mission and policies, park's legislation, and guidance from current park planning documents. Treatment tasks provide recommendations to preserve, enhance, and reestablish the historic character of the landscape. A treatment plan and photographs supplement the narrative.

The historic resource study, *John Fitzgerald Kennedy's Birthplace: A Presidential Home in History and Memory* (2004), cites the need for broader perspectives that take into account the social, economic, and cultural contexts of both the Kennedy's early residency and later memorial periods. Consequently, the cultural landscape report examines the site as well as its residential setting, streetscapes, and nearby commercial district that are central to the preservation and interpretation of the site.

Based on a thorough level of research as defined in NPS's *Director's Order 28: Cultural Resource Management,* the authors examined primary and secondary sources to document the evolution of the landscape. Primary sources provided by Historian Carole Perrault included documents from the registry of deeds, the Kennedy Family Collection photographs, Town of Brookline building

permits, exterior photographs, the Myerson's home video, and park files. Key secondary sources included town histories, town planning documents, Kennedy family biographies and memoirs, and recent histories of the various building complexes known and utilized by the Kennedy family. Repositories included park management records now housed at Longfellow National Historic Site, the Brookline Room at the Brookline Library, the Office of Planning and Community Development for the Town of Brookline, the Massachusetts State Archives, as well as photographs from the collection at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in conjunction with concurrent research for the park's Historic Structure Report. Maps were developed using the Town of Brookline Geographic Information System data.

STUDY BOUNDARIES

The Town of Brookline is one of 351 incorporated cities and towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is bounded by Boston on the north, east, and south and by Newton to the west (Figure 0.1). In area, Brookline comprises

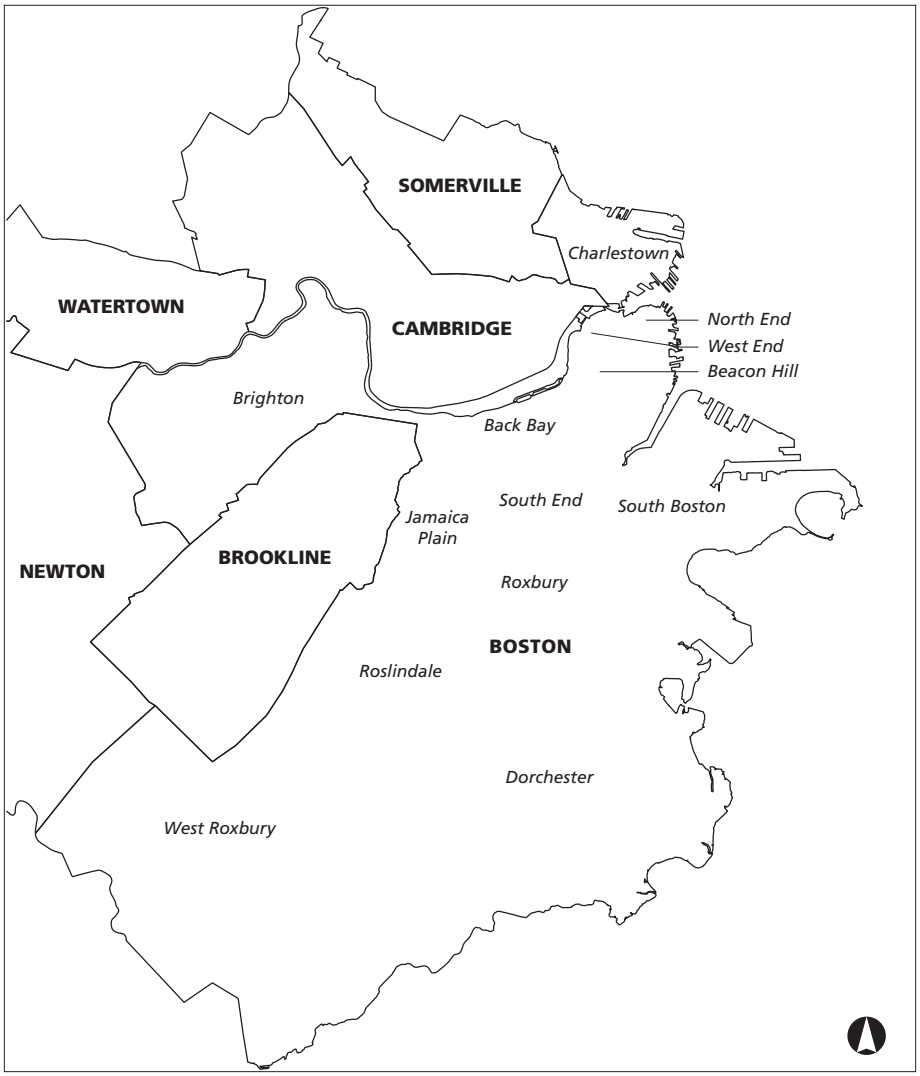


Figure 0.1. Map of Brookline, Boston, surrounding towns, and Boston neighborhoods. Similar to Brookline, many of Boston's neighborhoods started as independent towns. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Charlestown, Roxbury, West Roxbury, and Dorchester were annexed to Boston while Brookline remained independent (town outlines from MassGIS, http://www.mass.gov/mgis/townssurvey.htm).

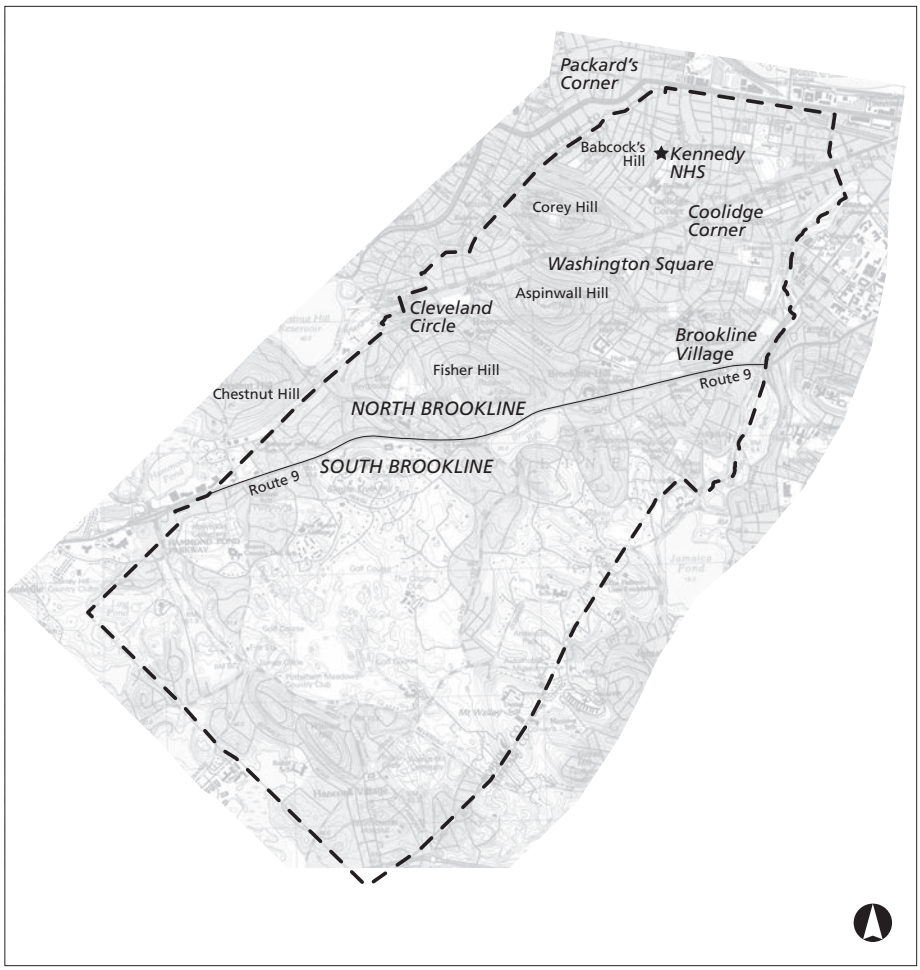


Figure 0.2. Brookline topography and neighborhood landmarks. Route 9, also known as Boylston Street, serves as the divider between North and South Brookline. Note the northwest to southeast orientation of the drumlins created by advancing and retreating glaciers (USGS Digital Raster Graphics from MassGIS, http://www.mass.gov/mgis/im_quad.htm).

slightly less than seven square miles. Route 9, also known as Boylston Street, serves as a geographical divider between North and South Brookline (Figure 0.2). This cultural landscape report focuses on North Brookline, and specifically the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, where the Kennedy National Historic Site is located.

Within each chapter of the report and the associated maps, information is presented at three scales or levels of detail—the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, the Beals Street development, and the site itself. Within the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, the boundaries of the study area incorporate five locations identified by the Kennedy National Historic Site staff as important in communicating the story of the Kennedys' daily life in Brookline. These five locations are part of a neighborhood walking tour prepared by the park and include the Kennedys' second Brookline home at 51 Abbottsford Road, the Edward Devotion Elementary School, the Noble and Greenough/Dexter School site, the site of Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, and the Coolidge Corner commercial area and public transportation stop. Streets bounding the study area include Beacon Street on the southeast, Harvard Street on the southwest, Naples Road on the northwest, Abbottsford Road and Freeman Street on the north, and St. Paul Street on the northeast. Maps in this report show an area slightly beyond

these boundaries to illustrate the adjacent building density, building setbacks, and road widths.

The second scale, with a more detailed level of documentation, is within the Beals Street development. The boundary is based on the Beals Estate subdivision created in 1897, when Benjamin Newhall purchased thirteen acres from James Beals Jr., known as the "Beals Estate," and subdivided the land into seventy building lots along two new roads, Beals and Stedman streets. The development is bounded by Harvard Street to the southwest and Manchester Road to the northeast.

Finally, the most detailed documentation is for the National Historic Site. The 0.09-acre lot is located on the south side of Beals Street, and bounded by three adjacent lots, 77/79 Beals to the southwest and 85/87 Beals to the northeast—both duplexes—and 82 Stedman to the southeast. Chain link fences demarcate the sides of the lot, but are neither on the original nor current property lines.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Prior to European settlement of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, the Massachusetts confederation of Native Americans occupied the narrow coastal peninsula and Muddy River area that would become Boston and Brookline. European colonists, drawn to the abundant fresh water, fertile soils, as well as fishing, hunting, and trade opportunities, displaced most Native Americans by the end of the seventeenth century. Early Native American inland trails across the Muddy River flats and Charles River lowlands became colonial cart paths, accessible from Boston—first at the Muddy River ford in 1633 and later by the Mill River Dam Road across the Back Bay mudflats in 1821.

A village center grew near the Muddy River ford, and in 1686 the General Council approved a schoolhouse for the Hamlet of Muddy River, effectively separating the community from Boston. In 1705 the General Council approved a petition to incorporate the community as the Town of Brookline. By the end of the eighteenth century, the town included sparse settlements of farms and summer retreats built by wealthy Bostonians. Despite numerous efforts to annex the area to the growing city of Boston, the town remained independent.

During the nineteenth century, the town established its own municipal utilities, allowing it to remain a prestigious community of country estates that was set apart but almost geographically surrounded by the city of Boston. Boston's population swelled mid-century with an influx of immigrants, many from Ireland who left during the Great Famine. Included among these Irish immigrants were the

maternal and paternal great grandparents of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Although Kennedy's great grandparents did not settle in Brookline, many Irish Roman Catholic immigrants found work in the growing commercial centers and on the large estates in the town. In 1852 the Archdiocese established a Catholic Church in Brookline in the town's first center by the Muddy River ford, later known as Brookline Village and located along present-day Brookline Avenue.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the heirs of some of Brookline's greatest landowners chose to divide and sell their properties, particularly in North Brookline. Brookline's population nearly tripled with the introduction of first the horse-drawn and then the electric streetcar. Streetcars along Beacon and Harvard streets prompted Coolidge Corner, where the two lines intersected, to become a commercial hub and led to the rapid development of subdivisions in the surrounding area. These new communities required new school buildings, town services, and houses of worship.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when Joseph and Rose Kennedy were searching for their first home, North Brookline was developing rapidly. Members of diverse ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groups were moving out of Boston to new neighborhoods along streetcar lines, resulting in new houses of worship, schools, services, and stores. The young couple chose a two and one half-story Colonial Revival home within a seventeen year-old subdivision, in close proximity to the Coolidge Corner commercial area, the newly constructed Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, and the recently expanded Edward Devotion School. When the Kennedys moved into their home at 83 Beals Street in October 1914, the neighborhood was open and spacious compared to their respective neighborhoods in Boston, and many of the surrounding lots were undeveloped.

Four of the nine Kennedy children were born while the family lived at 83 Beals Street. Their first child, Joseph Patrick (Joe) Jr., was born on July 25, 1915. On May 29, 1917, six weeks after the United States entered the First World War, their second son, John Fitzgerald (Jack) Kennedy was born in the upstairs bedroom of their home. Jack was baptized at the nearby Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, where he later served an altar boy. Jack spent his first three years playing in the small yard at 83 Beals and walking along the tree-lined streets of the neighborhood. During the Kennedy's residency, the trimmed grass yard remained unadorned, with the exception of the London plane along the street, a privet hedge along the southwest property line, and three rose bushes along the rear foundation wall. A chicken-wire fence enclosed the rear yard with a small picket gate across a concrete walk. The surrounding open lots appear unmaintained.

In 1920, the Kennedy family moved three blocks north to 51 Abbottsford Road, a larger house and lot with increased space for live-in help and a detached garage for the family car. For the next seven years, Jack and his growing number of siblings lived in the Abbottsford Road home where a wrap-around porch, lawn

areas, and paved surfaces offered more space for play and fresh air. Along with his older brother, Jack attended the local public elementary Edward Devotion School in 1922 and 1923. The boys transferred to the nearby private Noble and Greenough lower school in 1924 and continued to attend the school in 1926 when it became the Dexter School. The family left Brookline in the fall of 1927 and moved to Riverdale, New York.

Two years after the Kennedys left Brookline, the country entered the Great Depression. Residential construction in Brookline diminished and after the Second World War, suburban development shifted further from the city, due in large part to new roads built under the 1950s federal transportation programs, federal mortgage guarantees, and veterans' incentives. Despite the continued exodus of residents from Boston and its urban neighborhoods, the Coolidge Corner area remained vibrant, with little change. John F. Kennedy returned to Massachusetts in 1945 and began his political career as a representative from the eleventh Congressional district, an area which did not include Brookline.

In years between the sale of the 83 Beals Street property by the Kennedys in 1920 and the mid 1960s, the property passed through three owners: the Moores who were friends of the Kennedys, the Myersons, and the Pollacks. During this time, a detached garage and driveway were added and then removed from the west side of the property. Foundation plantings, a perimeter hedge, and a blue spruce tree were added to the yard, enhancing its domestic character.

When John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected president in 1960, the Beals Street neighborhood acquired widespread public significance as his birthplace and childhood home. The Town of Brookline installed a commemorative bronze plaque in the front yard at 83 Beals, which at the time was a private residence owned by Martha Pollack. Three years later, when Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, Beals Street and the Kennedy birthplace became a gathering site for thousands of mourners who wished to express their sorrow at the untimely loss of the nation's thirty-fifth president.

Recognizing the significance of the property as a memorial to the late president, the Town of Brookline considered plans for acquiring the Beals Street property. Ultimately, the Kennedy family repurchased the property and Rose Kennedy refurbished the home as she remembered it at the time of John's birth. Mrs. Kennedy donated the property to the National Park Service in 1967. The landscape however, was not restored, but instead ornamented with shrubs, flowers, and a reproduction gas light. The site opened with a dedication ceremony on May 29, 1969, and according to a local newspaper, drew about 600 visitors.

Throughout these events and physical changes to the home, the London plane trees, planted prior to the arrival of the Kennedy family to the Brookline neighborhood in 1914, have remained and continued to envelop the streetscape.

Other smaller landscape features including shrubs, signs, walks, and lawn furniture have been maintained or updated. The present landscape collectively represents the two periods of Kennedy family involvement in the 1910s and 1960s as well as later features introduced by the National Park Service.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The one-tenth acre site retains the home, furnishings, and landscape in good condition and closely resembles the appearance of the site upon its dedication and opening on May 29, 1969. A large London plane tree extends over the street and front lawn. A collection of deciduous and evergreen shrubs frame the front yard, which contains the commemorative marker, flagpole, gas light, and park signs. The backyard is accessed by a concrete walk, which leads to the basement visitor entrance. The backyard predominantly consists of turf, ringed by deciduous trees and shrubs and evergreens. Seasonal flowers and roses add color by the commemorative marker and along the chain link fence.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The Kennedy National Historic Site at 83 Beals Street is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Landmark. However, the Beals Street development—the thirteen-acre subdivision initiated in 1897 and built out by about 1928—is not listed as a historic district. As described in greater detail in the site history, the Beals Street development included the Kennedy home at 83 Beals and approximately seventy lots on Beals and Stedman streets between Harvard Street and Manchester Road. Conversely, the former Kennedy home on nearby Abbottsford Road is listed within the Graffam Development Historic District and is within the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District, but not individually listed in the National Register.

The National Park Service is currently updating the 1976 National Register documentation for the site. The updated documentation encompasses additional areas of significance relating to two periods. The site is significant under Criterion A as the birthplace of an American President and as a memorial site where people came to experience a tangible link to the slain President. The site is significant under Criterion B for its association with both John Fitzgerald Kennedy, thirty-fifth President, and his mother, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, a symbolic public figure that played a central role in the rise of one of America's most prominent political families. The property meets Criteria Consideration C as the birthplace of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, and Criteria Consideration G for significance achieved within the last fifty years. The property has a discontinuous period of significance. The first period of significance, which is addressed in the 1976 documentation, extends from May 29, 1917, the birth of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, to 1920, the year the Kennedys moved from the home. The second period of significance

spans the years when the site became a heavily visited memorial site after Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963, to May 29, 1969, when Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy formally transferred the property to the National Park Service and the site opened to the public, on what would have been Kennedy's fifty-second birthday.

The landscape retains a higher level of integrity to the latter period due to the embellishments added to the landscape in the 1960s by the Town of Brookline, the Kennedy family, and the National Park Service. Features that remain at the 83 Beals property from the 1910s include the home, the large London plane, sidewalk, and front walk. Features that predate the May 29, 1969 dedication include the commemorative marker, privet hedge, shrubs, gas light, and chain-link fence. Additions to the landscape after the dedication include the visitor walkway, park signs, and flagpole in the front yard, and the lawn furniture, Colorado blue spruce, and shrubs in the backyard. Despite these additions, the 83 Beals landscape retains overall integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

SUMMARY OF TREATMENT

The recommended treatment approach for the 83 Beals cultural landscape is to preserve its historic character so that it closely reflects its appearance on May 29, 1969 at the time of the park dedication. Rehabilitation, identified as the primary treatment, focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of the landscape elements as they have evolved over time. This approach allows for compatible elements for public use, such as walkways, signs, and seating in the landscape and allows for substitute plant material where plant species have failed to survive.

Key treatment tasks for the long-term management of the Kennedy landscape include the preservation of the spatial organization of the neighborhood, monitoring of the mature London planes along Beals Street, continued maintenance, and in some cases replacement, of the shrubs and hedges on the property, improved pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding and access to the property, identification of parking locations and accessible facilities for visitors, preservation of small-scale features, the relocation of the flagpole, and the addition of a wayside in the backyard.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

This cultural landscape report for the Kennedy National Historic Site was completed at a thorough level of research, which provided sufficient documentation on the overall development of the landscape. However, further research could expand the site history to gather additional historical

documentation for the property, as well as information on the Beals Street development that was initiated in 1897. Additional research may locate more maps showing the development of the neighborhood and yield information on how the Kennedys used the landscape at 83 Beals, how they interacted with their neighbors, and who from the Town of Brookline was responsible for the commemorative efforts in the early 1960s.

Chapter 1. Site History

Settlement and Development of Brookline, Pre-Contact to 1914

The Town of Brookline spans two geological lowland areas known as the Boston Basin and Needham Plains. The basin and plains are framed by the rocky Middlesex Fells to the north and the Blue Hills to the south (Figure 1.1).[1] Dispersed within the Needham Plains are smaller outcrops of a conglomerate, known as Roxbury puddingstone. While these outcrops are infrequent in the lowland portions of Brookline, quarried puddingstone can be seen today in stone walls, building foundations, and facades in the area.

The topography of Brookline is relatively flat but punctuated by several large drumlins. Created during the Wisconsin Ice Age, these rounded hills of glacial till are generally oval in shape and oriented in a northwest to southeast direction as a result of the advancing glaciers.[2] Collectively known as the Brookline Hills, the major drumlins in North Brookline range from 240 to 270 feet in elevation and are known as Aspinwall Hill, Corey Hill and Fisher Hill.[3] Although smaller in scale, Babcock's Hill—located between present-day Beals and Fuller streets—is a similar topographic feature that was subsequently leveled (see Figure 0.2).[4]

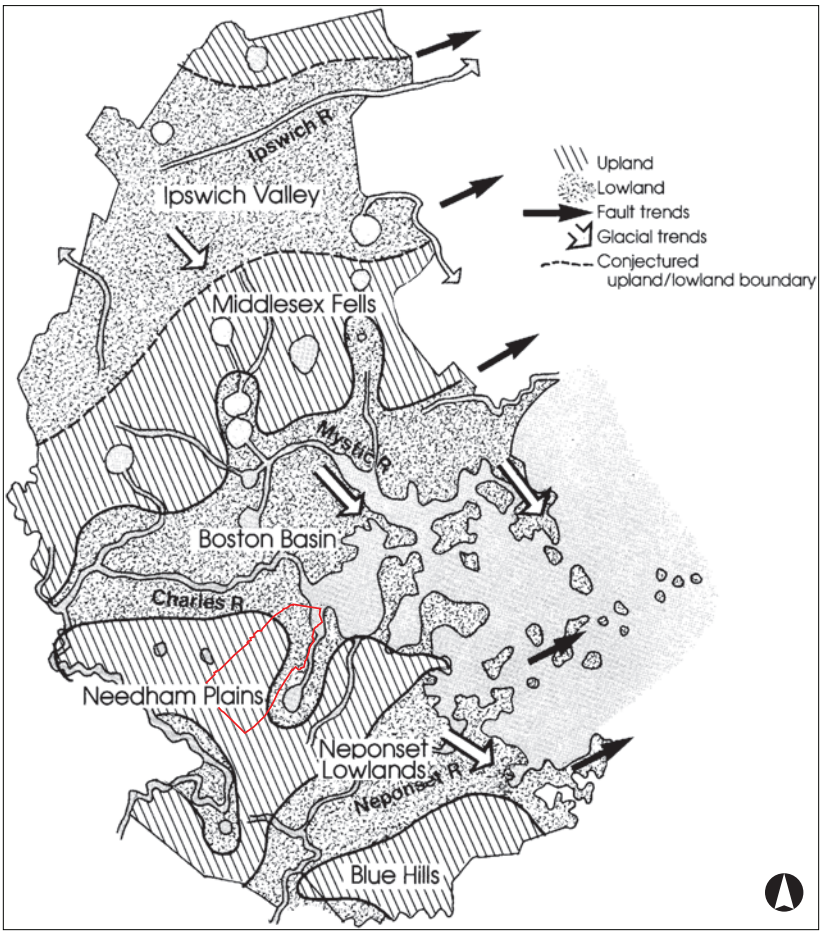


Figure 1.1. Geology and topography of the Boston area. The present-day Brookline town boundary is shown in red within the Boston Basin and Needham Plains (Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Boston Area,* January 1982).

The Boston Basin and Needham Plains are dissected by the Mystic, Charles, and Neponset river watersheds. As retreating glaciers melted, these drainage courses were formed in low lying and softer soils. Two tributaries in Brookline, the Muddy River and Smelt Brook, flowed north into the Charles River. The Muddy River still flows north along the boundary between Boston and the eastern edge of Brookline, though its extensive tidal flats have been covered with fill and the river itself flows into a culvert beside the Landmark Center at Audubon Circle.

Smelt Brook, formerly located in the northwest corner of Brookline, flowed out of a pond formed at approximately the intersection of present-day Commonwealth and Brighton avenues at Packard's Corner. Urban development has resulted in the complete filling of both Smelt Brook and the associated pond.[5] Similarly, the lowland areas of North Brookline in proximity to these tributaries had deep, rich soils that were excellent for agriculture, though later development altered these soils.[6]

MASSACHUSETTS CONFEDERATION

Based on seventeenth century accounts, Brookline was occupied by Native Americans from the Massachusetts confederation. Located throughout the Metropolitan Boston area, the Massachusetts were primarily based south of the city in present-day Quincy and along the Neponset River.[7] Although there has been limited archaeological documentation of indigenous settlements in Brookline, findings from sites in neighboring towns indicate that Massachusetts established both large, permanent villages and temporary camps for hunting, fishing, and social and ceremonial gatherings.[8] Prior to European contact, a series of trails were likely established in Brookline that would later become major roads. One east-west route, following present-day Route 9, crossed the Muddy River at a ford. Another east-west route probably followed the alignment of Newton Street. Between these two trails, a north-south connector likely followed portions of Warren Street. The ford at the Muddy River was a strategic point, and a palisaded fort may have existed that would eventually become Brookline Village.[9]

Puritan settlers arrived in Massachusetts Bay in 1630 and relied on the purchase of land from the Massachusetts confederation, though much of the land was simply granted by the English General Court. Native Americans not only lost much of their land rights but also succumbed to European-introduced diseases, particularly smallpox and measles. Although numbers vary widely and were based more on observation than actual count, one estimate cites that Massachusetts confederation adult males were reduced from 3,000 to 300 in a sixty-year span before 1675.[10] Many of the remaining Native Americans resettled in "praying towns." Fourteen of these Christianizing villages were established by colonial ministers, some of which were in the nearby towns of Newton, Natick, and Ponkapoag (present-day Stoughton).[11]

In addition to disease, the violent conflict in 1675 that came to be known as King Philip's War dispersed Native American populations in the greater Boston region and throughout southeastern New England.[12] During the conflict, many of the Christian Indians were interned without adequate food, clothing, or shelter.[13] After the war, colonists remained fearful and the Massachusetts Bay Colony ordered that Native Americans involved in English deaths were to be killed and all others were to be sold into slavery.[14] Ultimately, the combined effect

of disease, war, and colonial policies allowed "for the uninterrupted growth of England's northern colonies right up to the American Revolution"—a pattern of development reflected in the Brookline area.[15]

SETTLEMENT OF BROOKLINE

The contiguous swath of land between Brookline and Greater Boston today is misleading compared to the expansive bays, inlets, and marshes of the 1600s, which originally surrounded the hilly port settlement. Projecting out into the harbor, Boston was known as the Shawmut Peninsula and comprised three distinct peaks. The peninsula connected to land to the west by a thin strip known as Boston Neck or the Neck. Today, Washington Street in Boston's South End neighborhood follows an historic route west along the center of the Neck (Figure 1.2).

Increased shipping and trading, a growing population, and Boston's dense settlement left little open land for livestock. As a result, additional pasture land was needed and the most convenient place was to the west of the city, beyond the neck, along the Roxbury Flats and Muddy River so that "loathsome smells might be avoided, which are of great annoyance unto the neighbors, and to strangers."[16] Wetland hay meadows were available along the river banks as well as undeveloped uplands for pasturage.[17] To facilitate use of this area, in 1633 the General Court authorized the construction of a cart bridge over the Muddy River.[18] Due to its close association with the river, the area that would become Brookline was first known simply as Muddy River.

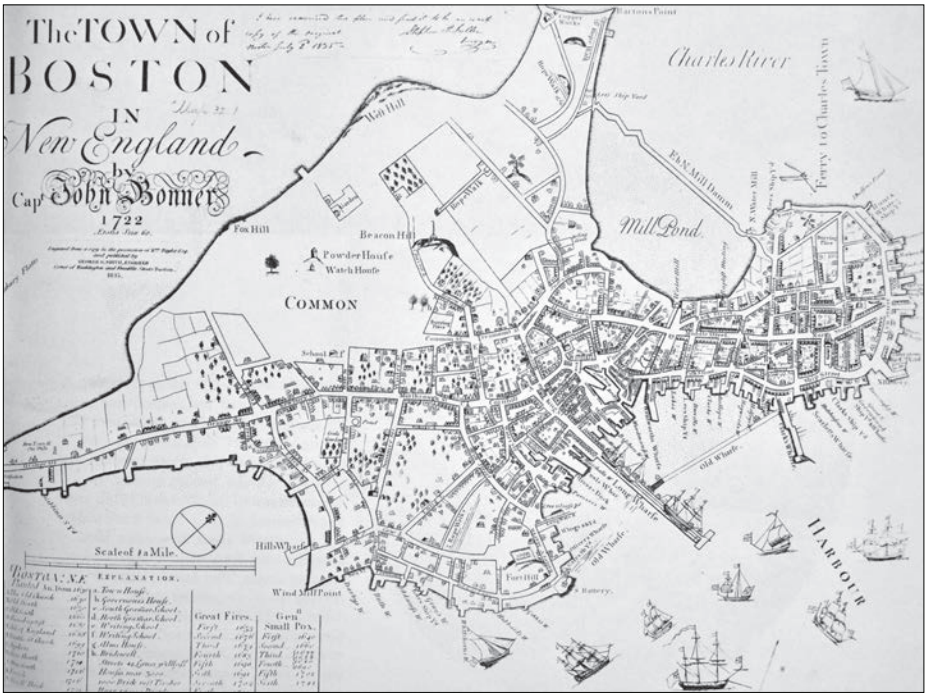


Figure 1.2. The Town of Boston in New England by Capt. John Bonner, 1722. Boston was connected to land to the west by a thin strip of land known as the Neck. Orange Street, present-day Washington Street, in Boston's South End neighborhood was the only route from Boston to Brookline (Jane Holtz Kay, *Lost Boston,* University of Massachusetts Press, 2006).

The beginning of formal land partitioning in Muddy River dates to a Boston town meeting on December 14, 1635, when a committee laid out farms in the surrounding communities, and "set aside an adequate allotment at Muddy River to provide a farm for 'our Teacher, Mr. John Cotton.'"[19] The committee also partitioned land for William Colebourne, Thomas Oliver, and Thomas Leveritt. Shortly after this initial charge, the town meeting removed land granting power from the committee and gave authorization to the selectmen in the spring of 1636. Between

December 1636 and June 1637, the selectmen promised "great allotments" to five additional men and ultimately proposed allotments for sixteen men by 1641. The newly defined parcels were called great allotments because they included farmland and house sites and not just land for a house.[20] The Cotton, Colbourne, Leveritt, and Oliver allotments were all roughly triangular in shape with shared points coming together at the Muddy River ford. This layout provided each of them access to the river crossing and to the Boston Neck. Altogether, the area of the great allotments amounted to approximately 1,450 acres.[21]

The strategic crossing at the Muddy River ford became the starting point for a series of roads that were officially laid out in the mid-1600s. The first road, established in the spring of 1657, connected the ford with the Watertown Mill to the northwest. Today, this route is Washington Street and although other roads were likely constructed and used before 1657, Washington Street became the first official road.[22] The next year Sherburne Road, present-day Route 9, was added in June. The Boston selectmen designated this east-west route as the town's main highway.[23] A north-south route was laid out in 1662 connecting the ford with a bridge crossing the Charles River to Cambridge. Known as the "road to colleges," it was renamed Harvard Street in 1841.[24]

Although the Muddy River land was primarily used for agricultural purposes by inhabitants of Boston, approximately thirty families were living in Muddy River by the 1680s.[25] On December 6, 1686, the Muddy River took the first steps to becoming an independent municipality when the General Council approved a separate schoolhouse for Muddy River and excluded the hamlet from payment of Boston taxes for maintaining highways, assisting the poor, and other public services.[26] A series of petitions and delays followed to grant Muddy River autonomy from Boston. Bostonians were reluctant to approve any request due to concerns about losing access to productive agricultural land and becoming a more isolated peninsula. Finally on November 13, 1705, a petition was approved by the General Council and Muddy River was incorporated as the Town of Brookline.[27]

The name Brookline can be traced to a proposed division of John Hull's land on March 13, 1684. Hull's daughter, Hannah, and her husband Judge Samuel Sewall were the recipients of one of the divisions of Hull's arable farmland along Smelt Brook, which they referred to as the "Brookline Lands."[28] Although the origin of the name Brookline can be credited to Sewall, it does not appear he applied the Brookline name to the town. In his history of the town, Charles Knowles Bolton contends the name was most likely adopted by the residents as a compliment to Judge Sewall.[29]

In the decades leading up to the Revolutionary War, Brookline's population grew at a modest pace as Boston residents maintained their city homes and continued to rely on Brookline for agricultural production. By 1765, Brookline recorded a

population of 388 people within 53 families.[30] At the onset of the Revolutionary War, William Dawes rode north on Harvard Street in 1775 to warn of the British advance on Concord. During the war, several hills and strategic points along the Muddy River were fortified with gun batteries, and barracks and a hospital were constructed on farmland during the siege of Boston.[31] There were, however, no battles staged in Brookline.

Following the Revolution several wealthy Bostonians established summer retreats in Brookline in addition to their city residence. Included in this new group was Thomas Handasyd Perkins who, with his brother, amassed considerable wealth trading with China, Africa, Europe, Russia, and the West Indies. In subsequent years, Perkins would be a leading advocate for the filling of the mudflats between Boston and Brookline, stating that "a disposition in the people, to change the channels of their industry, is the best possible evidence of the necessity or utility of such change."[32]

At the start of the nineteenth century, Brookline's population had grown to 605 residents.[33] Since its incorporation and leading into the nineteenth century, the Muddy River ford was the center of social and political life in Brookline.[34] The ford remained the only access point to Boston and the ensuing concentration of roads and development resulted in a neighborhood known as Brookline Village. A combination of transportation developments, an influx of Irish immigrants, and an ideological shift to rural settings would open up the development of North Brookline, including the neighborhood of the Kennedy National Historic Site.

BACK BAY MILL DAM AND MILL DAM ROAD

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the newly established government of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts invested in the improvement of roads and bridges throughout the state, in an effort to enhance economic opportunities for commerce and trade. The importance of the Muddy River ford and Brookline Village continued in the early nineteenth century. In 1806, the Boston-Worcester Turnpike was constructed as a major east-west route passing through Brookline Village and overlaying the Sherburne Road, which is now Route 9.[35]

To the north of Boston Neck and the Shawmut peninsula, the Charles River widened into an estuarine lowland known as the Back Bay. In the Back Bay, water and salinity levels fluctuated based on the tides in the harbor. Seeking to capture water power for a mill and avoid having it diffuse across tidal flats, the Boston and Roxbury Mill Corporation—incorporated in 1804—began building the Back Bay Mill Dam in 1814 using glacial till from Boston's Mount Vernon to fill a fifty acre area. On top of the dam, a road was proposed to expedite travel between Boston and the productive towns to the west. The project was completed and the Back Bay Mill Dam Road opened in 1821 (Figure 1.3).[36] Halfway across the causeway, a



Figure 1.3. View looking southwest from Beacon Hill in Boston of the Mill Dam Road and Back Bay in the 1850s. Completed in 1821, the Mill Dam Road provided a more direct route between Brookline and Boston. The Brookline Hills are visible in the distance to the far left. (Jane Holtz Kay, *Lost Boston,* University of Massachusetts Press, 2006).

mill powered by tidal flow "ground corn hauled in from Brookline and Newton by the farmers."[37]

The Mill Dam Road started at the intersection of Charles and Beacon Streets at Boston Common and connected to land projecting into the Charles River known as Sewall's Point in Brookline. The point was part of land formerly owned by Judge Samuel Sewall in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.[38] From Sewall's Point, two other roads were constructed. Another dam road was built to Brookline Village along present-day Brookline Avenue and a northern route was built along present-day Brighton Avenue (Figure 1.4).[39] A route now existed that dramatically cut the time it took to travel between Boston and Brookline. Previously, a Boston traveler would have to head south of the city on Washington Street, through Roxbury, and into Brookline Village. The more direct route along the Back Bay Mill Dam created "the first major improvement to the road network that directly enhanced Brookline as a suburb for people making a daily commute to work."[40]

In addition to infrastructure changes, new modes of transportation emerged before 1850 that expedited the Boston-to-Brookline connection. In 1826, the omnibus was introduced. Designed to take multiple passengers to the same destination, the horse-drawn omnibus was longer than a standard carriage with seating typically set parallel to the long axis of the car. Yet, widespread use of the omnibus was hindered by its cost, slow speeds and the relatively low number of passengers it could carry.[41]

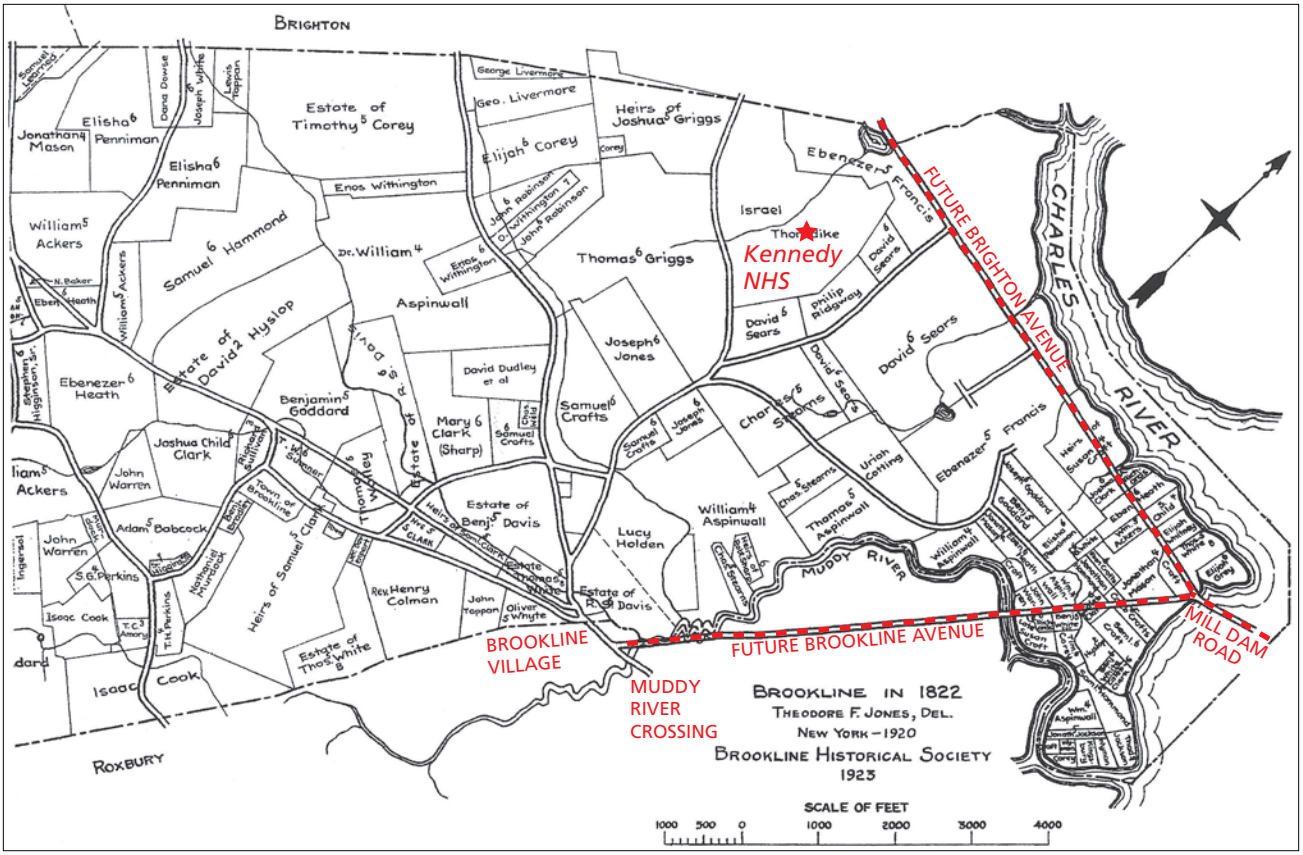


Figure 1.4. Digitally enhanced map of Brookline in 1822. The Back Bay Mill Dam Road entered Brookline and then forked, heading roughly west to Brighton and southwest to Brookline Village. Compared to Beacon Street, which was extended from Boston in 1851, neither of these routes provided convenient access from the neighborhood of the future Kennedy home in Brookline to Boston (Brookline Historical Society, Land Ownership in Brookline from the First Settlement, 1923).

Incorporated in 1831, the Boston and Worcester Railroad Company constructed the first railroad line through Brookline.[42] Its route approximately followed the present-day Massachusetts Turnpike to the north of Brookline. At Sewall's Point, now the Kenmore Square area of Boston, a line branched off to the station in Brookline Village and continued west to Newton. This branch followed what is today the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Green line "D" route.[43] Like the omnibus, the railroads had their detractors as well. Railroads had infrequent stops and the station may have been some distance from a passenger's final destination.[44] The mode of transportation that would catapult development in North Brookline was on the horizon, but needed a logical connection to Boston and a populace eager to relocate away from the city.

CONSTRUCTION OF BEACON STREET AND COOLIDGE AND BROTHER STORE

When it opened in 1821, the Back Bay Mill Dam Road entered Brookline and then split with roads heading roughly west to Brighton and southwest to Brookline Village (see Figure 1.4). These routes bypassed the future neighborhood of the Kennedy National Historic Site. The northern part of Brookline gained direct access to Boston via the Back Bay Mill Dam Road with the construction of Beacon Street. Previously open land, Beacon Street was laid out west of Washington Street in 1850 and east of Washington Street to connect with Boston in 1851 (Figure 1.5). Beacon Street was laid out as a "country way" indicating the relatively narrow



Figure 1.5. Beacon Street circa 1880. This photograph was taken at the intersection of Beacon and Marion Streets, four blocks west of the Beacon and Harvard intersection. Between 1850 and 1851, Beacon Street was constructed as a "country way" indicating a relatively narrow width and unimproved condition. In 1886, plans were developed to widen Beacon Street into a formal boulevard supporting multiple modes of transportation (Brookline Public Library).

width and unimproved condition of the road bed in comparison to the Boston-Worcester Turnpike.[45]

Following the construction of Beacon Street, David and William Coolidge established a general store at the northwest corner of Beacon and Harvard Streets in 1857. Selling feed and hay in addition to general goods, the Coolidge and Brother Store became the first major retail presence in North Brookline (Figure 1.6).[46] As early as 1874, the intersection of Harvard and Beacon Streets was called Coolidge's Corner (Figure 1.7). Even after the Coolidge store was replaced by other retail establishments, the area retained this place name. Sometime in the early twentieth century, the possessive form was dropped to simply Coolidge Corner and today, the area is still known by that name.

VISIONS FOR IMPROVING GREATER BOSTON'S OPEN SPACES

After a half century of independence from British rule, Boston was densely settled. The highly regarded architect Charles Bullfinch advocated for city squares within developed areas.[47] These tree-filled enclaves lent an air of dignity to the rapidly growing city. Furthermore, the city extended major inland thoroughfares to outlying areas to the north, west, and south.[48] Unfortunately these corridors led through ill-conceived developments in the Back Bay and Muddy River marshes, creating a condition "of nuisance, offensive and injurious to the large and increasing population residing upon it."[49] In 1844, Robert Fleming Gourlay proposed a forward-thinking scheme for the further development of Boston with a network of suburban railway lines, which would run along tree-shaded boulevards two hundred feet wide. Though Gourlay's larger plan for a transportation hub, "Circus Island," never materialized, threads of his ideas were manifested a half century later in schemes by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.[50] An early visionary was David Sears, a prominent merchant and



Figure 1.6. Coolidge and Brother Store, 1887. This photograph was taken at the intersection of Beacon and Harvard Streets looking northwest at the store, constructed in 1857. Note the water trough on the left, carriages, and the earthen surfaces of Beacon and Harvard Streets (Brookline Public Library).

landowner who invested in the development of Brookline. In the 1820s Sears purchased numerous acres of the mudflats in the Back Bay, eventually acquiring over 200 acres along the Boston and Brookline border including the land of Judge Sewall.[51] In 1849, Sears proposed setting aside tracts of land and water bodies to improve the sanitary conditions of developed areas.[52] Like Gourlay, Sears's ideas were not widely accepted by his contemporaries, but would appear in Olmsted's later plans for the Muddy River improvements. Within his own developments, Sears set aside squares of open space including the Longwood Mall and Mason Square on the eastern side of Brookline and Winthrop Square—named for his mother's family—and Knyvet Square—named for his son—in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood. The heirs of Sears later gave all four squares to the Town of Brookline in 1902 and 1903 to be reserved for park purposes.[53]

By the 1870s the stench of the Muddy River could no longer be ignored, as it was "a body of water so foul that even clams and eels cannot live there, and a place that no one will go within a half mile of in the summer time unless absolutely

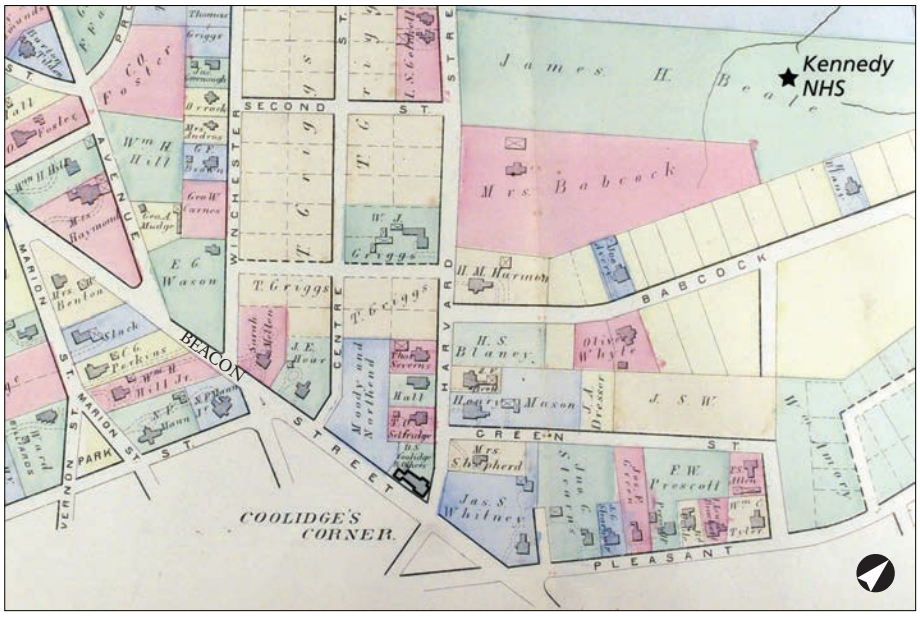


Figure 1.7. Digitally enhanced copy of "Coolidge's Corner" at the intersection of Beacon, Harvard, and Pleasant streets as depicted in 1874. The Coolidge and Brother store is highlighted with a heavy outline and the future Kennedy home at 83 Beals is shown in land owned by James H. Beals. Note the streams originating on the Babcock and Beals properties that flow north and east (Hopkins Town Atlas, 1874).

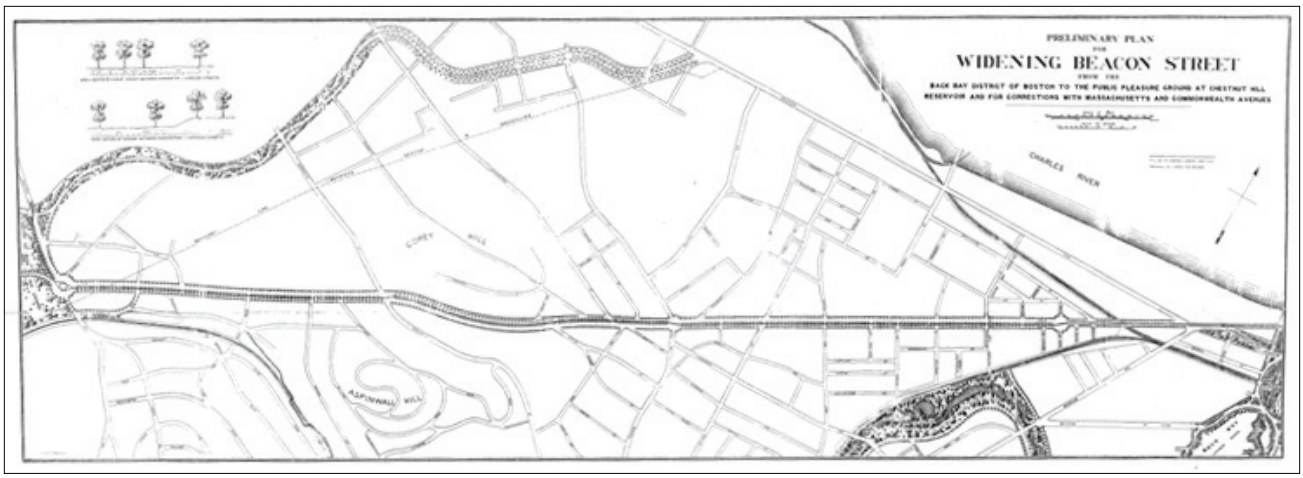


Figure 1.8. Preliminary plan for widening Beacon Street prepared by Frederick Law and John Charles Olmsted Landscape Architects, October 1886 (Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Archives).

necessary."[54] In response to this problem and wider issues related to Boston's sewage and loss of open space, the newly formed Boston Parks Commission sought the advice of Frederick Law Olmsted in 1875. Olmsted's preliminary plan, produced in 1886, included the establishment of parks, parkways, and street improvements, some of which would directly influence the character of Beacon Street and the Coolidge Corner neighborhood (Figures 1.8 and 1.9).

WEST END RAIL COMPANY AND WIDENING OF BEACON STREET

Though it was a narrow country way in the 1850s, Beacon Street greatly improved access between North Brookline and Boston. However, the development of North Brookline is more directly attributed to first the horse-drawn, and then electric streetcar. The Boston area's first streetcar service was established around 1852 as a one-car operation that ran between Harvard Square in Cambridge and Union Square in Somerville. The success of this line and other examples nationwide indicated to local investors that profits could be made on large-scale land speculation after installing rail lines for horse-drawn streetcars.[55]

In North Brookline Henry M. Whitney, the president of Metropolitan Steamship Company, proved to be such an investor. Whitney began buying land in Brookline in 1868 and formed the West End Land Company and West End Railway Company with other investors by 1886.[56] Whitney commissioned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted to design an expansion of Beacon Street into a formal boulevard supporting multiple modes of transportation.[57] Proposing to widen Beacon Street to 200 feet, the Olmsted plan called for eastbound and westbound vehicular traffic separated by a central green corridor containing the streetcar lines and bridle paths. The definition between the sidewalk, street, and central corridor were to be further delineated by four rows of street trees (see Figures 1.8 and 1.9).

Implementation of Olmsted's plan required acquisition of a swath of land along the road corridor. Whitney and the West End Company investors owned roughly half the land along Beacon Street needed for the widening project. Whitney

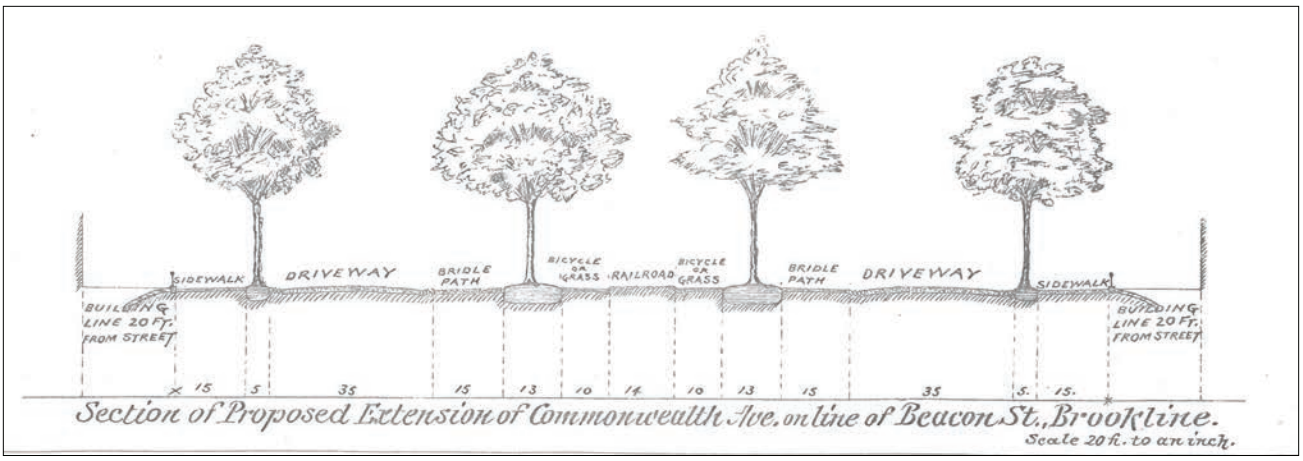


Figure 1.9. Section detailing layout of Beacon Street prepared by Frederick Law and John Charles Olmsted Landscape Architects, October 1886 (Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Archives).

offered to forfeit the land to the town without compensation and donate $150,000 to the funding of the project. His proposed donation represented about half the project's estimated construction costs.[58] With additional support from a petition requesting the town widen Beacon Street, Brookline accepted Whitney's offer.[59]

The West End Railway Company was not the only streetcar company in Boston and the metropolitan area. In 1887, as the widening project started, Whitney and other investors began purchasing stock in the five separate streetcar companies that served Boston. After obtaining a majority of the stock, Whitney proposed combining all the companies into one and offered stock to the other owners and investors as compensation. Due to congestion caused by horse carriages in downtown Boston, Whitney had the support of the legislature and public to create a streetcar monopoly. With a monopoly in place, service provided by the West End Railway extended to six miles from Boston City Hall.[60] Two years after the widening project and the consolidation of streetcar owners, the West End Railway began converting Beacon Street from horse-drawn to electric streetcars.[61] The introduction of the electric streetcar completed a convenient connection between North Brookline and Boston. Compared to the horse-drawn streetcar, the electric streetcar moved two times faster and carried three times as many passengers.[62]

IMMIGRATION AND THE RURAL IDEAL

Advances in transportation technology were not the single, causal factor in the development of North Brookline. If Boston's population had remained stagnant, Brookline may have continued as an agrarian town and country retreat for wealthy Bostonians. In 1847, Boston's population was roughly 115,000 people. That year, over 37,000 immigrants arrived from Ireland, desperate to escape the national famine caused by the potato blight. Geographically, Boston was still a small peninsula jutting out into the harbor. The Back Bay and South End neighborhoods were still tidal flats and neighboring municipalities like Dorchester and Roxbury were independent towns. Without economic means, tens of thousands of impoverished Irish immigrants crammed into Boston's North End neighborhood.

By 1855, over thirty-four percent of Boston's population was Irish. Included in this new demographic were John F. Kennedy's maternal and paternal great grandparents, who emigrated from Ireland in the late 1840s.[63]

In response to increasing industrialization, crowding, and immigration in mid- and late-nineteenth century cities, the rural ideal emerged. The rural ideal held that cities were artificial and a moral, healthy life could best be achieved by residing in a natural, rural setting.[64] Brookline still projected an agricultural image, though transportation innovations and the start of speculative development were beginning to alter its character. Responding to criticism of his streetcar monopoly, Henry Whitney referenced the rural ideal in public addresses and highlighted the streetcars' ability to make the ideal accessible to more people.[65] Ultimately, development and population growth in North Brookline and its transformation into a suburb of Boston resulted from investors, builders, and homeowners who shared Whitney's sentiment. The rural ideal influenced, but did not preserve, the natural setting of areas such as North Brookline.

UTILITIES AND TOWN DEVELOPMENT

From the mid-nineteenth century onward, the development of communities and utilities were intertwined. At times, the increasing population necessitated public services for health and safety. Other times, the installation of utilities helped expedite growth in a particular area.

Before water, sewer, and electric power, the first utilities installed in Brookline were gas street lights. The town accepted a proposal from the privately-owned Brookline Gas Light Company in 1853 for installing twenty lamps and maintaining them at a cost of twenty-five dollars each per year. In 1856, the town took over ownership of the lamps and appropriated an additional $1,200 for street lighting.[66]

As scientific understanding of disease origins increased during the nineteenth century, providing a clean water supply and proper sewage disposal became public health necessities. In October 1873, a Brookline committee voted in favor of a $400,000 appropriation to provide water service and lay water mains throughout a large portion of the town. Included on the list of streets to receive water mains was Harvard Street from its intersection with Washington Street to the south up to William Grigg's house, just north of Coolidge Corner.[67] In addition to the water lines, during 1873 the town did not neglect other services and approved $51,000 for highways, $15,000 for sidewalks, and $7,000 for gas street lamps.[68] Since roads were not surfaced with a hard material like stone, brick, or asphalt, part of the town's highway maintenance involved crews spraying water on road surfaces to keep down dust. Similarly, sidewalks during this period were constructed out of wood planks (Figure 1.10).

Realizing that sewage handling methods for a sparse, rural population would not work for a denser population, Brookline next addressed sewer lines. The impact caused by backyard disposal and dumping waste into a low culvert or ditch can be seen in Olmsted's redesign for the Muddy River corridor. The natural flow of the Muddy River had been blocked off by crossing rail lines and dams that turned the waterway into a cesspool. Olmsted rerouted the course of the Muddy River in a plan entitled "General Plan for the Sanitary Improvement of Muddy River."[69] In May 1878, Brookline received approval from the state to assess part of the sewer costs on abutting property owners. With the additional funding in place by 1893, approximately 42 miles of sewer lines had been installed and the system was "considered the best equipment of its kind among the towns of New England."[70] In addition to responding to and encouraging development, Brookline's utility installations provided the town with leverage in the debate over joining Boston or remaining independent.

ANNEXATION

Following the Civil War, large American cities like Philadelphia, Chicago, Saint Louis, and New Orleans expanded their municipal boundaries by annexing outlying suburbs or acquiring adjacent, undeveloped land. New York City, with twenty-three square miles of area on Manhattan, did not face a confinement dilemma that growing populations placed on other urban centers. Boston was confined by tight boundaries and in the 1850s, tried to annex the suburban towns of Cambridge, Somerville, Roxbury, and Dorchester. These efforts were defeated by the independent towns, however, this did not end the annexation debate.[71]

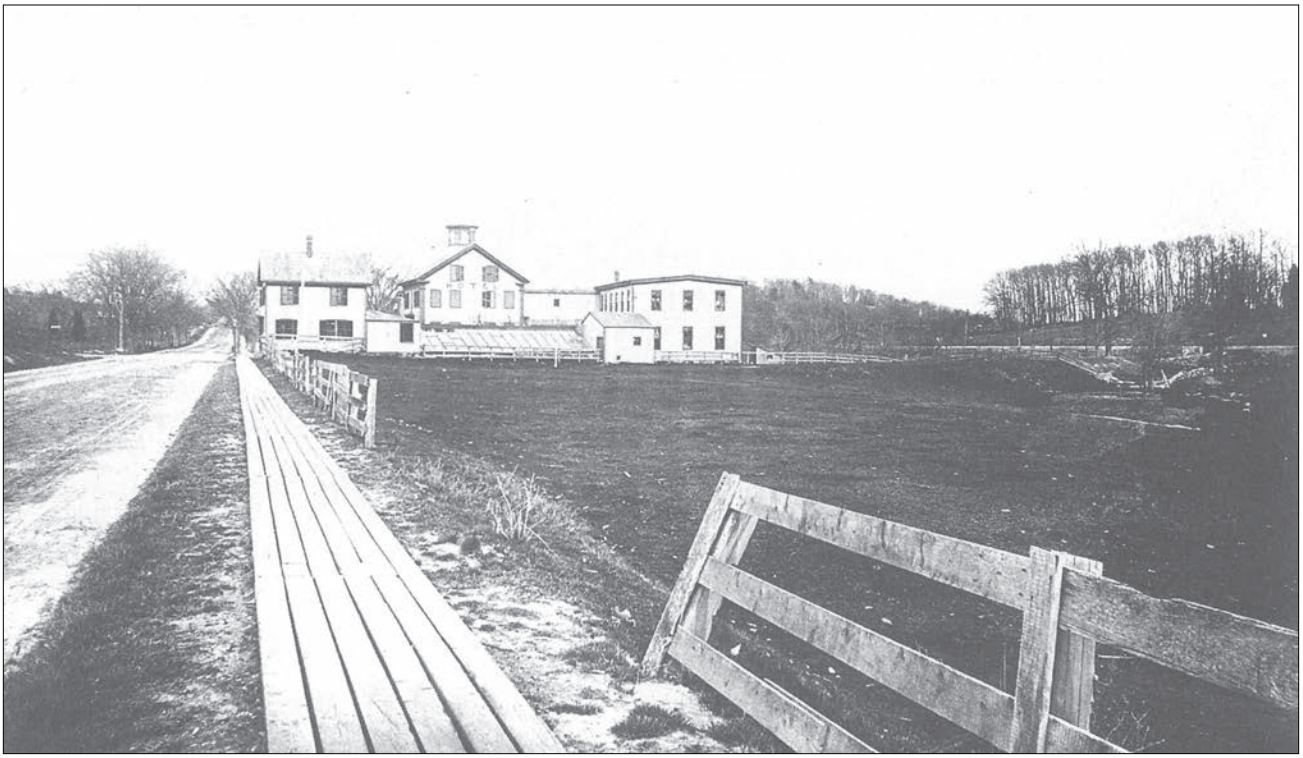


Figure 1.10. Wood plank sidewalk along Beacon Street in the 1880s. This photograph was taken looking east on Beacon before the widening project. The building shown was located across from the present-day intersection of Beacon and Englewood Avenue, near Cleveland Circle. Note the distant views across open land to the surrounding wooded hills (Brookline Public Library).

In 1868, Roxbury joined Boston primarily to be a part of the city's sewer and water service. Roxbury was followed by Dorchester in 1870, and Charlestown, Brighton, and West Roxbury in 1873. A series of attempts, both initiated by Boston and Brookline residents, were made to annex Brookline starting in 1870.[72] While Boston had established municipal utilities, opponents of annexation cited higher taxes, maintaining the rural ideal and separation from Boston's waves of poor immigrants as arguments against joining.[73] In addition, Brookline had established first-class water and sewer services separate from Boston.[74]

DEVELOPMENT AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

At the close of the nineteenth century Brookline was closely tied to Boston, but remained independent with an established public transportation system, its own utilities, and a growing population. In 1880, the town's population was 8,057. The town's open rural character was still evident (see Figure 1.10). Sparse development and agricultural fields allowed distant views to the surrounding landscape and wooded hills. By 1900, the population increased almost two-and-a-half times to 19,935. A flurry of residential and commercial construction erased pockets of Brookline's open land along its streetcar corridors.[75] In North Brookline, the land west of Pleasant Street remained predominantly undeveloped while the land to the east contained large, single-family homes. Development at the turn of the century would alter this open rural character.

In response to the rapid urbanization of the Boston area and following the establishment of the Boston Park Commission in 1876, the Metropolitan Park Commission was established in 1893. Frederick Law Olmsted, his stepson and nephew John Charles Olmsted, and his young partner Charles Eliot, all played a part in identifying and protecting parcels of open space. The firm advocated for a network of boulevards that would string together the major tracts of undeveloped forested land and major water bodies in the Boston area. In Brookline, key boulevards and parcels included Beacon Street, Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill Reservoir, and Brookline Reservoir, with connections to the Muddy River Reservation between Brookline and Boston. The firm also recommended that towns set aside parcels to serve as promenades, plazas, public parks, and playgrounds. Olmsted wrote in 1895,

> As there are many modes and means of open-air recreation, so there are many kinds of public pleasure-grounds. The formal promenade or plaza is perhaps the simplest type. Broad gravel-ways well shaded by trees afford pleasant out-of-door halls where crowds may mingle in an easy social life, the value of which is better understood in Southern Europe and in Spanish America than in the United States.
>
> Agreeable and numerous open-air nurseries and playgrounds for small children present a complex, but perhaps more necessary, type of public ground. Very few public open spaces suitably arranged for this special purpose are to be

> found in American cities and yet it goes without saying that every crowded neighborhood ought to be provided with a place removed from the paved streets, in which mothers, babies, and small children may find opportunity to rest, and sleep, and play in the open air.[76]

Fortunately for the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, David Sears and his heirs shared this vision for North Brookline and had set aside Winthrop and Knyvet squares. Similarly along Babcock Street, two smaller parcels remained undeveloped, creating small triangular parks known as Freeman Square and Dwight Square. Most developers in the neighborhood were unwilling to forgo the profits to be made by developing all available land—and even filled wetland areas to create more land.

In the 1890s, Peter Graffam and David McKay purchased a large tract of land west of Pleasant Street, subdivided the entire parcel, and began building "substantial middle-class dwellings" along Manchester, Abbottsford, Osborne, and Naples Roads.[77] Included in the homes constructed by Peter Graffam was the Kennedy family's second Brookline home on Abbottsford Road.

South of Beacon Street, a denser pattern of development resulted from a new housing type. A block south of Beacon Street at Tappan Street and Garrison Road, "Beaconsfield Terrace" was built in 1890 as Brookline's first apartment houses or French flats. The development included thirty-six semi-detached city row houses, a six-acre park, and shared facilities for residents' activities.[78] A similar development sprang up on the north side of Beacon Street in the early 1900s. The single-family homes located east of Pleasant Street were demolished in favor of multi-family houses and apartment blocks.[79]

At the same time the town was expanding public utilities and approving increased residential development, the town also allocated funds to establish a street tree program. As part of the Beacon Street widening plan, the center median and sidewalks were almost entirely planted with American elms (*Ulmus americana*) from the Boston city line to Cleveland Circle at the western border of Brookline (Figure 1.11). The exception to the continuous use of American elms occurred in the Corey Hill area where local residents donated 100 red oaks and 40 pin oaks for use along Beacon Street.[80]

With a significant investment in trees along its new, formal boulevard, the town passed a tree warden act in 1883. Two years later, the Committee for Planting Trees was formed and given the authority to act as the town's tree warden.[81] Beacon Street was not the only route to benefit from the street tree program. When developers added new streets to the town's jurisdiction, trees were incorporated into the streetscape design. Between 1898 and 1908, an average of 195 trees a year were planted along town roadways.[82] The town's commitment and expenditures were not exclusive to new plantings. In the late 1900s and lasting through the mid-



Figure 1.11. View from St. Mary's Street looking west on Beacon Street in the 1910s. In the Olmsted plan to widen Beacon Street, eastbound and westbound vehicular traffic were separated by a central green corridor containing the streetcar lines and bridle paths. The definition between sidewalk and street and street and central corridor was further delineated by fours rows of American elms. This photograph shows Beacon Street about 25 years after the widening project. The American elms have sufficiently matured to provide a vertical definition and overhead structure to the boulevard (Stanley Album, Brookline Public Library).

1910s, Brookline spent thousands of dollars for spraying equipment and crews to combat gypsy and brown-tail moth infestations that threatened the town's parks and street trees (Figure 1.12).[83]

Addressing moth infestations may seem a frivolous pursuit for a town, but in the case of Brookline demonstrates how residential growth, increased town revenue, and an expectation for services were linked together. In fact, in 1904, Brookline's revenues and expenditures exceeded the individual revenues and expenditures of Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont.[84] In this growing and financially prosperous community, institutional and commercial centers would be established that would become part of the Kennedys' neighborhood and ultimately, part of the family's daily lives.



Figure 1.12. Tree spraying equipment and crew in the early 1900s. The placard on the side of the wagon reads "Brookline Forestry Dept." A present-day division of the Department of Public Works, the Forestry Department was responsible for tree maintenance in public parks and along public streets. In addition to investments in public utilities, Brookline appropriated $26,000 in 1909 for "suppressing" gypsy and brown-tail moths (Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History,* 1989).



Figure 1.13. View looking northwest in Coolidge Corner, in about 1906. Prior to the 1920s, both streetcar shelters on Beacon Street were located east of Harvard Street. Note the S. S. Pierce Store in the background, unpaved Beacon Street, and street trees present on the east side of Harvard Street and north side of Beacon Street (Brookline Historical Society, "Archives of Brookline Historical Society, Brookline MA," http://www.brooklinehistoricalsociety.org/archives/archives.asp).

COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

Prior to the Beacon Street widening and introduction of electric streetcars, the commercial center of the town was Brookline Village. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the center began transitioning to Coolidge Corner as businesses shifted from a compact urban center to a strip configuration along a transportation corridor. In addition to Beacon Street, a streetcar line ran along Harvard Street from Brookline Village to Cambridge Street in Brighton. Throughout the twentieth century, commercial establishments increased along Beacon and Harvard Streets as "storefronts stretched to reflect the fact that people might now window shop from a fast-moving trolley."[85]

The first step in the commercial transition occurred in 1892, when Wallace Pierce purchased the Coolidge and Brother Store. The Pierce family had established an upscale grocery store in downtown Boston and in 1898 began construction of a Brookline branch of the S. S. Pierce store where the Coolidge store had stood. The store opened in 1900 in the Tudor Revival building, complete with a clock tower, and remains a landmark in Coolidge Corner today (Figure 1.13).[86]

In 1906, just to the north of the S.S. Pierce store on Harvard Street, members of the Shawmut Universalist Society constructed a church, known as Beacon Universalist Parish. Adding yet another anchor to this community center, the house of worship was one of several that would be constructed in the neighborhood in the years ahead.

Prior to the Kennedys' arrival at Beals Street, Brookline experienced a rapid increase in car ownership. Brookline town directories published in the early 1900s listed both horse owners and car owners. Between 1904 and 1906, the number of car owners jumped from 70 to 400. Two years later, Ford introduced the Model T. More affordable than competing brands, the Model T dramatically increased car ownership.[87]

With more cars using the roads, Brookline could no longer effectively maintain the entire packed earth road surface along its main thoroughfares. In 1910, the town appropriated $30,000 for installing "first-class pavement" at Coolidge Corner. The appropriation was approved along with a similar request for paving in Brookline Village demonstrating that both locations were suffering from comparable traffic loads. In Coolidge Corner, Beacon Street was paved between Pleasant and Center Streets and Harvard Street was paved 100-feet in each direction from Beacon Street.[88] Thus by the 1910s Coolidge Corner was an attractive commercial center that was accessible by both public transportation as well as amenable to private vehicles (Drawing 1).

Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church

In 1852, the Archdiocese of Boston established Brookline's first Catholic Church, Saint Mary of the Assumption in Brookline Village.[89] Founded one year after Beacon Street's construction, Saint Mary's served a growing Irish immigrant population attracted to Brookline Village by employment opportunities in the town's established commercial center. The Archdiocese established a second church, Saint Lawrence, in 1898 in South Brookline, which predominantly served the immigrants who worked at the large estates.

Reflecting the growing number of Catholics moving to North Brookline at the turn of the century, the Archdiocese sought land for a third church, Saint Aidan's, in 1910. The growing commercial center at Coolidge Corner and the construction of hundreds of new homes in the neighborhood supported the need for a new church. The Archdiocese of Boston purchased land at the corner of Pleasant and Freeman Streets in 1910 and plans for a new church were announced in February 1911.[90] The parish boundaries were Commonwealth Avenue on the north, Beacon Street on the south, Saint Mary's Street on the east, and Cleveland Circle on the west.

The architectural firm of Maginnis & Walsh was selected for the church's design. Both Charles Maginnis and Timothy Walsh lived in Brookline. In the late 1900s their Boston-based practice developed a national reputation for designing Catholic churches in Los Angeles; Dayton, Ohio; and Somerville, Massachusetts.[91] Renowned for their American Gothic architecture, the firm also designed the campus for Boston College, which relocated from downtown Boston to Chestnut Hill in the 1910s, as well as some twenty-five other college campuses across the country.

The Archdiocese laid the Saint Aidan's cornerstone in May 1911 and constructed the building in an L-shaped plan as opposed to a symmetrical, cruciform plan (Figure 1.14). The shorter leg of the "L" contained the chapel and from this portion of the building, a connector was constructed to an existing house on the site that would become the rectory (see Drawing 1).[92] With construction complete,

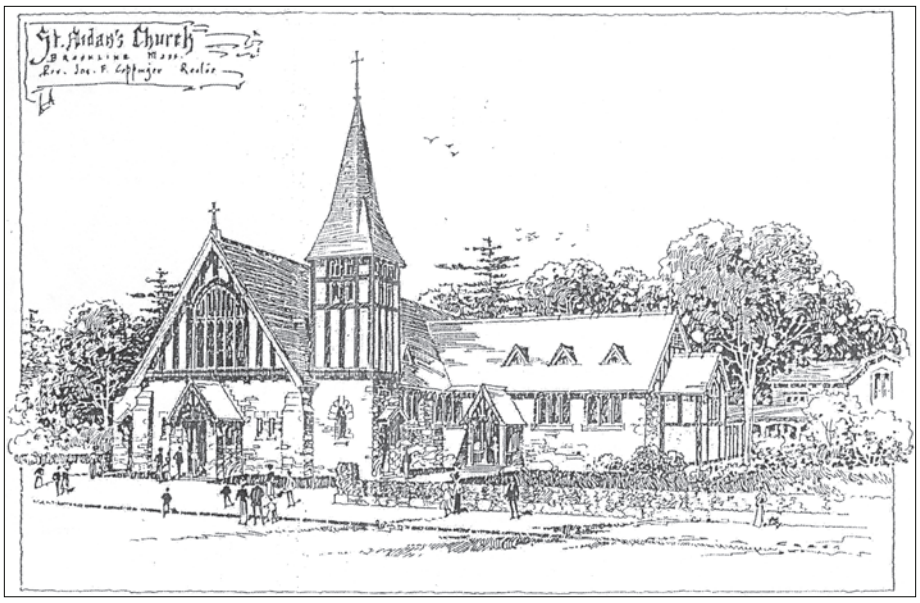


Figure 1.14. Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, design sketch in about 1911. The church was designed by Brookline architects Charles Maginnis and Timothy Walsh in the style of a Medieval village church (*St. Aidan's Re-Use Team, St. Aidan's Church: Inspiring Community Ideas for Adaptive Reuse,* Brookline: St. Aidan's Church, 2003).

Saint Aidan's was dedicated on November 17, 1912, by the recently appointed Cardinal William O'Connell.[93] According to the Brookline Press, "The occasion brought out about one thousand parishioners and many friends in Brookline and surrounding parishes, and the audience included many of the town officials."[94] The Kennedys would also soon join the Saint Aidan's Parish.

Edward Devotion School

In 1891, the Town of Brookline purchased farmland along Harvard Street to build a school, since the one serving the Coolidge Corner neighborhood was torn down during the Beacon Street widening. The new school site was two blocks north of the S. S. Pierce store on Harvard Street, south of the mid-eighteenth century Devotion House.[95] The town named the school for Edward Devotion Jr. who, in 1744, bequeathed money to the town for building and maintaining a public school. The town completed the new school building in 1892.

As residential development increased in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, so did the need for additional facilities at the Devotion School. In 1898, the town added a second building to the property to the north of the Devotion House. Now flanked by larger-scale buildings on both sides, the town offered to sell the Devotion House to anyone who would move the structure and maintain it as a historic house. Unable to find a buyer, the town transferred the house to the newly formed Brookline Historical Society in 1901. To this day, the Historical Society continues to manage the Devotion House as a house museum.[96]

In 1913, a year before the Kennedys would settle at Beals Street, the town opted to construct an additional school building for the Coolidge Corner neighborhood. The Selectmen authorized $138,000 for a third building on March 6 to be designed by the Boston architectural firm of Kilham and Hopkins and sited east of the Devotion House.[97] The completed ensemble of the three buildings now



Figure 1.15. Edward Devotion Elementary School, undated, likely late 1910s. Taken from Harvard Street and looking east at the school, this photograph shows the three school buildings around the Edward Devotion House. The Town of Brookline constructed the building on the right in 1892, followed by the building on the left in 1898 and the central building in 1913. Note the streetcar tracks and brick paving set between the tracks on Harvard Street (Brookline Historical Society, "Archives of Brookline Historical Society, Brookline MA," http://www.brooklinehistoricalsociety.org/archives/archives.asp).

wrapped around the Devotion House and created an enclosed courtyard space (Figure 1.15).

The growing Coolidge Corner neighborhood also required more town services, including a fire station and public works facilities. As part of the school parcel, the town owned land on either side of Devotion Street, a north-south connector between Babcock and Steadman Streets. Between 1892 and 1893, a town fire station was constructed on the west side of Devotion Street and dedicated in 1893.[98] A stable for the town's department of public works was located on the east side of Devotion Street and in 1898 a nursery was established for the Committee for Planting Trees. At its height of production, the nursery contained 2,000 trees, primarily American elms and sugar maples.[99]

Noble and Greenough/Dexter School

Serving as an all-boys preparatory school for Harvard University, Noble and Greenough was founded in Boston in 1866 by George Washington Copp Noble. Originally called Noble's Classical School, the name changed in 1892 to reflect a partnership between Noble and his son-in-law, James Jay Greenough.[100] Throughout the late nineteenth century, the school rented several locations in Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood. Noble and Greenough, commonly called Nobles, began using the grounds of the Dexter family estate in Brookline for their athletic programs in 1893 (Figure 1.16). The Dexter property was offered for school use primarily because William Dexter was a member of the class of 1893.[101] Students traveled from the Boston school buildings by taking either the Beacon Street or Commonwealth Avenue streetcar to stops on Saint Paul Street and walking to Freeman Street.[102]

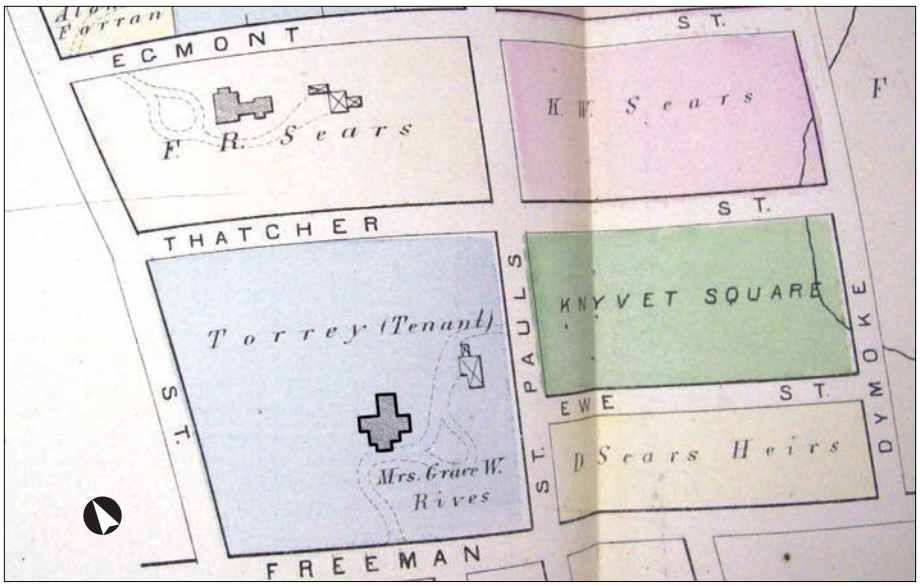


Figure 1.16. Digitally enhanced copy of the Hopkins Town Atlas, 1874. The Dexter family estate house, highlighted with a heavy outline, became the Dexter School athletic building and later the lower school for Noble and Greenough. This building footprint remains on historic atlases until the mid-twentieth century when it was demolished and a new school building constructed. Note the land owned by the Sears heirs to the east and the Knyvet Square open space.

When Nobles incorporated in 1913, and one of the first acts of the trustees was to formally secure the Dexter family estate for athletic programs. Across Pleasant Street from Saint Aidan's, the school purchased the block bounded by Freeman, Thatcher, and Saint Paul Streets.[103] In addition to purchasing the property, money was raised to grade the fields and convert the former house into locker room facilities. The new complex was named Dexter Field. This would later be converted to the Noble and Greenough lower school (see Drawing 1).

51 Abbottsford Road

The Graffam-McKay subdivision of eighty house lots was one of the new residential sections of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood that influenced the Devotion School expansion. Comprising portions of Babcock Street and Manchester, Abbottsford, Osborne, and Naples Roads, the homes built by Peter Graffam and David McKay were consistent in scale, materials, and architectural character (Figure 1.17).[104] The vast majority of homes were built between 1895 and 1905, including the future second home of the Kennedys at 51 Abbottsford Road.[105]

The house at 51 Abbottsford was designed by the firm of Greenleaf & Cobb and built by Peter Graffam in 1897.[106] Architect Luther C. Greenleaf, working individually and with his partner Albert Winslow Cobb, prepared designs for twenty-two homes, including the home at 51 Abbottsford. Current research indicates Graffam was responsible for building forty-four homes in the subdivision. The remaining lots were sold to individuals who employed their own architect or builder.[107] When completed, businessman Frederick B. Lovejoy lived in 51 Abbottsford for a year. During the early 1900s, he rented the house to a series of tenants before selling it to the Charles E. Osgood in 1908.[108] Osgood retained ownership as the Kennedys were preparing to move to Beals Street.

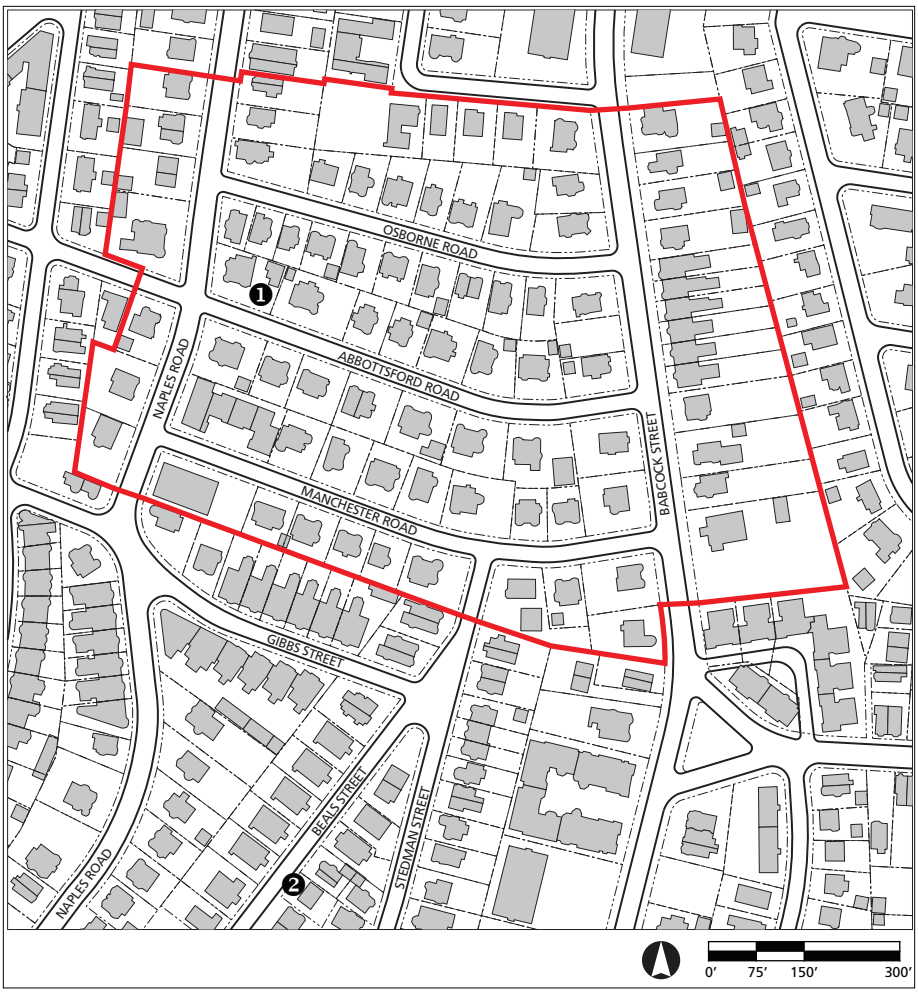


Figure 1.17. Plan of Graffam-McKay Development Local Historic District. A local historic district was established to recognize the consistency in scale, materials, and architectural character of homes built by Peter Graffam and David McKay. The district outline is shown in red and a vast majority of homes within the district were built between 1895 and 1905, including the Kennedys' second home at 51 Abbottsford Road (shown at #1). The Kennedy's first home at 83 Beals Street is shown at #2 (Town of Brookline GIS Data).

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

North of Coolidge Corner, the land that became the Beals Street development was purchased by George Babcock in 1835.[109] Present-day Babcock Street follows the approximate southeastern boundary of Babcock's 76-acre property. The property extended northwest almost to the Boston line and was bounded to the southwest by Harvard Street and to the northeast by Manchester Road.

Babcock and his family owned the land for over thirty years and based on this association, two physical features were given the Babcock name. On the northwestern half of the property, a wooded drumlin was known as Babcock's Hill. On the southeastern half of the property, a pond and associated wetland became known as Babcock Pond. The pond and wetland were drained by a brook that started at the base of Corey Hill to the west, and flowed north and east to the Charles River (Figure 1.18).[110]

In 1868, George Babcock's widow, Lucy, sold a thirteen-acre parcel of land to James M. Beals that included pastureland and the pond.[111] The land would be retained by the Beals family until the final years of the nineteenth century. In 1897, James Beals Jr. sold the entire thirteen acres to Benjamin Newhall, a speculative developer who planned to subdivide the property.[112]

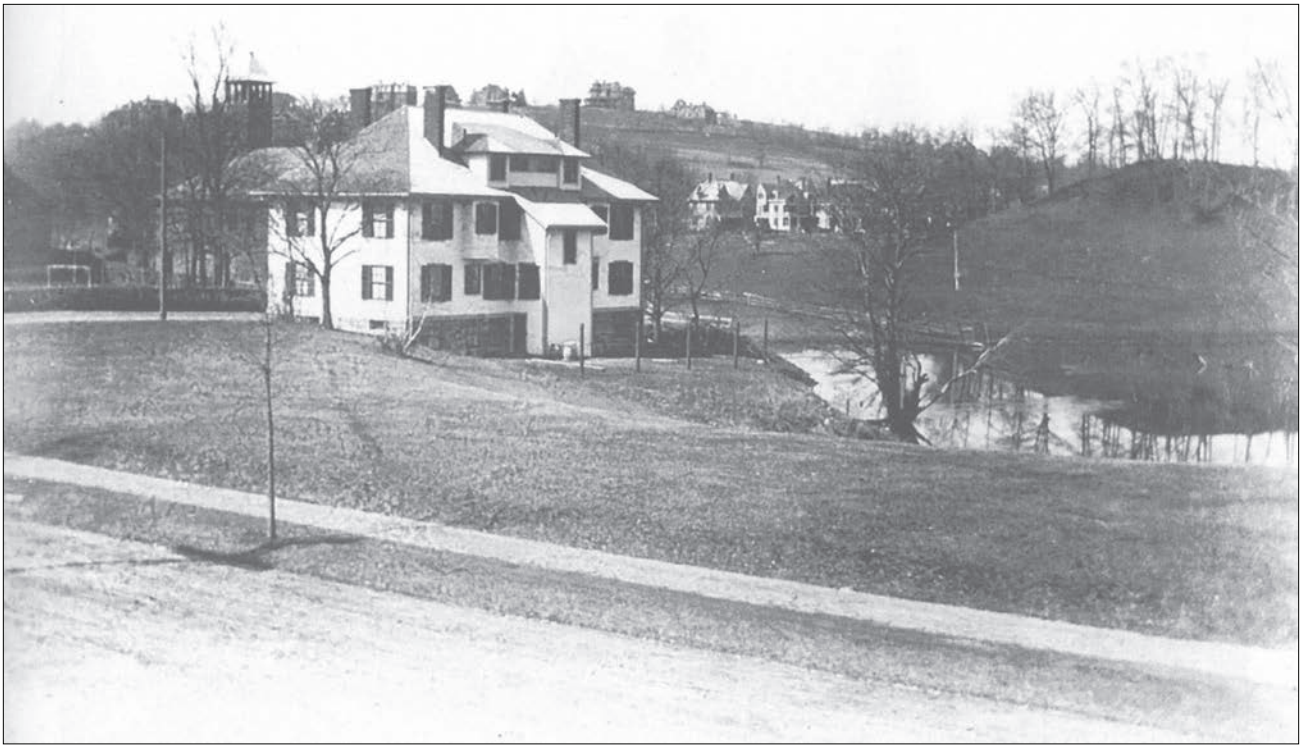


Figure 1.18. View from Babcock Street looking west to Corey Hill, circa 1895. Babcock Pond can be seen in the foreground and Babcock's Hill rises up behind the pond. In order to build the Beals Street Development, a portion of Babcock's Hill was removed and used to fill Babcock Pond (Brookline Public Library).

Also in the 1890s, but in a different social and economic sphere, two Boston families, led by the grown children of Irish immigrants, were beginning their political careers. John Francis (Honey Fitz) Fitzgerald served as ward leader for the Democratic Party in the North End of Boston and was launching his political career that would lead to his election as Mayor of Boston in 1906 and his relocation to Dorchester.[113] Meanwhile, Patrick Joseph (P.J.) Kennedy served as ward leader for the Democratic Party in East Boston and would serve eight successive terms in the state legislature.[114] These two men became colleagues in Boston politics, and it was not coincidental when their families met at the beach in the summers in the 1890s. Thus, at the age of seven Joseph (Joe) Patrick Kennedy met five-year old Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald at a picnic at Old Orchard Beach in Maine, where both families typically spent their summers.[115]

Almost twenty years would pass from Joe and Rose's first encounter until the time, as a newlywed couple, they moved into the Beals Street development. In those intervening years, after he acquired the property, Benjamin Newhall employed Joseph R. Carn, a civil engineer, to prepare a subdivision plan in October 1897 for the "Beals Estate."[116] Accepted by the registry of deeds the following month, the plan laid out two northeast-southwest streets northwest of Babcock Street. The first, Stedman Street, connected Harvard Street on the southwest and curved slightly to meet Manchester Road on the northeast. Northwest of Stedman, Beals Street also started at Harvard Street and headed northeast until forming a point at its intersection with Stedman. The development had Harvard Street as its southwestern boundary and Manchester Road as its northeastern boundary. Seventy lots were designated along Stedman and Beals Streets and with the

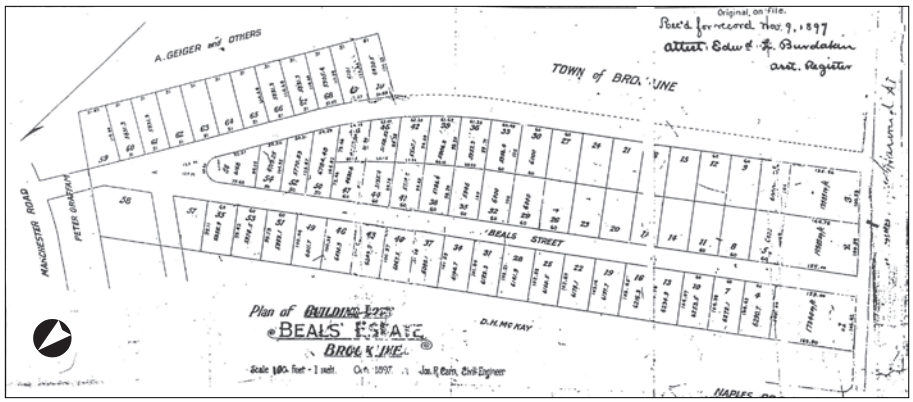


Figure 1.19. Beals Estate Subdivision Plan, 1897. After purchasing land from James Beals Jr., Benjamin Newhall employed Joseph R. Carn to prepare a subdivision plan. The plan created Beals Street, Stedman Street, and seventy lots (Norfolk Registry of Deeds, vol. 800, pg. 640).

exception of three lots along Harvard Street, each lot was approximately 60-feet wide by 100-feet deep (Figure 1.19). After Carn prepared the subdivision plan, Benjamin Newhall entered into agreements with speculative builders to construct homes and share with the builders a portion of the completed property's sale price (see Drawing 2).

In order for homes to be built on all seventy lots, a portion of Babcock's Hill was removed and used to fill Babcock Pond and the associated wetland. Although altered for the development's layout, evidence of Babcock's Hill can still be seen in Beals Street's northwestern lots. These lots abut steep slopes and many contain retaining walls to provide a flatter area at the back of the homes.

To clearly review the development history and patterns of the Beals Street development, it is necessary to reference the street addresses of the buildings and not the lot numbers shown on the subdivision plan. Utilizing this naming convention follows research done by the Brookline Historical Commission in their inventory of Beals Street homes during the late 1970s. Direction and orientation can be further clarified by referring to all even number addresses as the northwest side of Beals Street and all odd number addresses as the southeast side of Beals Street.

Taking the proposed subdivision and dividing the lots evenly in half, all homes starting with 58 Beals and 55 Beals and heading northeast toward Manchester

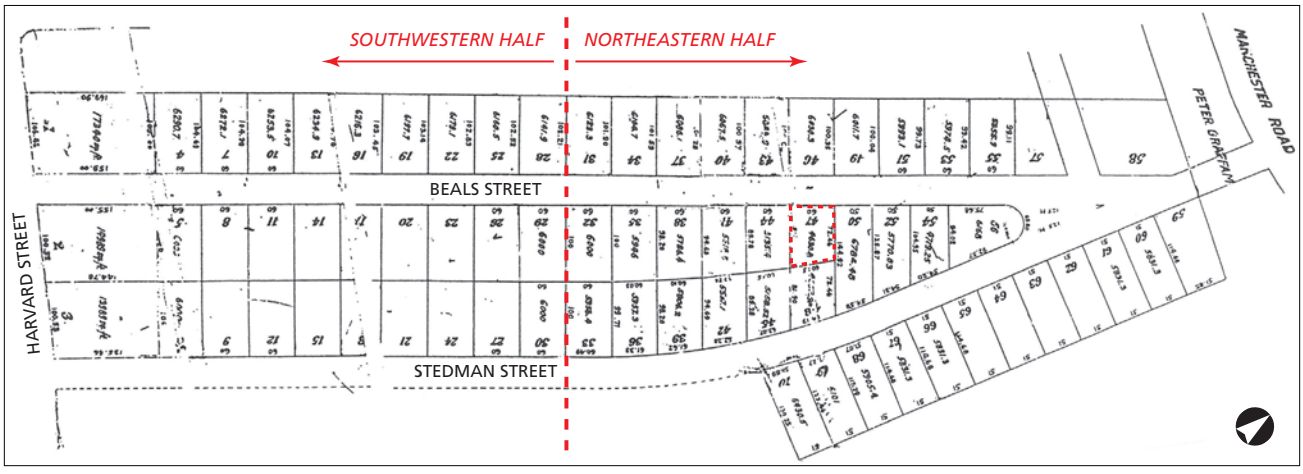


Figure 1.20. Digitally enhanced copy of the Beals Estate Subdivision Plan, 1897. The future Kennedy home at 83 Beals Street is outlined in red and on the northeastern half of the development (Norfolk Registry of Deeds, vol. 800, pg. 640).

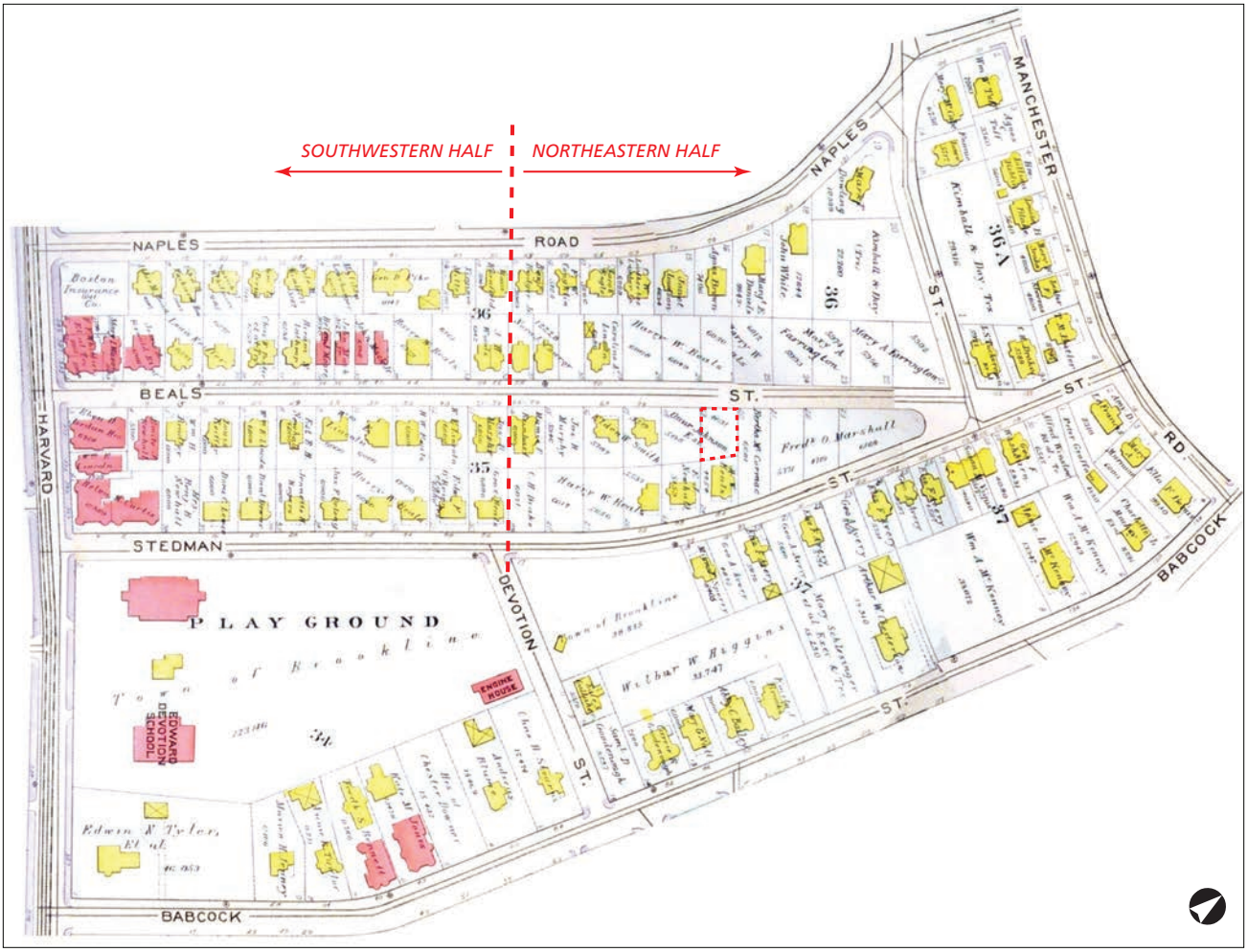


Figure 1.21. Digitally enhanced map of Beals Street Development and neighborhood to the southeast in 1907. With the exception of 50 Beals, all of the lots on the southwestern half of Beals Street are recorded as having buildings. In contrast, the northeastern half of Beals has over a dozen unbuilt parcels including the site of the future Kennedy home at 83 Beals Street, which is outlined in red. The Bromley atlases denote wood frame construction with the yellow fill and brick construction with the pink fill (Bromley Town Atlas, 1907).

Road comprise the northeastern half of the development. All homes starting with 56 Beals and 53 Beals and heading southwest towards Harvard Street comprise the southwestern half of the development (Figure 1.20).

The earliest building permits submitted on Beals Street occurred in 1898 for homes at 25, 29, and 49 Beals. The next year, a permit was submitted for 30 Beals. All four of these properties are located on the southwestern half of the development. Two properties on the northeastern half of the development also recorded permit applications shortly after the subdivision plan. In 1899, permits for 67 and 73 Beals were submitted and note that the architect was Walter Kilham. Kilham would later work in partnership with James Hopkins and design the third Devotion School building in 1913.[117]

After this early activity, a discrepancy appeared in the development of Beals Street. All of the buildings on the southwestern half of the street had permits submitted by 1905, with the exception of 50 Beals, which had a building permit submitted in 1923. At the latest, most of the construction on the southwestern half was completed by 1907 and recorded in the Bromley Town Atlas for that year (Figure 1.21). In contrast, the northeastern half of Beals Street was not completely built out until after 1927.

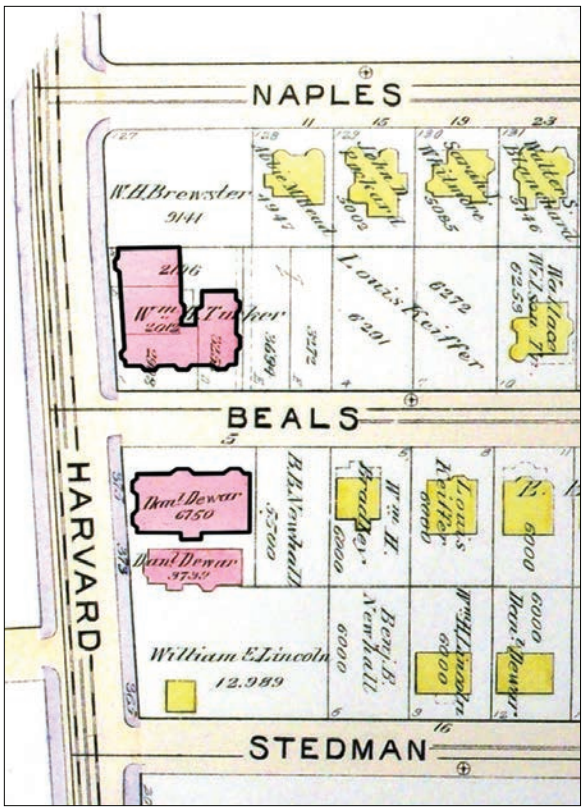


Figure 1.22. Digitally enhanced map of the southwest end of Beals Street in 1900. Shortly after the subdivision plan, 5 Beals/375 Harvard and 6 Beals/385 Harvard (shown with heavy black outline) were constructed and recorded in the atlas. These structures were the first multi-unit, brick apartment buildings in the development. The Bromley atlases denote wood frame construction with the yellow fill and brick construction with the pink fill (*Bromley Town Atlas,* 1900).

The southwestern most portion of the Beals Street development, at the intersection with Harvard Street, was constructed shortly after the subdivision plan. In the 1900 Bromley Town Atlas, buildings were recorded at 5 Beals/375 Harvard and 6 Beals/385 Harvard (Figure 1.22). These structures were the first multi-unit, brick apartment buildings in the development. In 1901 and 1902, building permits were submitted for 7/9 Beals and 10 Beals respectively and these addresses were also developed as brick apartment buildings.[118] Similar to the larger apartment buildings on Beacon Street, the ones at the corners of Harvard and Beals offered close proximity to the streetcar line on Harvard Street and nearby access to commercial services in Coolidge Corner.

In addition to the brick apartment buildings near Harvard Street, four detached brick row houses occupied 34 through 40 Beals. These structures stand out in comparison to the rest of the street due to their brick construction, location on narrower lots, and higher percentage of lot coverage. Although they may appear to be a later development, all four homes were designed by Boston-based architect Edward Payson Whitman and have building permits submitted in 1905. The four brick homes occupied two original 60-foot wide lots that were subdivided into four 30-foot wide lots resulting in the higher lot coverage.[119]

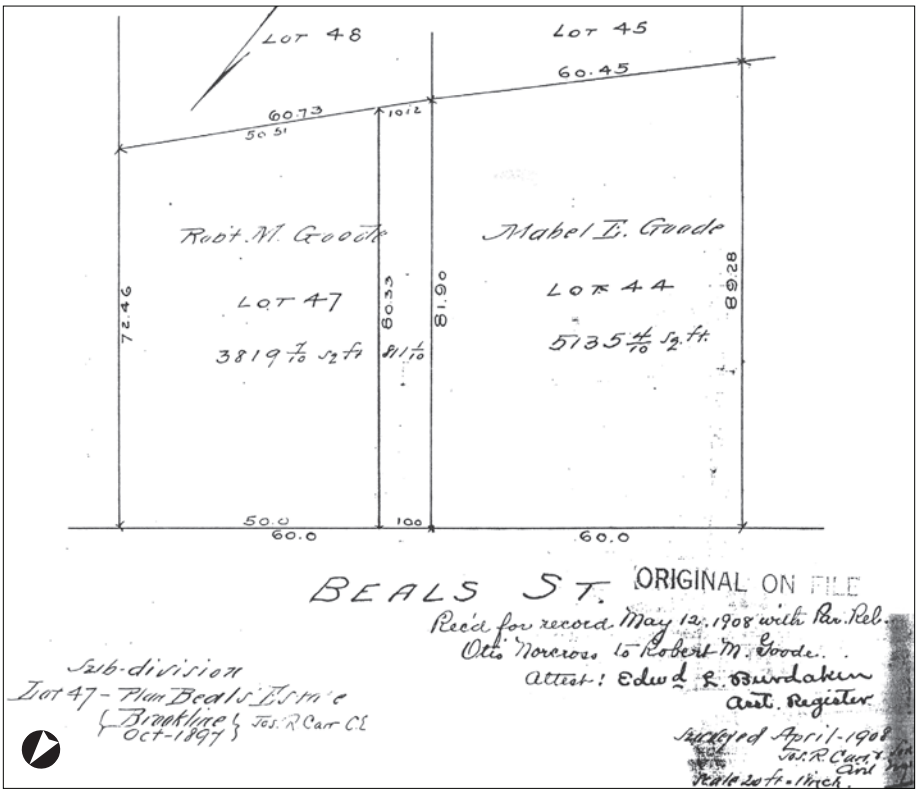


Figure 1.23. Beals Estate Subdivision, Lot 47 in 1908. Approximately six months after purchasing the 83 Beals Street property, Lot 47, Robert M. Goode subdivided a ten-foot wide swath and added this narrow piece to the adjacent lot, owned by his wife. With 70 feet of frontage on Lot 44, Goode applied for and had built a two-family dwelling that would become 77-79 Beals. In 1909 he applied for and built the single family dwelling at 83 Beals Street (Norfolk Registry of Deeds, vol. 1080, pg. 461).

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY BIRTHPLACE

Joe Kennedy and Rose Fitzgerald began dating when they were teenagers, around the turn of the century. They continued to date while Joe attended Harvard College and Rose received an education from multiple schools, including the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Boston, the New England Conservatory of Music, the Convent Kasteel Bloemendal in the Netherlands, and the Sacred Heart Convent at Manhattanville, New York. Rather than a career in politics, Joe pursued banking and finance and began as a clerk for the Columbia Trust Company, a small bank in East Boston founded in 1895 by "men of limited means" including his father.[120] Joe was also selected by the Governor to serve as one of the three bank examiners for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1912.[121] With his career successfully launched, Joe and Rose were engaged in the fall of 1913. In advance of their wedding, the couple searched for the ideal home. They chose to leave their native city and searched for a home in the Town of Brookline—a growing community, which, like a career in banking, offered economic promise and prestige. Rose recalled finding the home at 83 Beals Street.

> We looked around that summer before we were married and found one we both liked and decided would suit our needs. It was a nice old wooden-frame house with clapboard siding; seven rooms, plus two small ones in the converted attic, all on a small lot with a few bushes and trees. It would have blended perfectly into most of the main streets of America. It was in the Boston suburb of Brookline. . .[122]

At the 83 Beals Street site—shown as Lot 47 on the 1897 subdivision plan—speculative building practices resulted in a complex deed history with different owners for the lot and for the lot's mortgage. The two separate transaction histories were united in 1906, when Mary M. Poor purchased both the undeveloped lot and mortgage for 83 Beals.[123]

Mary Poor owned the undeveloped 83 Beals for slightly more than a year and in November 1907, sold the property to Robert M. Goode.[124] The same day of the sale, Goode's wife Mabel purchased the future 77/79 Beals also from Mary Poor. The Goodes now owned two adjacent lots on the southeast side of Beals Street, neither of which had been developed.

Robert Goode worked as a real estate agent in Newton and proceeded with steps to develop the two Beals lots.[125] First, about six months after purchasing the lots, Goode submitted a plan that subdivided the 83 Beals lot and gave a ten-foot wide swath to 77/79 Beals. The 83 Beals lot now had a frontage of 50-feet and the lot to the southwest had a frontage of 70-feet (Figure 1.23). The day after the plan was recorded with the registry of deeds, Goode submitted a building permit to the Town of Brookline for a two-family house at 77/79 Beals. On the permit, Louis P. McCarron was listed as the architect. Almost a year later, in April 1909, Goode submitted a building permit for a single family home at 83 Beals. [126] On the permit

for 83 Beals, Goode was listed as the owner, builder, and architect.[127] The Town of Brookline approved the permit and the two and one half-story Colonial Revival home built in 1909.

Whether Goode was the architect of the home at 83 Beals or simply listed his name to expedite the permitting process is unclear. Brookline historian Roger Reed has examined other permits, Goode's relationships with architects and extant buildings, and has concluded that the house at 83 Beals was most likely Goode's design. The architects Goode worked with primarily designed brick apartment blocks, and when they did design wood-frame homes, these homes did not share similar features with the house at 83 Beals.[128]

The Kennedys were not the first owners of the house at 83 Beals. When construction was completed, Daniel Kiley purchased the property from Goode on September 17, 1909.[129] Following Kiley's ownership, Howard and Laura Kline purchased the property on February 1, 1913. Joseph Kennedy purchased the property from the Klines on August 20, 1914. Shortly after the purchase, Kennedy submitted a permit for alterations, which was approved on August 31, 1914. The permit was for the addition of the bay window on the northeast side of the building, off of the dining room. The permit notes, "No buildings on that side" in reference to the distance from the addition to the surrounding buildings. Joseph and Rose Kennedy moved into 83 Beals on October 28, 1914 (Drawing 3).

SUMMARY

The Coolidge Corner commercial area, the Devotion School, 51 Abbottsford Road, Saint Aidan's, and the Dexter School are not only important in communicating the Kennedys' daily life in Brookline but also represent the development of the neighborhood during a critical era. Brookline historians Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke identify 1890 to 1930 as "the most important period of development for this section [North Brookline] of town."[130] The third building for the Devotion School, the establishment of Saint Aidan's, the formal purchase of Dexter Field, and the Kennedys moving to Beals Street all occur during the middle of this time span that witnessed North Brookline's transformation from a rural setting with scattered residences to a high-density, residential suburb of Boston.

Drawings 1, 2 and 3 illustrate the layout in 1914 of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, Beals Street development, and the property at 83 Beals Street. By 1914 the electric streetcars along Beacon and Harvard streets had dramatically altered the landscape character of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood. Large country estates were transformed into dense subdivisions. The Beals Street development, 13 acres of the 76-acre Babcock property, consisted of 70 one-tenth acre house lots, some of which were built as apartment and duplex units.

Similarly, the impact of private vehicles was visible throughout the neighborhood, with the introduction of paved surfaces to the Coolidge Corner area in 1910, the addition of car garages to neighborhood areas, and the increasing number of cars lining the streets. The density of development obscured the once open views to the Brookline Hills. Distant views were now down the tree- and car-lined streets with an occasional gas street light, and framed by an even row of building facades (Figure 1.24). Over the main thoroughfares, a web of electric lines supported by rows of utility poles had become an integral part of the streetscape. Sewer, water, and gas lines were concealed under streets and sidewalks.

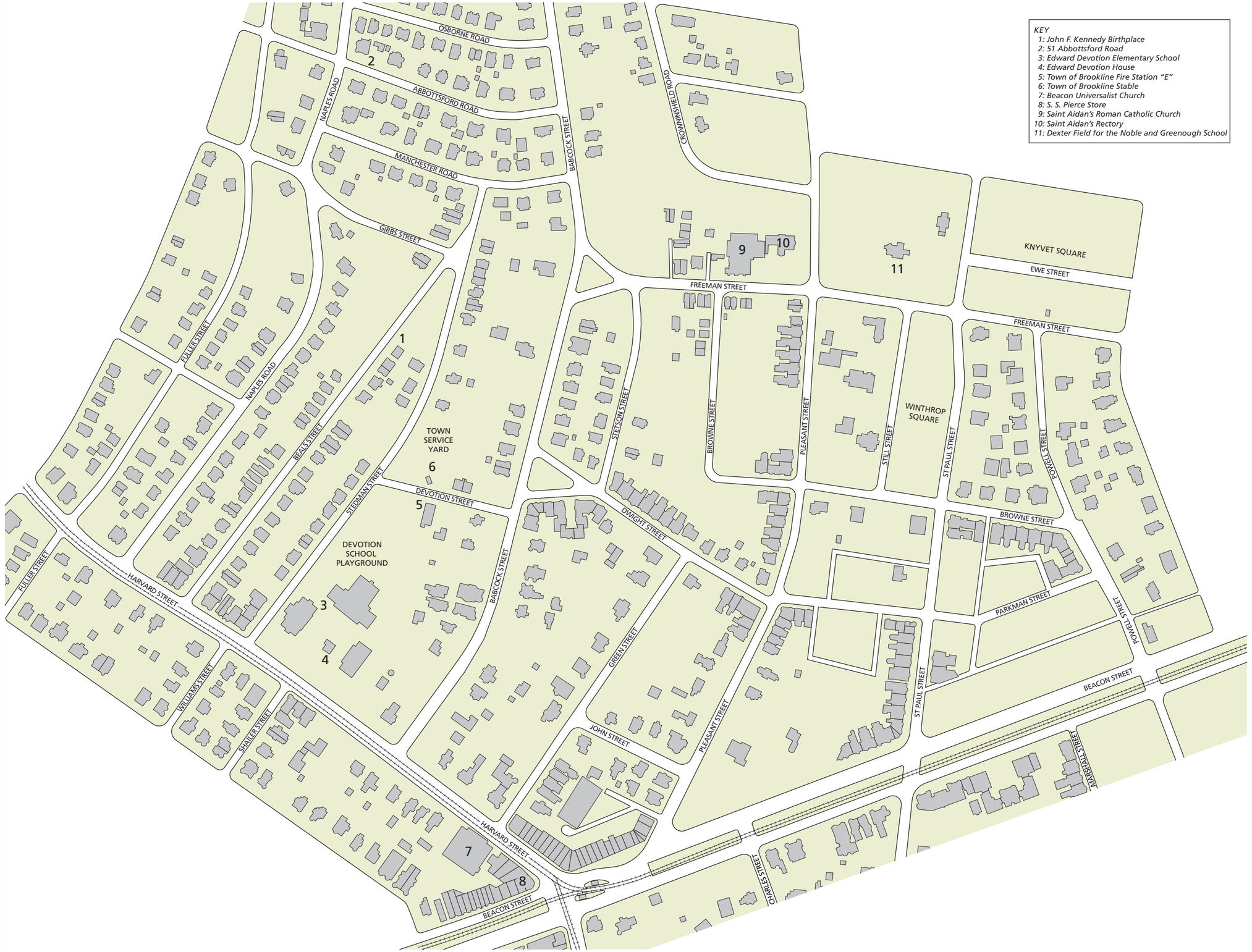
Within each subdivision, the houses were generally uniform in height, setback, and spacing. In the Beals Street development the houses were two and one-half-stories, set back thirty feet from the road and spaced about twenty feet apart. In comparison, in the nearby Peter Graffam and David McKay developments the houses were three stories, also set back thirty feet from the road and spaced about thirty-five feet apart. By 1914, many of the homes in these neighborhoods had already changed hands several times. Due to the nature of land speculation and the rapid turnover in ownership, there is little evidence of extensive landscape improvements beyond concrete walkways to the kitchen and basement doors and the addition of a few trees and shrubs for privacy and ornamentation.

The numerous street trees, mostly American elms, planted along the streets throughout North Brookline in the 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s were, by 1914,



Figure 1.24. View from the intersection of Harvard and Beals Streets, looking northeast on Beals, circa 1910s. In the early twentieth century, it was common for the town to select one species for street tree planting. London planes were selected for Beals and by the time the Kennedys moved into 83 Beals, the trees were casting shade and about twenty-five feet in height. Also note in the image that Beals is not paved and lacks the vertical curbing seen on Harvard Street. A utility pole is visible on the northwestern side of Beals northeast of the first two trees. A gas light with a square luminaire can be seen near the southeast corner of the intersection. (Stanley Album, Brookline Public Library).

beginning to cast shade on the hardened surfaces and soften the dense suburban setting. Unfortunately Dutch elm disease would arrive in the United States in the next decade and eliminate many of North Brookline's elms. The trees selected for Beals Street, London planes *(Platanus × acerifolia)*, would not share the elm's fate and by 1914, were about twenty-five feet in height (see Figure 1.24).



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

1914 Period Plan Coolidge Corner Neighborhood Context

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1913

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

Buildings

Streetcar Rail Lines

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0' 75' 150' 300'

Drawing 1



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

1914 Period Plan
Beals Street Development

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1913

DRAWN BY

Tim Layton, AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Buildings
- Streetcar Rail Lines
- Deciduous Tree

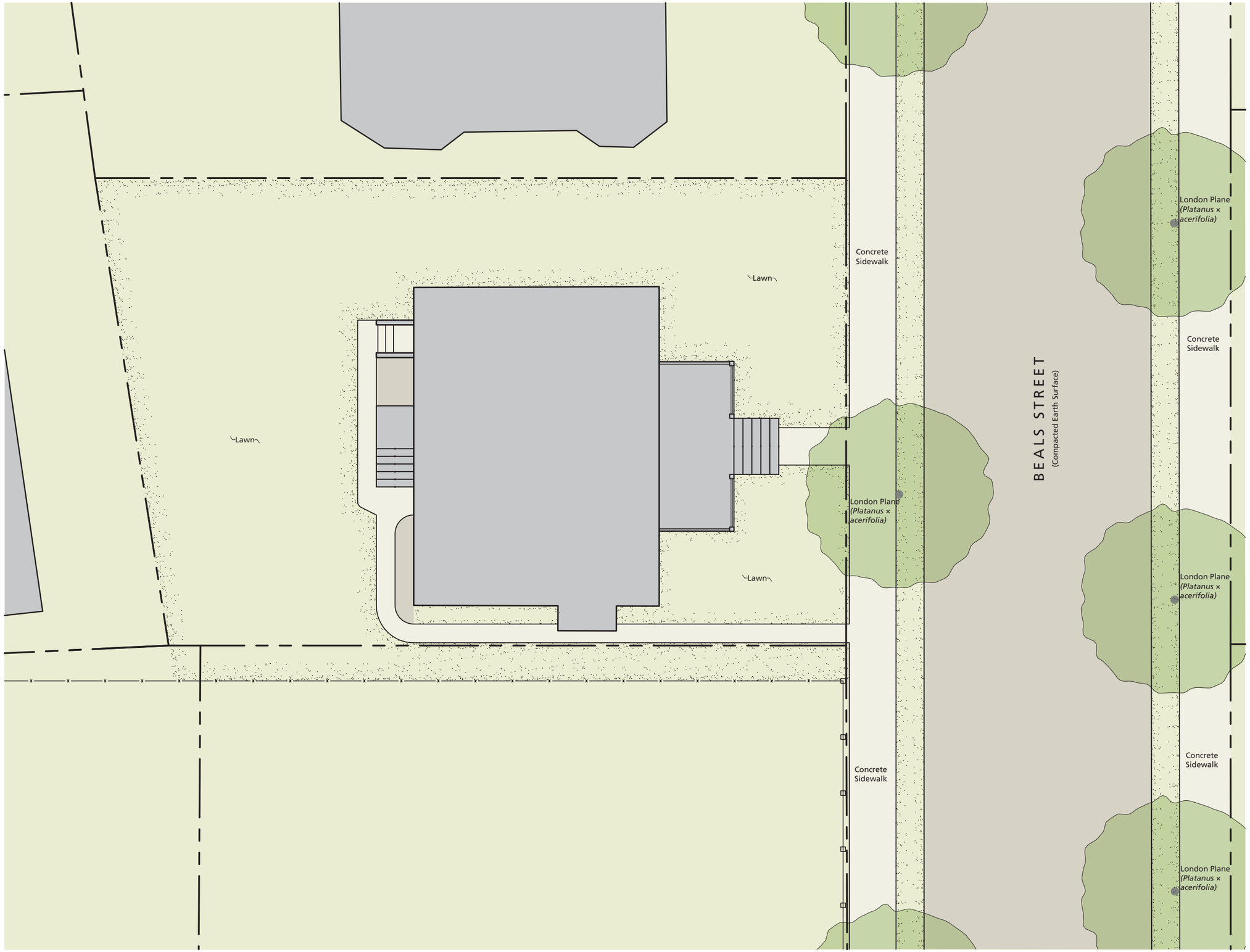
NOTES

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2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0′ 37.5′ 75′ 150′

Drawing 2



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

1914 Period Plan John Fitzgerald Kennedy Birthplace

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. Pres. John F. Kennedy Birthplace, Historic American Buildings Survey, Sheet 2 of 7, 1966
3. Plot Plan 83 Beals Street, Brookline, Mass. by Somerville Engineering Services, Inc., 1976
4. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1913

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Deciduous Tree
- Planting Bed
- Chicken Wire Fence
- Wood Board Fence

NOTES

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2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0′ 2.5′ 5′ 10′

Drawing 3

KENNEDY RESIDENCY 1914–1920

Following their wedding and honeymoon, Joe and Rose Kennedy moved into their new home at 83 Beals Street on October 28, 1914. Starting their married lives in their own home in Brookline was a departure from their social circle—most of their newlywed friends rented apartments. Purchasing a home helped Joe and Rose establish their independence. Rose recalled,

> Home was the center of [Joe's] world and the only place that really, finally counted in his plans. Moreover, he had a strong need for privacy, for independence, for being able to choose the people he wanted to be with in close association.[131]

Joe was primarily focused on his banking career, working twelve hours a day and six days a week, while Rose led a more solitary life in Brookline, and was quickly absorbed by the prospect of motherhood.[132] Before their first wedding anniversary, on July 25, 1915, Rose gave birth to their first child, Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., while they were staying at the Fitzgerald's summer house in Hull, Massachusetts.[133]

Initially the growing unrest between European nations was nothing more than a news item to the young couple. As the conflict escalated, however, it clouded the Kennedys' early years in Brookline as Joe felt the war was senseless.[134] In April 1917, President Woodrow Wilson declared that the United States would enter World War I and many of Joe's friends and neighbors enlisted. In Brookline, 1,841 men served in the armed forces during World War I, representing approximately five percent of the town's population.[135] Joe remained focused on his career and in April 1917 was elected a trustee of the Massachusetts Electric Company, while Rose was expecting their second child. The following month, on May 29, 1917, the family welcomed John Fitzgerald (Jack) Kennedy. Unlike his older brother, Jack was born in the upstairs bedroom of their home at 83 Beals.

In October 1917, Joe found a way to support the war effort without enlisting.[136] He left his job as bank president at the Columbia Trust Company and accepted an assistant general manager position at Bethlehem Steel Corporation's Fore River Shipyard in Quincy, Massachusetts. Bethlehem Steel had won contracts to produce destroyers and service vessels for the Navy and as a result, hired Kennedy as part of a new management team to lead the effort.[137]

As the war drew to an end with the armistice in place in November 1918 and the Treaty of Versailles signed in June 1919, Joe soon left the Fore River Shipyard. In July he began working as a customers' man at the prestigious brokerage firm, Hayden, Stone and Company. Under the tutelage of Galen Stone, who lived in North Brookline's Fisher Hill neighborhood, Kennedy greatly advanced his family's financial fortune in the unregulated stock market that preceded the Great Depression.[138] The birth of the Kennedys' sons was followed by the birth of their



Figure 1.25. View looking southwest of the west side of Harvard Street at Coolidge Corner, undated, about 1914. The Beacon Universalist Parish is at center and the clock tower of the S. S. Pierce store can be seen south of the church at the intersection of Beacon and Harvard Streets. Young elm trees, utility poles and curbstones line the street. (Brookline Historical Society, "Archives of Brookline Historical Society, Brookline MA," http://www.brooklinehistoricalsociety.org/archives/archives.asp).

first daughter, Rosemary, on September 13, 1918 and then Kathleen on February 20, 1920. Like Jack, the two girls were born at 83 Beals Street.

Meanwhile, Brookline continued to grow at a fast pace. Between 1900 and 1930, the town's population grew by approximately 1,000 people a year.[139] Members of diverse ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groups moved out of Boston to new neighborhoods along the streetcar lines, resulting in new houses of worship, schools, services, and stores.[140] The general assembly style of town meeting had been used since the town's formation in 1705. Open to all legal voters, the meetings were becoming crowded. Recognizing the increased population of their town and its potential to delay any public legislation, the citizens approved a plan in 1915 to establish a representative town meeting.[141] There is no known documentation, however, of the Kennedy's involvement in Brookline politics.

Figure 1.26. View looking west of Beacon Street in about 1915. Young elm trees, utility poles and curbstones line the street and few vehicles are present. (Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Archives, Town of Brookline Survey).



While the Coolidge Corner neighborhood was enhanced by the tree-lined boulevard of Beacon Street, residents did not directly benefit from the open space offered by areas of the newly created Metropolitan Park System such as the Chestnut Hill Reservoir, Brookline Reservoir, or Muddy River Reservation, as none were within walking distance. The open space of North Brookline to the north of Beacon Street consisted of its tree-lined streets; park squares such as Freeman, Dwight, Winthrop, and Knyvet squares; and playgrounds and athletic fields including those associated with the Devotion School and Noble and Greenough.

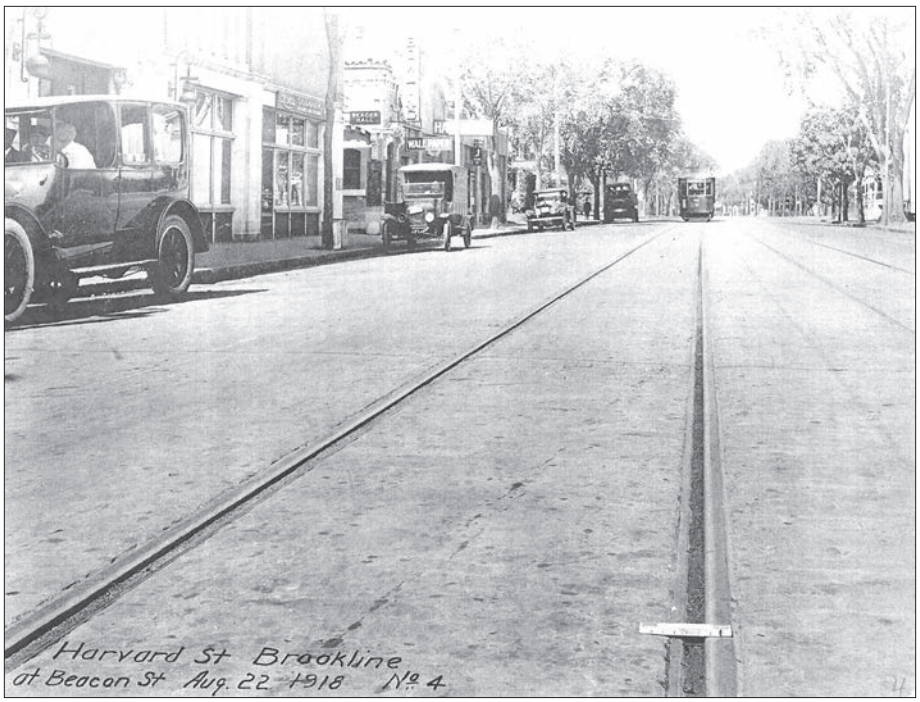


Figure 1.27. View looking north on Harvard Street, August 1918. Immediately north of the Beacon Universalist Parish, storefronts can be seen for a tailor, bowling alley, and hardware store. In addition the photograph shows north and southbound streetcar tracks, a hard pavement and vertical curbing, and several cars. Trees of mixed ages line the street, most with the characteristic vase form of the American elm (Brookline Preservation Commission).

THE COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

The Coolidge Corner commercial area continued to expand throughout the 1910s in response to increased residential development. The S. S. Pierce store anchored commercial and retail activity at the corner of the Beacon and Harvard Streets. An early 1910s photograph looking south along the Harvard Street facades captures the young street trees and gas street lights (Figure 1.25) A photograph dating to about 1915 shows a growing number of vehicles at Coolidge Corner, including a couple of trolley cars, but no horse-drawn carriages (Figure 1.26). A couple of years later, an 1918 photograph looking north on Harvard Street shows a portion of the Beacon Universalist Parish and as one headed north, storefronts for a tailor, bowling alley, and hardware store (Figure 1.27). The photograph also shows north and southbound tracks for the streetcar line between Brookline Village and Cambridge Street in Brighton, a hard pavement and vertical curbing on Harvard Street, several cars, and a mixture of street trees on both sides of the street.[142]

Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church

Brookline was still a predominantly Protestant community in the 1910s. The close proximity of Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church and a growing community of Irish Catholics likely influenced the Kennedys' choice to reside in North Brookline. Completed just two years earlier, Saint Aidan's was the third Catholic Church in Brookline. The church soon became a cornerstone of the Kennedys' life in Brookline. In her memoirs, Rose reflected,

> 'To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose.' There was courtship, there was discovery of love, there was engagement, there was

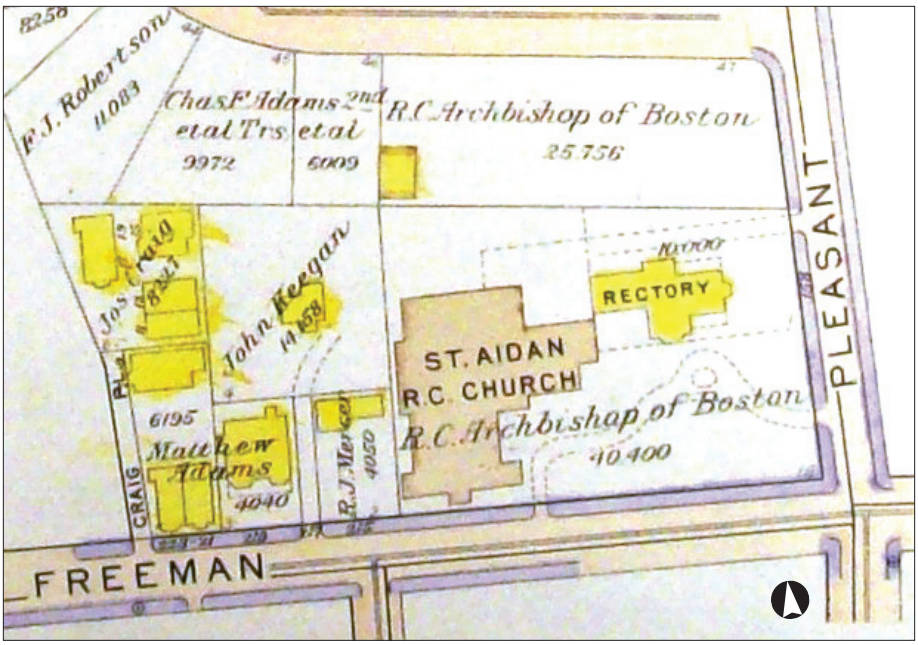


Figure 1.28. Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church property, *Bromley Town Atlas,* 1919. The atlas recorded the addition of a garage on the northwest corner of site in 1917. Intended to be used by the parish priest, the garage matched the Tudor Revival style of the church. The Bromley atlases denote wood frame construction with the yellow fill and stone construction with the tan fill. The tan stripes on the garage indicate a stone veneer on a wood frame building.

marriage, there was parenthood: Each in its season and marked by traditions and rituals which, believe me, were sources of strength for young people.[143]

Cardinal William O'Connell, who had married Joe and Rose in a private chapel in Boston and who had laid the cornerstone for Saint Aidan's, also moved to Brookline in 1915—a move that lent prestige to the Brookline parishes. Initially, the Kennedys likely celebrated family events at their respective family parishes in Boston. Joseph Kennedy Jr., who was born in Hull, may have been baptized in Boston. However, their second child Jack was baptized at Saint Aidan's in 1917. And in subsequent years, five of their other children were baptized there as well. Rose would later recount her routine walks to Saint Aidan's accompanied by her children as a significant part of their family rituals.

Set on a corner lot, the church was surrounded by open space to the north and east. Initially this open space was predominantly a lawn area, framed by a low fence and dotted with at least one newly planted tree. A curving driveway with a circle cut across the lawn at the corner of Pleasant and Freeman streets. On the northwest corner of the parcel, the Archdiocese constructed a garage in 1917 for use by the parish priest. Designed by James E. McLaughlin, the garage matched the Tudor Revival style of the church. Its addition to the site was recorded in the Bromley Town Atlas for 1919 (Figures 1.28 and 1.29).[144]



Figure 1.29. Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, undated, likely late 1910s. This photograph is taken from Freeman Street looking northwest at the church. After completing a renovation of the rectory, a cohesive architectural ensemble of the church, rectory, and garage was completed by 1920. The buildings remained unchanged throughout the rest of the twentieth century (Brookline Historical Society, "Archives of Brookline Historical Society, Brookline MA," http://www.brooklinehistoricalsociety.org/archives/archives.asp).

In addition to building a garage, the Archdiocese remodeled the rectory building in 1920. The rectory was originally the Parker then Chadbourne home, which had remained on the eastern half of the site during the construction of the church. The firm of O'Connell and Shaw prepared designs to substantially alter the 1850s

home and match the Tudor Revival style of the church and garage.[145] Therefore, a cohesive architectural ensemble of the church, rectory, and garage, was completed by 1920 and little would change to the buildings throughout the rest of the twentieth century.[146]

Edward Devotion School

Located only a block to the south of the Kennedy home at 83 Beals Street, the Edward Devotion School may have been partially visible through the gaps left by undeveloped lots on Stedman Street (Drawing 4). During the years of 1914 to 1920, the school retained its open quadrangle configuration that faced Harvard Street and there were few changes to the complex. The eldest Kennedy child, Joseph Jr., was old enough to attend kindergarten in the fall of 1920. Yet by this time the family was preparing to move to 51 Abbottsford Road. Joseph Jr. possibly spent his first weeks of school walking to the Devotion School from nearby 83 Beals Street.

Noble and Greenough/Dexter School Site

During the years the Kennedys lived at 83 Beals, the parcel east of Saint Aidan's known as Dexter Field continued to be used by the Noble and Greenough private school for athletic programs. The school was located in Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood and most students traveled by streetcar to the facility in Brookline. By the late 1910s, some students owned Model T Fords and shuttled between Beacon Hill and Brookline with classmates loaded in their cars.[147]

Records have not been found indicating the physical layout of Dexter Field. A written account reveals that when ice hockey became an official school sport in 1918, the games were played outside on a flooded rink at the field.[148] Also in 1918, during the height of American involvement in World War I, military drills became part of the school's curriculum. A photograph from that period indicates a board track was installed at the field and used during the drills (Figure 1.30).[149] The Kennedys had no direct association with the school property until the fall of 1924.



Figure 1.30. Dexter Field in about 1918. During the height of American involvement in World War I, military drills became part of Noble and Greenough's curriculum. Although located in Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood, the school used Dexter Field in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood and installed a board track for drills and athletic events (Richard T. Flood, *The Story of Noble and Greenough School, 1866-1966,* Dedham, MA: Noble and Greenough School, 1966).

51 Abbottsford Road

While the homes on Beals Street were predominantly rented and changed hands frequently or were still being built, the homes in the Abbottsford Road neighborhood were more commonly owned and held for longer.[150] The second owner of the home at 51 Abbottsford was Charles E. Osgood. Osgood purchased the property in 1908 and continued living there until 1918. Brookline town directories indicate Osgood was a proprietor or manager of a furniture business. After 1918, the town directories do not list a resident at 51 Abbottsford for the next two years. In March 1920, Rose Kennedy purchased 51 Abbottsford.[151]

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

During the Kennedys' tenure at the 83 Beals, the number of homes on the northeastern half of the Beals Street development did not change (see Figure 1.21). On the northwestern side of the street, numbers 74, 80, 84, 88, 92, 96, and 100 Beals were not yet built when the Kennedys arrived in 1914 and remained as empty lots until after 1920. To the northeast of the Kennedy home, numbers 85/87, 91, 95, and 99/103 Beals were similarly open parcels until after 1920. The first home constructed on the northeastern half of the development—after no activity during the 1910s—occurred in 1921 or slightly later when a building permit was filed for a home at 63 Beals (Figure 1.31 and Drawing 5).[152]

Between 1914 and 1920, street atlases and building permits document the building density of the Beals Street development, while Rose Kennedy's reflections convey its character. Recalling the appearance of the neighborhood in her autobiography in the early 1970s, Kennedy wrote,

> There was a sense of openness in the neighborhood, with a vacant lot on one side of us and another across the street, and fine big shade trees lining the sidewalks. It is built up now and to my eyes seems rather congested and drab.[153]

While not officially designated public open space, the Kennedys benefited from the openness offered by the undeveloped lots to the northwest and northeast

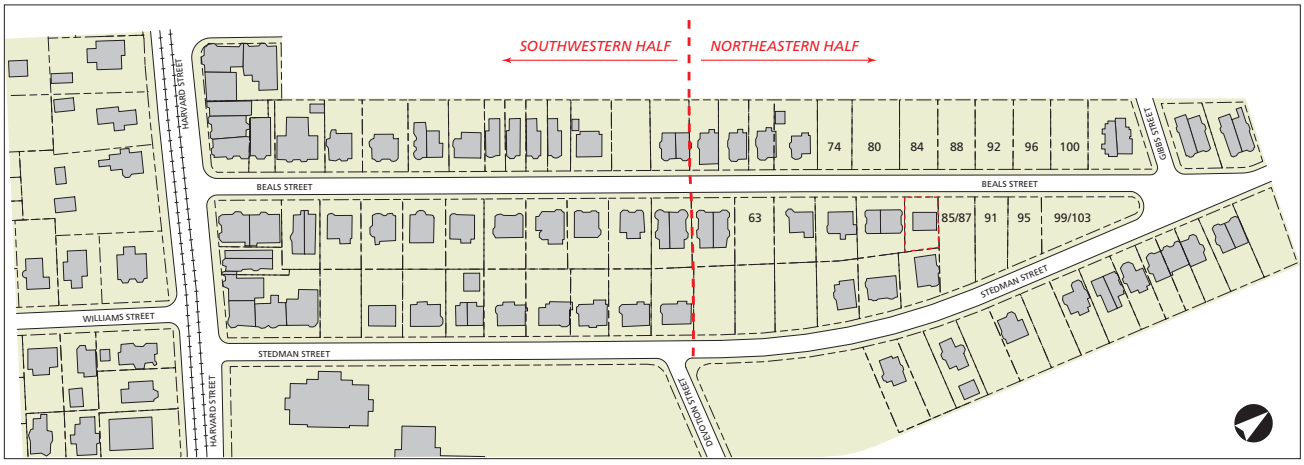


Figure 1.31. Beals Street Development, 1920. Continuing the trend observed during the first decade of the twentieth century, the northeastern half of Beals remained opened and unbuilt. The future house numbers have been added to identify the vacant parcels and the John F. Kennedy Birthplace is outlined in red. After no building activity on the northeastern half during the 1910s, a building permit was filed for a home at 63 Beals in 1921.



Figure 1.32. View northeast from Stedman Street to the intersection of Manchester Road in November, 1915. Note the earthen road surface, concrete sidewalks, trees protected with fencing, and shrubs in the front yards of some homes. (Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Archives, Town of Brookline Survey).



Figure 1.33. Close up of view northeast from Stedman Street to the intersection of Manchester Road in November, 1915. Note the earthen road surface, concrete sidewalks, and evergreen and deciduous shrubs in the front yards of some homes. (Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Archives, Town of Brookline Survey).

of their property. The later construction of nine homes to the northwest and northeast of 83 Beals contributed to the congested feeling described by Rose Kennedy.

A circa 1910s photograph from the Stanley Album, a collection of photographs found at the Brookline Public Library, provides information on vehicular and pedestrian circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features for the Beals Street development at the time Joseph and Rose Kennedy arrived in 1914 (see Figure 1.24).

Two photographs taken by the Olmsted firm in November 1915 provide additional views of the neighborhood streetscape. The road at the intersection of Stedman and Manchester consisted of a compacted earthen surface, concrete sidewalks, maturing street trees, and lacked curbing. Some front yards contained a mix of deciduous and evergreen shrubs, both in front of the homes and along the street (Figures 1.32 and 1.33).



Figure 1.34. John F. and Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., 1919. View from the front of the home looking north showing the location of London planes in front of and directly across from the Kennedy's home. The plane tree behind the Kennedy children has chicken wire wrapped around its trunk as a protective measure. The tree grows in a tree lawn—a three-foot wide strip of grass set between the street and sidewalk (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.36. John F. and Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. circa 1919. Looking northeast toward the intersection of Beals and Stedman Streets, a simple wood plank fence can be seen along both streets surrounding the vacant parcels adjacent to 83 Beals. The fence has square posts, a cap, and a horizontal rail a third of the way up from the base of the fence. Note the concrete walk behind the children that extended from the Beals Street sidewalk to the rear yard. The street trees, now over twenty years old, are taller than the surrounding houses (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.35. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., unidentified, and John F. Kennedy, 1919. Note the open, undeveloped lots at the northeast end of Beals Street, maturing London planes, and a utility pole and fire hydrant on the northwest side of Beals Street. The utility pole is slightly to the left and behind the plane tree in the foreground (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.37. Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. and Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., undated, likely 1917. On the northeastern side of the property, a concrete walk paralleled the house and provided access to the rear yard. This walk was narrower than the Beals Street sidewalk and at the east corner of the house, turned to parallel the rear of the house. In addition to the walk, note the chicken wire fencing, wood picket gate, and rose by the foundation on the left of the image (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

Photographs from the Kennedy Family Collection dating to the late 1910s provide further information on the features of the Beals Street development between 1914 and 1920. These photographs show that Beals Street remained unpaved with no curbing during the family's years at 83 Beals. For pedestrians, sidewalks were located on both the northeast and southwest sides of Beals Street and appear to be concrete based on the light color of the paving material.

In addition to circulation features, the Kennedy Family Collection photographs provide information on the street trees along Beals Street and associated tree lawn—the three-foot wide strip of grass set between the street and sidewalk. Even though these photographs focus on capturing moments in the family's life, they show London planes were present in front of and directly across from 83 Beals (Figure 1.34). The London plane directly in front of 83 Beals is shown with chicken wire wrapped around its trunk as a protective measure. It was a common practice for the town to install either wood or wire guards to protect street trees from horses that might gnaw on their bark.[154] Furthermore, the photographs show the London planes are located in a tree lawn.[155]

Small-scale landscape features can be seen in the Kennedy Family Collection photographs including a utility pole and fire hydrant on the northwest side of Beals Street (Figure 1.35). Another photograph captures the character of the open area where Beals and Stedman Streets intersect (Figure 1.36). The lots appear overgrown with tall grass and young saplings, yet the open space is expansive compared to the dense development to the southwest of the house. In the background of a photograph of Joe Jr. and Jack, a simple wood plank fence can be seen along both Beals and Stedman Streets surrounding the vacant parcels. The fence has square posts, a cap, and a horizontal rail a third of the way up from the base of the fence (see Figure 1.36). The grass grew tall in the undeveloped plots to the northeast (Figure 1.37).

In conjunction with the increase in car ownership, a number of private garages were built in the neighborhood. By 1920 there were approximately four car garages in the Beals Street development, though none at the Kennedys' home. While some of the portable types of car garages were constructed of wood, after 1915 the vast majority were prefabricated garages made of metal, a more fireproof material that was easier to assemble. The metal siding was either corrugated or simulated horizontal clapboarding and the doors were metal or wooden.[156] The car garages were typically erected in the back corner of the small Beals Street development lots—which is where a garage would be placed at 83 Beals in 1928.

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY BIRTHPLACE

Photographs in the Kennedy Family Collection provide the best documentation of the landscape features present at 83 Beals in 1920, particularly the circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features.[157] In addition, they reveal that the outdoor spaces near the home were used for children's play and may have, on certain occasions, looked a little cluttered with various toys.

As noted in the description for the Beals Street development, pedestrian circulation along the front of the lots was by a concrete sidewalk that paralleled Beals Street. On the northeast side of the 83 Beals lot, a concrete walk extended perpendicular from the sidewalk and proceeded southeast past the house to the rear yard, back door, and basement. This walk was narrower than the sidewalk and at the east corner of the house, turned 90 degrees to parallel the rear facade of the house. The walk flared out to form a landing at the wooden stairs for the rear entry and continued southeast of the stairs to provide access to the bulkhead steps and basement (see Figures 1.37, 1.38, and 1.39 and Drawing 6).

Although no photographs or plans exist from the 1910s that capture the front walk, it is reasonable to assume a paved walk provided access between the sidewalk and the front porch steps. Other than the sidewalk, walk to the front steps, and concrete walk on the northeast side and rear yard, there were no other formal, paved pedestrian or vehicular surfaces at 83 Beals. Joe Kennedy purchased a Model T Ford in 1914, but there is no documentary or photographic evidence that the landscape was modified to accommodate the car at 83 Beals. Most likely, the car was parked on Beals Street as later photographs indicate was a common practice, or it was garaged off site (Figure 1.40).



Figure 1.38 (left). Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., undated, likely 1917 on the walk behind the house near the bulkhead (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.39 (right). Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., undated, likely 1917. The image captures the edge of the sidewalk where it meets the house near the kitchen entry and the edge of the planter bed at the east back corner of the house (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

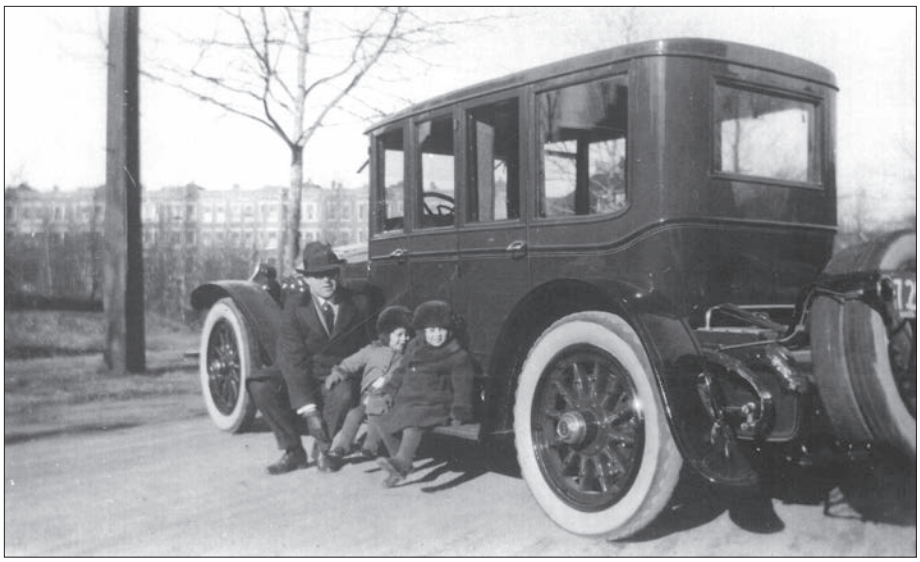


Figure 1.40. Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., John F., and Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., 1919. Taken from the front of the house at 83 Beals and looking north, this photograph shows the Pierce Arrow Limousine Joe Kennedy purchased in 1919. There is no documentary or photographic evidence that the 83 Beals property was modified to accommodate the car. Most likely, the car was parked on Beals Street as later photographs indicate was a common practice for residents, or it was garaged off site. Note the utility pole and London plane in front of the car on the northwest side of Beals Street (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

In her autobiography, Rose Kennedy described the house as being located "…on a small lot with a few bushes and trees."[158] Because the autobiography was written in the 1970s, over fifty years after her residency at 83 Beals Street, it is questionable whether Kennedy accurately remembered features of the landscape or if she was uncertain of detail and trying to support her general argument that their home "would have blended perfectly into most of the main streets of America."[159] The Kennedy Family Collection photographs help confirm there were a few shrubs on the house lot, but that the only tree was the London plane in the tree lawn along Beals Street. Shrubs included roses along the rear foundation wall and a privet hedge along the southwest property line as described below.

While the collection does not contain a straight-on image of the front yard and facade, images from other vantages indicate the front yard was primarily lawn. Photographs of family members on the front porch steps show there were no foundation plantings immediately next to the front steps and porch interface (Figure 1.41). In an image of the southwest side yard looking northwest, the street trees can be seen beyond the front facade of the house (Figure 1.42).



Figure 1.41. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. seated with Rose Kennedy's younger sister, Agnes Gargan, on the front steps of 83 Beals in 1915. The lower right of the photograph shows no foundation planting in front of the porch (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

Similar to the front yard, photographs of the side yards indicate these areas were primarily lawn and lacked plantings along the house foundation. A 1916 photograph of the southwest side yard shows a young privet hedge growing along the property line between 77/79 and 83 Beals (Figure 1.43). The photograph collection does not have a panoramic image of the rear yard, but images do show lawn immediately past the concrete walk and foundation plantings in a narrow bed on the northeastern side of the rear facade.



Figure 1.42. John F., seated, and Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., undated, likely 1919. Looking northwest from the southwest side yard toward Beals Street, street trees can be seen beyond the front facade. In addition, the photograph shows the southwest side yard was primarily lawn and lacked plantings along the house foundation. Chicken wire fencing can be seen starting at the west corner of the house and heading southwest towards the property line. It is unclear whether the fence is tying into another length of fence paralleling the property line or terminating in some fashion. An object beyond Joseph's right hand may be an overturned rocking boat (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

Three plants, two healthy and one struggling, have the branching characteristics of roses (*Rosa* sp.) (Figures 1.44 and 1.45).

Small-scale features visible in family photographs include chicken wire fencing on the northeast side yard located beyond the property line. At the east corner of the property, a wood picket gate has been tacked on to the house and chicken wire fencing attaches to the northeast of the gate and intersects with the fencing past the property line (see Figures 1.37 and 1.44). Reviewing the photographs, it is difficult to tell if this gate had an operable swing or if it was simply moved and repositioned when access was needed. Extra horizontal boards appear at the base of the gate and were likely added at that low level to contain crawling children.

Additional fencing can be seen starting at the west corner of the house and heading northeast along the property line. It is unclear from the photographs if the fence is tying into another length of fence paralleling the property line or terminating in some fashion (see Figure 1.42). It is seems reasonable that by 1920, with a newborn and three young children between the ages of two and five, the backyard of the property and possibly the front yard had perimeter fencing.

As previously mentioned, the photograph collection does not contain an image looking southeast of the overall rear yard. In her autobiography, Rose Kennedy recalled,

> One of my continuing memories is of two decades of rows of diapers hanging up to dry on the backyard clotheslines. In the winter they often froze stiff and then had to be thawed and further dried before being put away.[160]



Figure 1.43. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. in playpen in lawn at 83 Beals in 1916. Looking southwest toward 77/79 Beals. A low privet hedge grows along the property line (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.44. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., undated, likely 1917. Looking northwest from the east corner of the house at 83 Beals, a wood picket gate is seen behind Joseph Kennedy Jr. Chicken wire fencing attaches to the northeast of the gate and intersects with the fencing past the property line. Extra horizontal boards appear at the base of the gate and were likely added at that low level for crawling children. On the left of the image, one of three roses is visible, which was planted in a narrow bed on the northeastern side of the rear facade (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

With this memory, though not a specific reference to 83 Beals, Rose recalls the years she was raising her family in Brookline. It is plausible, therefore, that a clothesline would be another small-scale feature located in the rear yard.

Kathleen's birth in 1920 was part of a series of events that made the beginning of that year particularly challenging for the family. In January 1920, Rose left her family and returned to her father's house in Dorchester for a period of three weeks. Rose described her return as a "needed rest," but a Fitzgerald relative believed it was a serious separation in Rose and Joe's marriage.[161] Following Rose's return to 83 Beals and around Kathleen's birth, Jack contracted scarlet fever and was admitted to Boston City Hospital for treatment.[162] As Jack was recovering, Rose purchased their second Brookline home at 51 Abbottsford Road in March 1920.[163]



Figure 1.45. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., undated, likely 1917. A healthy rose on the right is staked, an unhealthy rose on the left is barely discernible (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

Exactly when the Kennedy family left 83 Beals and moved into 51 Abbottsford Road is not well documented. In her autobiography, Rose Kennedy cites the event taking place "early in 1921" and being driven by her expecting a fifth child.[164] Contradicting this date is research prepared for the park's *Historic Furnishings Assessment*. Reviewing correspondence in the Joseph P. Kennedy papers, author Janice Hodson discovered that Joseph Kennedy was shopping for new furnishings in July and September 1920. Furthermore, Hodson cites a letter from August 16, 1920 confirming the phone company would switch Kennedy's phone number to Abbottsford Road on October 1.[165] The dates provided by Hodson's research also conflict with the notion that Kennedy's pregnancy, and the arrival of her fifth child, Eunice, born in July 1921, was the impetus for the move. A range of dates for the Kennedy's move—from July1920 to early 1921—may reflect the length of time a transition occurred between the two properties.

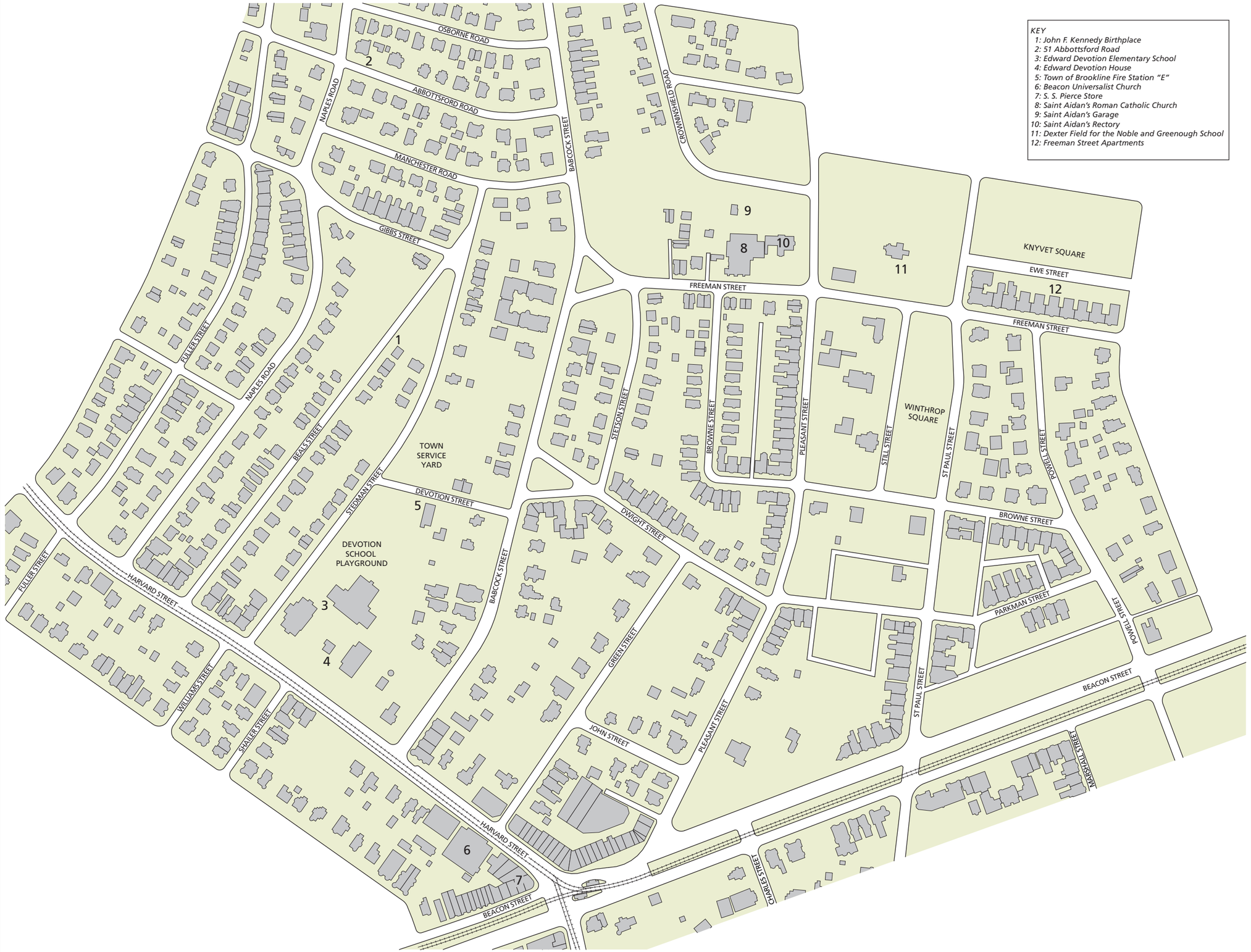
The deed at the Norfolk Registry indicates that the 83 Beals Street property was sold on September 13, 1920 to Mary Moore, wife of Edward (Eddie) E. Moore of Boston.[166] Eddie Moore served as John Fitzgerald's secretary and personal assistant while Fitzgerald was mayor. Rose and Joe Sr. Kennedy maintained a close friendship with the Moores, and Eddie Moore became a confidant to Joe Sr.[167] With a close family friend owning their former home and the stress caused by events earlier in the year, it is possible that the move was incremental between fall 1920 and early 1921. Rose Kennedy may have retained the 1921 date because that was the time in her mind when the transition was complete to a new home three blocks away.

SUMMARY

Drawings 4, 5 and 6 illustrate the layout in 1920 of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, Beals Street development, and the property at 83 Beals Street. Changes to the neighborhood landscape between 1914 and 1920 were subtle in comparison to those of the previous two decades. The row of commercial buildings at Coolidge Corner crept further north along Harvard Street. Townhouses were added to subdivisions along Fuller Street, Naples Road, and Browne Street while Freeman Square, Dwight Square, Winthrop Square, Knyvet Square, the Devotion School playgrounds, and the Dexter Fields of Noble and Greenough remained as open space. Smaller pockets of open space remained in residential subdivisions such as the Beals Street development, which still contained vacant lots, particularly at the northeastern ends of Stedman and Beals streets. Photographs depict the unkempt appearance of these open lots.

The streetcar lines along Beacon and Harvard streets continued to spur development, but the widespread use of the automobile was also bringing about changes in the appearance of the landscape. A growing number of driveways, parking lots, and garages were added to private and public properties. Parked cars were ever present along the streets. Utility lines carrying electricity and phone service ran overhead on the northwest side of Beals Street, while gas, water, and sewer lines ran down below the center of the street, equidistant from the street trees.

The London planes lining both sides of the street continued to mature and cast shade along the streets. Individual yards along Beals Street, however, remained unadorned perhaps because there were frequent changes in ownership and many units were rented. In the six years that the Kennedys lived at 83 Beals, they made few alterations to the property. Their flat yard had but a few roses, a low privet hedge along the southwest property line, a trodden lawn, and a simple chicken wire fence that contained the children's play to the rear yard.



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
Brookline, Massachusetts

1920 Period Plan
Coolidge Corner Neighborhood Context

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1919

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

Buildings

Streetcar Rail Lines

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0' 75' 150' 300'

Drawing 4



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
Brookline, Massachusetts

1920 Period Plan
Beals Street Development

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1919

DRAWN BY

Tim Layton, AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Buildings
- Streetcar Rail Lines
- Deciduous Tree

NOTES

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2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0′ 37.5′ 75′ 150′

Drawing 5

Privet Hedge
(Ligustrum sp.)

Lawn

Lawn

Roses
(Rosa sp.)

Wood Picket Gate

Concrete Sidewalk

Lawn

Concrete Sidewalk

London Plane
(Platanus × *acerifolia)*

BEALS STREET
(Compacted Earth Surface)

London Plane
(Platanus × *acerifolia)*

Concrete Sidewalk

London Plane
(Platanus × *acerifolia)*

Concrete Sidewalk

Concrete Sidewalk

London Plane
(Platanus × *acerifolia)*

Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

1920 Period Plan John Fitzgerald Kennedy Birthplace

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. Pres. John F. Kennedy Birthplace, Historic American Buildings Survey, Sheet 2 of 7, 1966
3. Plot Plan 83 Beals Street, Brookline, Mass. by Somerville Engineering Services, Inc., 1976
4. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1919
5. Kennedy Family Collection Photographs

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Deciduous Tree
- Planting Bed
- Chicken Wire Fence
- Wood Board Fence

NOTES

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2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0′ 2.5′ 5′ 10′

Drawing 6

ABBOTTSFORD ROAD, 1920–1927

A myriad of factors played into the Kennedys' decision to move from Beals Street to Abbottsford Road. Included were Rose's need for personal space, a growing family, increased space for live-in help, greater financial means, and the perceived social status of the Graffam-McKay development versus the Beals Street development.[168] Rose later recalled,

> …we began looking for another house. As always, my primary concern was that it be near good schools, good transportation, and a good shopping area. It also must be in a quiet, uncongested area with plenty of fresh air and play space for the children. We found what we needed in our same neighborhood: a bigger and better house for our busier family, only about a five-minute walk from Beals Street, at 131 Naples Road [51 Abbottsford Road].[169]

One factor that influenced the Kennedys' decision to move was their socio-economic class and status. In the park's *Historic Resource Study,* Alexander von Hoffman analyzed census data from 1910 and 1920 for the Beals Street and Abbottsford Road neighborhoods.[170] His analysis showed that in 1920, slightly over two-thirds of the Beals Street homes were rented. In contrast to the high number of renters on Beals, over half of the Abbottsford Road homes were owned. In addition to home ownership, "the larger size of the homes, higher status jobs and incomes of the heads of household, and higher proportion of live-in domestic workers all point to a neighborhood that was socially and financially superior to the Kennedy family's home in the Beals Street neighborhood."[171]

Joe Sr. continued to work for the brokerage firm of Hayden, Stone and Company and his success in banking allowed the family to purchase a larger home. Jack's three-month convalescence with scarlet fever in the winter and spring of 1920 had a deep impact on Joe Sr., who wrote, "I little realized what an effect such a happening could possibly have on me. During the darkest days I felt that nothing else mattered except his recovery."[172] From this point on, Joe Sr. became more engaged in his children's lives. Although business still dominated the majority of his day, he made time for family, including involvement on the board of sons' school, and canceling business appointments to care for his children.[173] During their residency at 51 Abbottsford, the Kennedy family grew to seven children. Eunice Mary arrived on July 10, 1921; Patricia (Pat) on May 6, 1924; and Robert Francis (Bobby) on November 20, 1925.

During the 1920s the Kennedys' fortune grew exponentially when Joe Sr. was drawn to the burgeoning motion picture industry. Venturing to Hollywood in March 1926, Joe Sr. became president of a motion picture company, Film Booking Offices. Kennedy's business aspirations, involvement in the film industry, and desire for his children to be successful ultimately propelled him to move his family to Riverdale, New York in September 1927. Joe Sr. felt that Boston, "was no place

to bring up Irish Catholic children. I didn't want them to go through what I had to go through when I was growing up there."[174]

THE COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

During the years the Kennedys lived at 51 Abbottsford, the Coolidge Corner neighborhood was still experiencing a period of major development. Population growth, immigration, an ideological preference for rural settings, utility improvements, and streetcars all contributed to its growth. This period of intensive commercial, residential, and institutional development continued through the 1920s and ended with stock market crash and start of the Great Depression in 1929.[175]

In 1926, a Boston publisher described Coolidge Corner as,

> . . .probably the most fashionable residential district of all Metropolitan Boston, and there is reason to believe that this same prestige in regard to residences will be included in the commercial aspect.[176]

The S. S. Pierce store had anchored the Coolidge Corner commercial area since 1900. The trend of Boston retailers establishing stores in Coolidge Corner continued during the 1920s when Slattery's, an upscale women's clothing store, signed on as a tenant for a new building at the intersection of Beacon and Pleasant Streets.[177] This new building was one of several that lengthened the commercial area further east and west along Beacon Street and further north along Harvard Street.

One block east of Coolidge Corner, the block bounded by Beacon, Pleasant, Dwight, and Saint Paul Streets was subdivided with the addition of James Street in 1925. James Street created a mid-block connector between Beacon and Pleasant Streets and building permits along this new street were also submitted in 1925.[178] In addition to the town records, the 1927 Bromley Town Atlas recorded the construction of James Street and the new buildings along its frontage (Drawing 7).

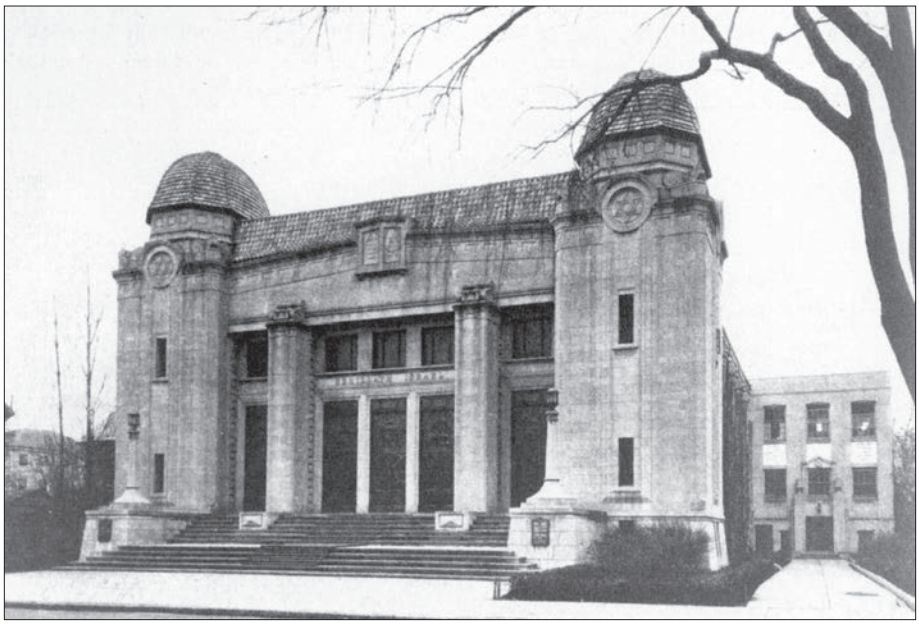


Figure 1.46. Congregation Kehillath Israel Synagogue, 1934. Construction on the synagogue began in 1921 and it was formally dedicated in 1925. Kehillath Israel provided another institutional anchor along Harvard Street and demonstrated the growing number of Jewish residents who were making North Brookline their home during the late 1910s and 1920s (Congregation Kehillath Israel).

Along Harvard Street, a trend in the early twentieth century was the conversion of residential properties to commercial and retail buildings. There was the potential for Harvard Street, with a streetcar line connecting

transportation routes on Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue, to be developed as a continuous commercial strip. Institutions, however, also shaped the character of Harvard Street in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, most notably the Devotion Elementary School, the Beacon Universalist Parish, and in the mid-1920s, a new synagogue.

Located directly across from the Beals and Harvard Streets intersection, Congregation Kehillath Israel Synagogue provided another institutional building along Harvard Street and demonstrated the growing number of Jewish residents who were making North Brookline their home. Construction on Kehillath Israel began in 1921 and the synagogue was formally dedicated in 1925 (Figure 1.46).[179] That same year, Congregation Ohabei Shalom, Massachusetts' first Jewish congregation, moved from Boston's South End neighborhood and began constructing a synagogue at the intersection of Marshall and Beacon Streets.[180] The founding of these two synagogues in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood demonstrates that both established Jews from Boston and new Jewish immigrants were selecting the neighborhood and greater North Brookline area for their homes. By 1925, estimates place the Jewish population in Brookline at over one thousand families.[181]

One of the largest developments in the neighborhood in the 1920s was to the west of Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church at Freeman Square, where the Mayflower Court apartment complex was constructed in 1923.[182] The attached apartment buildings represented a denser form of development than the single and multi-family wood fame homes in the neighborhood. Although the Mayflower Court apartments increased residential density, the building height—at three stories tall—was consistent with previous residential development in the neighborhood (see Drawing 7).

Residential and commercial garages also proved to be lucrative in the 1920s due to the growing number of automobiles. To accommodate apartment residents, apartment row garages were first constructed in Brookline in 1915. The earliest



Figure 1.47. Extant apartment row garages, 115-135 Freeman Street, 2002. In 1920, this 26-bay row of garages was added behind the apartments at 115-135 Freeman Street, just south of Knyvet Square. These structures, one of the largest apartment row garage installations constructed in Brookline, demonstrate an increase in automobile ownership for apartment dwellers in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood. The apartment buildings visible in the background predate the garage (Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House: A Guide to Brookline's Transportation Buildings to 1940,* Brookline Preservation Commission, 2002).

structures were designed with three or four bays and located behind or near an apartment complex. The longest garage added to the neighborhood ran along the apartments at 115-135 Freeman Street in 1920. The 26-bay garage unceremoniously fronted the adjacent Knyvet Square thereby diminishing any visual connection between the apartments and the town-owned open space (Figure 1.47).[183]

In addition to apartment row garages, commercial garage construction increased during the 1920s as an alternative for apartment owners and residents not wanting to build a garage on a small parcel. Between 1906 and 1924, twenty-four commercial garages were built in Brookline.[184] In the Coolidge Corner neighborhood the first commercial garage, the Verndale Garage, was built in 1921 at 525 Harvard Street.[185] The Verndale Garage was ideally situated midway on Harvard Street between Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue. Five years later, the Durgin Garage was built at the corner of Pleasant and John Streets and featured first-floor retail shops along Pleasant Street (see Drawing 7).[186] Prior to the Durgin Garage's construction, four wood frame, residential structures occupied the corner of Pleasant and John Streets.

Coolidge Corner

Physical alterations to the intersection of Beacon and Harvard streets included the redesign of the public transportation stop. Prior to the 1920s, both streetcar shelters on Beacon Street were located east of Harvard Street. The shelters were slightly offset from each other with the eastbound shelter located closer to Harvard Street (see Figure 1.13). Photographs and the town atlas from the

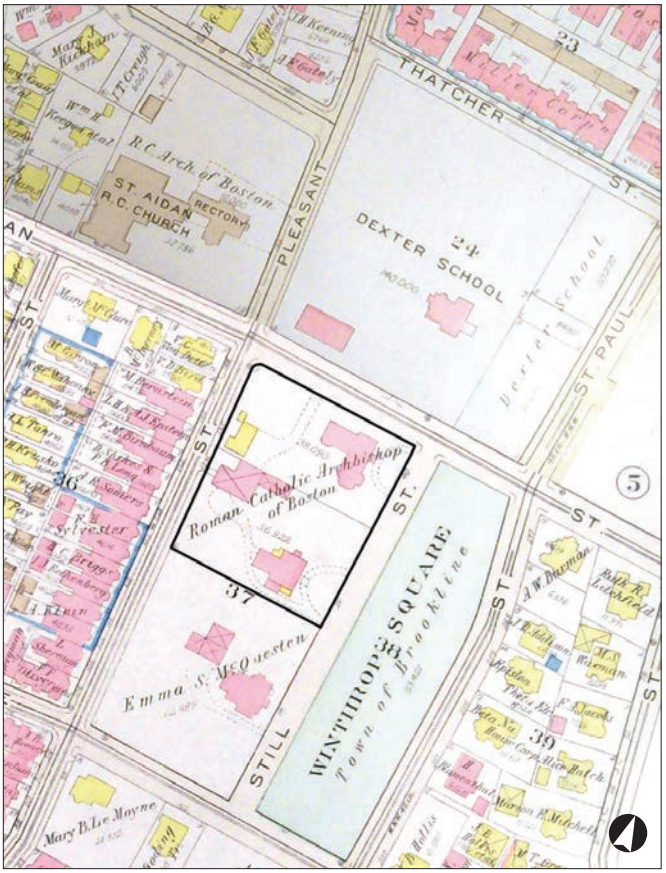


Figure 1.48. View looking at the northeast corner of Beacon and Harvard Streets, mid-1920s. The eastbound streetcar shelter, whose roof is visible in the lower left of the photograph, was moved to the west of Harvard Street increasing the distance between eastbound and westbound stops. The image also shows over two dozen cars either traveling along Beacon and Harvard Streets or parked at the various storefronts, a police officer stationed at the intersection in a guard stand, and brick paving installed as the surface treatment for Beacon Street (*Coolidge Corner, Brookline, Mass.: Past-Present-Future,* Boston: Hewitt Publishing Co., 1926).

mid-1920s show the eastbound shelter was moved to the west of Harvard Street resulting in a greater separation between the two stops. Arguably, the shelter was moved to improve vehicular circulation through the Beacon and Harvard Streets intersection. An eastbound streetcar would block the intersection while passengers boarded.

The need to make alterations based on increased vehicular traffic is reinforced by photographs from the mid-1920s showing over two dozen cars either traveling along Beacon and Harvard Streets or parked at the various storefronts. In addition the photographs show a police officer stationed at the intersection in a guard stand. Since traffic signals are not shown, the officer was present to help direct traffic. Finally, the photograph shows that brick paving had been installed as the surface treatment for Beacon Street (Figure 1.48).

Figure 1.49. Digitally enhanced copy of Bromley Town Atlas, 1927. In the 1920s, St. Aidan's parish purchased or was given three large, single-family homes on parcels of land bounded by Pleasant, Freeman, and Still Streets. The parcels are highlighted by a heavier black outline and were developed into the St. Aidan's parochial school and convent. The Bromley atlases denote wood frame construction with the yellow fill, brick construction with the pink fill, stone construction with the tan fill, and steel construction with the blue fill.



Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church

In her explanation of the decision to move, Rose Kennedy cites as important factors proximity to good schools, public transportation, shopping, and opportunities for the children to play. She does not mention maintaining the comfortable walking distance to Saint Aidan's that the family had from 83 Beals; however, this was arguably a crucial factor in the decision to move to 51 Abbottsford. In describing her daily walks with the children through the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, Rose states that, "Almost always, on the way home, we stopped in at our parish church. Part of the reason was I wanted them to understand, from an early age, that church isn't just something for Sundays and special times on the calendar but should be part of daily life."[187]

Although not explicitly stated in her autobiography, proximity to Saint Aidan's was an important consideration in the move to 51 Abbottsford and during the family's years there, permitted Rose to routinely visit the church with her children. Joe Jr. and Jack were altar boys and Joe Sr. was also was an active member of the church. When Jack was sick with scarlet fever, every morning Joe Sr. would go to church to pray for his recovery.[188]

After completion of the Saint Aidan's rectory remodeling in 1920, there were no major alterations to the Saint Aidan's site while the Kennedys lived at 51 Abbottsford. The church, however, purchased or was given three large, single-family homes on parcels of land diagonally across from the church site, on the

lot bounded by Pleasant, Freeman, and Still Streets. The houses were converted into the Saint Aidan's Parochial School and Convent in the 1920s (Drawing 7). Comparing the 1919 and 1927 Bromley Town Atlases shows no immediate changes between the private and parish ownership (Figure 1.49).[189]

Edward Devotion School

The Edward Devotion School played a central role in the daily routines of the Kennedys throughout their tenure at 51 Abbottsford Road. Joe Jr. had begun school in 1920 and Jack most likely started school in the fall of 1922. At the time the two boys attended Devotion, the school's three buildings were detached and wrapped around the Edward Devotion House on the north, east, and south sides. Joe Jr. and Jack continued to attend the Devotion School until the fall of 1924, when Joe Sr. enrolled them in the lower school of the prestigious Noble and Greenough School—in hopes of improving their education and assimilating them with some of Boston's most successful, elite families.[190]

The same year that the Kennedy boys switched schools, the Devotion School constructed a connecting wing between the 1898 northern wing and the 1913 central building. The addition created an L-shape configuration of buildings to the north and east of the site with the 1892 wing to the south remaining detached (see Drawing 7). The 1927 Bromley Town Atlas recorded this new layout for the school (Figure 1.50).

In addition to the Kennedy boys, the family's eldest daughters were kindergarten-age during the years they resided at 51 Abbottsford. Rosemary, Kathleen, and Eunice likely began attending Devotion in the fall of 1923, 1925, and 1926, respectively. In the years 1920 to the spring of 1924, the family would have walked daily between Abbottsford Road and Devotion School, passing through their former neighborhood on Beals Street. From the fall of 1924 until their move to New York, the boys walked east to Noble and Greenough/Dexter School, while the girls headed southeast to the Devotion School.

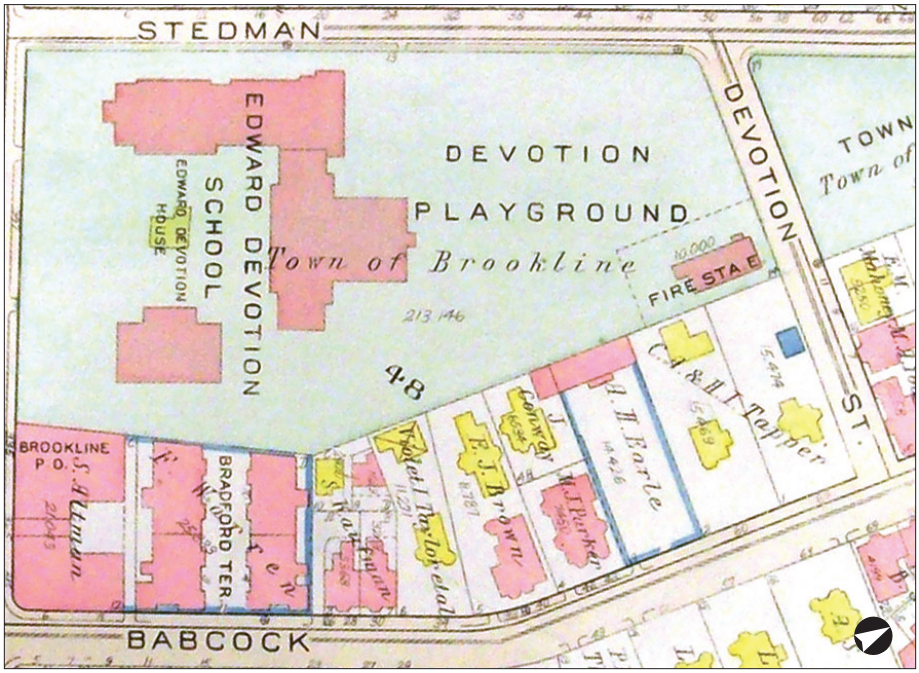


Figure 1.50. ***Bromley Town Atlas,*** **1927. In 1924, the Devotion School constructed a connecting wing between the 1898 northern wing and the 1913 central building. The addition created an L-shape configuration of buildings to the north and east of the site. The Bromley atlases denote wood frame construction with the yellow fill, brick construction with the pink fill, and steel construction with the blue fill.**

Noble and Greenough/Dexter School Site

In 1920, the parcel of land at the corner of Freeman and Pleasant streets was owned by Noble and Greenough School and used for athletic facilities. In November 1921, Noble and Greenough's trustees approved a plan to relocate their lower elementary school for boys from Boston to the Freeman Street parcel in Brookline. Part of the approval included $154,000 for changes at the Brookline site, as well as improvements to the upper school in Dedham.[191] The alterations to the Brookline site were arguably all interior as the building footprints did not change according to the 1919 and 1927 Bromley Town Atlases.

In the fall of 1924, Joe Sr. chose to enroll his two oldest sons at the private Noble and Greenough lower school, which was less than a half mile from their home at 51 Abbottsford. While Rose's emphasis on religion extended to a desire for Joseph Jr. and Jack to attend a parochial school, Joe Sr.'s wanted the boys to attend a secular, private school.[192] In the fall of 1924, he decided it was time "for his sons to meet the sons of Beacon Hill" and attend Noble and Greenough.[193] Though the Kennedys were likely the only Catholics in the school, they were well received by the faculty. In a letter dated April 3, 1924, from the lower school director, Myra Fiske, to the school's headmaster, Fiske wrote, "I am very glad that we decided to take this little John Kennedy. He is a fine chap. . . ."[194]

Shortly thereafter, Noble and Greenough relocated their lower school again, this time to Dedham. Some of the parents of the lower school's students purchased the vacated property and founded the The Dexter School in 1926.[195] Joe Sr. became a member of the Dexter School board.[196] The two oldest Kennedy boys thus attended Noble and Greenough for two years and the Dexter School for one year before moving with the family to Riverdale, New York in 1927.

51 Abbottsford Road

Peter Graffam constructed 51 Abbottsford in 1897, twelve years before construction of the Kennedys' home at 83 Beals. By 1906, building activities were completed in the Graffam development.[197] In contrast, homes were still being built on the northeastern end of Beals Street in 1927.[198] Situated on a corner parcel of land, the 51 Abbottsford lot, also referred to as 131 Naples Road, was roughly two-and-a-half times larger than the home at 83 Beals. Whereas the Kennedys had paid taxes on a $6,500 assessed value for 83 Beals ($5,000 house and $1,500 land), the Abbottsford Road home was assessed at $17,900 ($12,000 house, $1,000 auto house, plus $4,900 for the 8,857 square foot lot).[199] The 51 Abbottsford house contained twelve rooms in comparison to seven rooms at 83 Beals and displayed more architectural ornamentation like grouped Ionic columns for the porch, a second story balustrade with finials for the posts, and modillions under the eaves. In addition, the 51 Abbottsford landscape included more planting features like a clipped privet hedge on two sides of the property and foundation plantings



Figure 1.51. Residence at 51 Abbottsford Road, undated. Located on the corner of Abbottsford and Naples Roads, the Kennedys' second home occupied a larger parcel of land and contained more rooms than 83 Beals. The house displayed more architectural ornamentation like grouped Ionic columns for the porch, a second story balustrade with finials for the posts, and modillions under the eaves. In addition, the landscape included more planting features like a clipped privet hedge on two sides of the property and foundation plantings along the face of the porch (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

along the face of the porch (Figure 1.51). Finally, the new Abbottsford home had increased room for live-in help and a detached garage where the Kennedys could house their Model T and later, a Pierce Arrow and Rolls Royce (Figure 1.52).[200] In her autobiography, Rose Kennedy provided detail on how she used the wraparound porch at 51 Abbottsford so the children had outdoor activities. Rose wrote, "With that many children. . .we discovered it was a good idea to divide the porch into sections with folding gates: two, three, or four of them as the situation at the time indicated."[201]

Figure 1.52. Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., Rosemary, Kathleen, and Eunice Kennedy with Rolls Royce in front of 51 Abbottsford Road, undated, likely 1924. In addition to its larger size, architectural ornamentation, and location on a larger parcel of land, 51 Abbottsford provided the Kennedys with a detached garage where they could house their car. The garage has a hipped roof and can be seen to the right of the house behind a tree (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Family pictures taken during the 1920s show the family on their porch and in the yard (Figures 1.53 to 1.57). The lot was bordered by a privet hedge between the sidewalk and lawn area, a similar style that would later be adopted at 83 Beals. The lot had a large side lawn, which like 83 Beals, appears well trodden by children's play. The house number, "51," is mounted on a post in front of the entry porch. The lot included a screening fence, a large shade tree by the garage, and numerous shrubs and evergreens.



Figure 1.53. Eunice, Kathleen, and Rosemary Kennedy sitting in the lawn area in front of garage at 51 Abbottsford Road, 1925. (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.54. Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., Eunice, Rosemary, and Kathleen Kennedy in front of 51 Abbottsford Road, 1924. A concrete walk leads to the steps. (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.55. Rosemary, Kathleen, and Eunice Kennedy in front of 51 Abbottsford Road, 1924. The 51 numerals can be seen to the left of Rosemary. A low privet hedge grows along the property line (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).



Figure 1.56. John F. Kennedy in Halloween costume and Eunice Kennedy in front of 51 Abbottsford Road, undated. (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

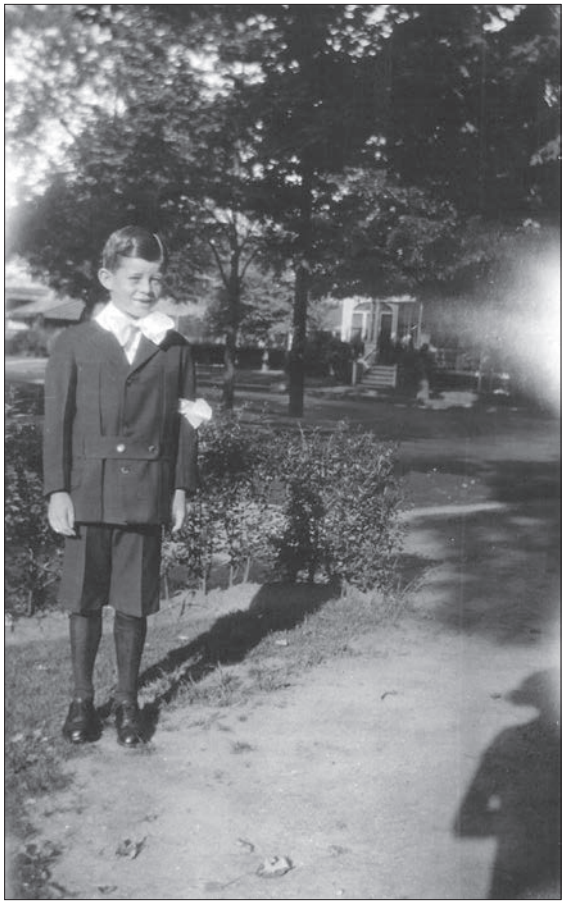


Figure 1.57. John F. Kennedy dressed for first communion, circa 1925. This photograph was taken from the front yard of 51 Abbottsford looking southwest towards Naples Road. The steps and porch of 132 Naples can be seen in the background and a young privet hedge (Kennedy Family Collection, copyright John F. Kennedy Library Foundation).

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

Early construction along Beals Street focused on the southwestern half of the development with almost all of the parcels built by 1907. In contrast, the parcels on the northeastern half of the development that were vacant when the Kennedys arrived in 1914 remained unbuilt when they moved to Abbottsford Road in 1920. After the Kennedys left 83 Beals, the first home constructed on the northeastern half of the development occurred in 1921 or slightly later when a building permit was filed for a home at 63 Beals.[202]

Between 1922 and 1924, developers constructed homes at 84, 88, 92, 96, and 100 Beals on the northwest side of the street. All five homes were duplicate structures possessing a distinct, alternating shingle pattern of thicker and thinner courses and an enclosed, rectangular, projecting entry off of the front gable. On the southeast side of the street, a developer submitted a permit for a two-family home at 85/87 Beals in 1922. By the mid-1920s, the vacant land to the northwest and northeast of 83 Beals had been filled.

As the Kennedys were preparing to move to New York, building permits were submitted for the last two homes in the Beals Street development. In 1927, permits were filed for a single-family home at 91 Beals and a two-family home at 99/103 Beals. These two structures were not recorded on the 1927 Bromley town atlas, but were planned for, under construction, or nearing completion when the Kennedys left Brookline in September 1927.

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY BIRTHPLACE

As discussed in the previous section, determining an exact date for when the Kennedy family left 83 Beals and moved to 51 Abbottsford Road is a difficult task. Deed transactions, records of shopping for new furnishings, a letter confirming the transfer of phone service, and even Rose Kennedy's recollection of the event provide a range of dates during 1920 to 1921 when the move could have taken place. A deed confirms that the Kennedys sold 83 Beals to their friends, Edward and Mary Moore, in September 1920.[203]

The relationship between the Kennedys and Moores began when Eddie Moore served as chief secretary during John Fitzgerald's years as Boston's mayor. Moore continued his role as chief secretary for the next two mayors but he and his wife, older than the Joe and Rose, also formed a friendship with the young couple that Rose compared to that of a "beloved aunt and uncle."[204] At the end of Boston Mayor Andrew Peters' term in 1922, Joe Kennedy asked Eddie Moore to work for him on a full time basis. Moore accepted the invitation and proceeded to work alongside Kennedy for the next three decades.[205] In her autobiography, Rose further describes the two families' work and personal relationship by noting that:

> …Joe had a rugged individualist's need for privacy; there were very few men he liked, trusted, and could relax with entirely. Among these, Eddie Moore became his closest friend, someone he trusted implicitly in every way and in all circumstances. His wife, Mary, became an equally great friend, confidante, and unfailing support for me.[206]

Rose provides additional information on the Moores taking the Kennedy children Christmas shopping in Coolidge Corner and Eddie Moore's responsibility for finding the family a suitable home to move into in New York.[207] Other historians have chronicled Eddie's business trips with Joe and the Moores watching over the children in New York following the birth of the family's eighth child, Jean, in 1927.[208] Unfortunately, these documentary records do not discuss what, when, and how the Moores may have modified the landscape at 83 Beals during their eight years at the property. In addition to written accounts, photographic documentation is not available to provide information on the landscape during the Moores' tenure at 83 Beals.

By 1927, changes to the circulation and small-scale features at 83 Beals may have occurred along the northeastern edge of the property. A building permit was

submitted in 1922 for a two-family home at 85/87 Beals. Previously an open lot northeast of 83 Beals, the new building may have impacted the chicken wire fence. The fence may have been removed or its layout may have shifted to the southwest closer to 83 Beals. Photographs from the 1960s indicate the concrete walk near the property's northeastern boundary remained, but with the addition of a neighboring building approximately twelve feet away, the walk may have been utilized less during the 1920s. The new building did not directly impact the walk, but may have created the perception that this route was not as accessible as it had been with an open lot next to it.

In addition to potential changes resulting from a new house to the northeast, the fences and gate at the east and west corners of 83 Beals may have been removed while the Moores lived at 83 Beals. The Moores did not have children of their own and it appears from earlier photographs that the fences were put in place to provide a safe, outdoor play area for the Kennedy children.

Similar to circulation and small-scale features, changes beyond seasonal variation and growth may have occurred to the site's vegetation. The majority of the vegetation on the small property likely remained lawn with foundation plantings continuing to occupy the narrow bed near the east corner of the house.

SUMMARY

Drawing 7 illustrates the continued growth of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, including the addition of commercial, institutional, and residential buildings and new streets and driveways. During the seven years that the Kennedys resided at 51 Abbottsford, there was more development than the previous decade, due in part to the widespread acquisition of automobiles, the addition of garages, and the economic boom of the 1920s.

With the continued infill and subdivision of vacant lots, the few remaining public and semi-public open spaces acquired additional importance for outdoor play and included the Devotion School fields and playground, the Dexter athletic fields, and Freeman, Dwight, Winthrop, and Knyvet squares.

During the 1920s the Kennedy's neighborhood network expanded when the children attended both the Devotion and Dexter schools. Moving from Beals Street to Abbottsford Road allowed the family to retain their ties to the larger Coolidge Corner area, particularly because family friends, the Moores, lived at their 83 Beals home. During the 1920s, the landscape at 83 Beals remained open, though the branches of the thirty-year old London planes were now interlaced over the street and extended over the front yard to the roof of the house.



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
Brookline, Massachusetts

1927 Period Plan
Coolidge Corner Neighborhood Context

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Atlas of the Town of Brookline, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1927

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

Buildings

Streetcar Rail Lines

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0' 75' 150' 300'

Drawing 7

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT 1927–1960

In September 1927, the Kennedy family moved from 51 Abbottsford Road to Riverdale, New York. Two years later, the family moved about seven miles to a large home in Bronxville. The youngest Kennedy children were born after the family moved to New York, Jean in February 1928 and Edward (Teddy) in February 1932, though both were born at St. Margaret's Hospital in Boston. In selecting a neighborhood, Rose later recalled her preferences, "...my only specification when Joe was looking for a house [was] to move to a place with a good school within walking distance, and I preferred that the children should walk to school and walk home from school and get to know the neighboring children and get some fresh air and exercise." [209]

The Kennedy family departed from Brookline as the town's major period of growth was coming to an end. Between 1890 and 1930, large estates and farmland were sold for development, especially in the North Brookline area. By the 1920s North Brookline had acquired a population and residential building density, institutional facilities, and a commercially active center at Coolidge Corner that made the area comparable to one of Boston's urban neighborhoods.

In the 1930s population growth and new building development slowed. Financial constraints brought on by the Great Depression played a major role in the decline of construction. In addition, most of the developable area in North Brookline was built upon and town zoning regulations began shaping property usage.[210] Nationwide, local zoning gained more acceptance and was legally reinforced by a Supreme Court ruling in 1926 that municipalities had the right to prescribe and enforce zoning under their police powers.[211]

During the Great Depression, average assessed property values decreased approximately nine percent and as a result, the town's revenue decreased.[212] With fewer funds available, the town ultimately increased their tax rate and continued to provide public services that distinguished it from neighboring towns, spending more on fire and police protection, public schools, libraries, parks and recreation, sanitation, and highways than towns of a similar size. Municipal services in 1940 beyond these essentials included the street tree program that started in the 1880s and snow removal from the town sidewalks by the Highway Department.[213]

On a national level, the Federal Housing Administration was created in 1934 as one of a series of programs initiated during the Great Depression to stabilize financial lending programs and insure mortgages. Following World War II, mortgage guarantees, veterans' incentives, and national changes to infrastructure facilitated a large population migration from denser, urban areas like Brookline to outlying suburbs.

Post-war, large-scale infrastructure changes did not have an immediate or drastic impact on the physical form of Brookline unlike neighboring Boston. Less than a mile away from 83 Beals Street, planning began for Interstate 90, also known as the Mass Pike, in the 1950s. The pike's route would ultimately wind its way through the strip of Boston between Brookline's northern border and the Charles River. During the same decade construction began on Interstate 93, also known as the Central Artery, in downtown Boston and concluded in 1959. Construction of the Central Artery removed over 1,000 structures and displaced over 20,000 Boston residents.[214] Within Boston's city limits, Interstate 93 was named the John F. Fitzgerald Expressway in honor of the former mayor (Rose Kennedy's father) who had passed away in 1950.

Both interstate projects were financially assisted by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 and the creation of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. The legislation, designed to mobilize soldiers and military equipment, created a transportation network for automobile commuting. In the same way that the streetcars extended a convenient commute from Boston's downtown to Brookline, the interstate system helped further separate where people chose to live from their location for work.

The access provided by the interstate system, combined with mortgage guarantees from the FHA and post-war veterans' benefits permitting no down payment on the purchase of a home, resulted in a housing boom in the suburb areas that were farther from the city. Outside urban areas, in the short period between 1956 and 1960, 11 million new homes were constructed nationwide in suburban locations.[215]

A contemporaneous development with post-war, residential expansion in the suburbs was the large-scale "renewal" of urban areas. In an attempt to remove areas perceived as blighted and to create more area for development, denser configurations of streets and sidewalks were consolidated or closed off resulting in larger block configurations. Associated with these larger blocks was the construction of residential towers that broke traditional building heights and occupied a larger footprint on the ground. In 1958, 48-acres in Boston's West End neighborhood were cleared for the Charles River Park residential towers.[216]

In the Boston metropolitan area, there are examples of post World War II development that altered the building density, street and pedestrian circulation systems, and, in the case of the interstate highway system, severed urban areas into separate pieces. It is important to note that while these development types drastically changed other urban areas, they were not implemented in Brookline.

During World War II the two eldest Kennedy sons, Joe Jr. and John, served in the Navy. Stationed at the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, John commanded the torpedo boat *PT 109*. On August 1, 1943, *PT 109* and fourteen additional PT boats

set off on a mission to intercept a Japanese destroyer convoy. In a series of events later described as "the most confused and least effectively executed action the PTs had been in," one of the destroyers rammed *PT 109* and severed the small boat in two.[217] Although the mission failed, John's assistance to surviving crew members and leadership in securing their rescue made the headlines of major newspapers and would later be retold throughout his campaigns for public office.[218]

Halfway around the world in the European theater, Joe Jr. was stationed at Dunkeswell Airfield in England and piloted the B-24 bomber on patrols over the English Channel. On August 12, 1944, Joe Jr. and a co-pilot embarked on a mission to fly an explosive-laden bomber to a German V-1 rocket site in France. Prior to reaching the target, the two had planned to parachute out of the bomber once a nearby plane obtained radio control over it and could guide the bomber the remainder of the way to its target. Before the transfer could take place and without explanation, Joe's plane exploded.[219] Following the war and with the family still grieving, John assumed the role of eldest son and the weight of his father's aspirations that that son would lead and serve at the highest levels.

Returning to Massachusetts in the fall of 1945, John established residence in Boston and the following year ran for representative from Massachusetts' 11th Congressional district. A largely Democratic district, the campaign brought out ten primary candidates all vying to take the seat vacated when James Michael Curley was re-elected as Boston's mayor.[220] John won the primary contest with forty percent of the vote and went on to win the general election in a landslide. He would win re-election for the next two terms.

John's entry into politics has been interpreted primarily as an effort to heal his father's grief over the loss of Joe Jr.[221] Personally, John was inspired to pursue statewide elected office when he witnessed the public outpouring of support at a wake for Boston Mayor James Michael Curley and then at the funeral of his maternal grandfather, John Fitzgerald.[222] Following 1950, John's focus shifted from the local congressional district to building a constituency for statewide office.

Agreeing not to challenge a prominent Democrat for the governor's race, John entered the 1952 U.S. Senate contest against three-term incumbent Republican Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. During the 1952 campaign, John's younger brother Bobby assumed the role of campaign manager, his father provided financing and worked business connections to receive major editorial endorsements, and Rose Kennedy and other family members hosted thirty-three tea parties which introduced the Kennedy family to "tens of thousands of women who looked upon them as royalty and saw their own dreams of success mirrored in the Kennedys' achievement."[223] In a close vote, John defeated the incumbent and gained national exposure, which prompted the Democratic committee to consider him for the vice presidential nomination at the 1956 convention.[224]

While John's political career took root, he also became a husband and father. John married Jacqueline Lee Bouvier in September 1953. After a miscarriage in 1955 and still born child in 1956, Caroline was born in 1957 and John Jr. in 1960. (A child born prematurely in 1963 did not survive.) With the unexpected attention received at the 1956 convention, John began plans with his family for mounting a presidential campaign in 1960. He won a convincing re-election to the Senate in 1958 capturing almost three-quarters of the vote and for 1960, applied the same formula involving his family that had made the 1952 Senate campaign successful.[225] In addition, a new national perspective was added to the 1960 campaign with the first televised presidential debate. Seventy million viewers watched the contest, which, despite substantively equal arguments, favored the youth and composure displayed by John Kennedy over his opponent Richard Nixon.[226]

On November 8, 1960, John and the Kennedy family watched the election returns from Hyannis Port on Cape Cod. Results from Michigan, Minnesota, California, and Illinois were not reported until the next morning when Kennedy, winning three of those last four states, became the president-elect.[227] As national plans developed for the inauguration and arrival in Washington of the thirty-fifth president, local attention began to focus on an inconspicuous house on Beals Street that Brookline residents still referred to as the Kennedy home.

THE COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

When the Kennedy family left Brookline in 1927, gaps were still present along the blocks fronting Beacon Street. Residential, commercial, and institutional development during the next three decades would provide nearly contiguous buildings along the boulevard that had been designed in 1886.

In 1925, during the Kennedys' tenure at 51 Abbottsford Road, James Street was added between Beacon and Pleasant Streets. In 1928, two apartment rows were constructed between Pleasant and James Streets that completed development along Beacon for this triangular configuration of land.[228] In the waning years of the Great Depression, an apartment complex known as Chatham Park Manor was built in 1941 on the southeast block at the intersection of Powell and Beacon streets.

Diagonally across from the Chatham Park Manor complex, a large hotel was built on Beacon in 1952, and named the 1200 Beacon Street Hotel.[229] The hotel remains in operation today as a Holiday Inn. In 1925, Congregation Ohabei Shalom enlarged their building at the corner of Marshall and Beacon Streets. East of the Marshall Street building, the synagogue added a substantially larger structure with a domed sanctuary in 1928.[230]

In 1944, Temple Sinai, a Reform Jewish congregation, moved from meeting at a private home in Boston's Brighton neighborhood to an institutional building in Coolidge Corner at 50 Sewall Avenue. Built in 1916, the building belonged to the Second Unitarian Society of Brookline before it was acquired by Temple Sinai.[231] The relocation of Temple Sinai and expansion of Congregation Ohabei Shalom were results of a growing Jewish population in Brookline that by the 1960s, accounted for over fifty percent of the town's population.[232]

The addition of religious structures was not the only component of institutional development along Beacon Street. In 1935, a branch office for the US Postal Service was constructed south of the Pleasant and Beacon Streets intersection.[233] The construction of federal, religious, commercial, and residential properties along Beacon Street demonstrates that a range of development took place before and during the Great Depression and following World War II. Beacon Street did not remain static during these decades but continued to have structures added creating a nearly uninterrupted row of buildings on its eastbound and westbound sides in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood.

The Great New England Hurricane of 1938 greatly affected the area following the Kennedys' departure to New York. In the late afternoon of September 21st, the category three hurricane struck Long Island and southeastern New England. The storm continued to move north and by midnight in Brookline, "…it was estimated that more than seventy miles of public highway were obstructed with fallen trees" (Figure 1.58).[234] Written accounts reveal that in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, street trees along Babcock Street and Naples and Crowninshield Roads were heavily damaged. Following the hurricane, estimates for clearing the toppled trees and repairing damaged roads and sidewalks totaled $65,000. Adjusted to 2012 dollars, the cost would have been over $1 million.[235]



Figure 1.58. Hurricane Damage on Boylston Street (Route 9) (Emma G. Cummings, *Brookline's Trees: A History of the Committee for Planting Trees of Brookline, Massachusetts and a Record of Some of Its Trees,* Cambridge, MA: The Brookline Historical Society, 1938).

Coolidge Corner

Following the Kennedys' departure from Brookline, the increase in vehicles and traffic influenced changes to the Coolidge Corner public transportation stop. In the late 1930s, a traffic count conducted at Coolidge Corner recorded nearly 14,000 cars passing through the Beacon and Harvard Streets intersection every day.[236] Since 1900, a streetcar line ran on Harvard Street from Brookline Village to Cambridge Street in Brighton. Due to concerns about traffic conflicts with the streetcar waiting shelters in Brookline Village, the route was closed and converted to bus service on September 10, 1938 (Figure 1.59 and 1.60).[237] A few years after the route was closed, with pressure mounting for materials to support World War II, the streetcar tracks were removed from Harvard Street for scrap metal.[238]

The Coolidge Corner commercial area, like the public transportation system, experienced changes during the years of the Great Depression. A major change along Harvard Street occurred when an institutional building was converted to commercial use. On the west side of Harvard Street, immediately north of the S. S. Pierce store, the Beacon Universalists constructed a church in 1906 (see Figure



Figure 1.59. Streetcar waiting shelters in Brookline Village, 1928. Due to concerns about traffic conflicts with the shelters, the streetcar line from Brookline Village to Cambridge Street in Brighton was closed and converted to bus service on September 10, 1938 (Photograph by L. H. Benton. "The History of Boston's Crosstowns the Allston-Dudley Route," *Rollsign*, May/June 1985).



Figure 1.60. View looking north on Harvard Street, Coolidge Corner, 1938. A few years after the Brookline Village to Brighton route was closed, the streetcar tracks on Harvard Street were removed for scrap metal. (Photograph by F. Cheney. "The History of Boston's Crosstowns the Allston-Dudley Route," *Rollsign*, May/June 1985).

1.26). In 1933, the church was converted into the Art Deco-style Coolidge Corner Theater, which to this day, remains a landmark in the neighborhood.[239]

By 1960, the street block containing the S. S. Pierce store, the Coolidge Corner Theater, and other retail establishments along Harvard Street added a parking lot west of these buildings. Prior to the lot's installation, this area contained four wood-frame and two brick-constructed residential structures. The installation of the parking lot resulted from two critical factors taking in place in the post-World War II years. First, as mentioned earlier with the changes in public transportation, vehicle ownership and daily use was increasing. Second, as suburban development increased west of Brookline and further away from the metropolitan Boston area, Coolidge Corner became a shopping destination not only for local residents, but also for suburban commuters making their way east. In fact, Coolidge Corner offered a closer location for western suburbanites to shop compared to locations in downtown Boston. Not wanting to miss these new suburban shoppers, the parking lot was created behind the established retail area.

Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church

After the Kennedys departed Brookline and throughout the middle portion of the twentieth century, the Saint Aidan's site remained relatively unchanged. An aerial photograph from 1939 indicated the northern half of the site, near Crowninshield Road, was lawn and some other scattered vegetation (Figure 1.61). In about 1960 the church added a parish parking lot on the northern half of the church parcel.[240]

Edward Devotion School

In 1952, the town demolished the 1892 southern wing of the Devotion School—the first building constructed for the school. In its place the town constructed a new wing that mirrored the 1898 and 1924 buildings to the north. Additionally, a new gym was added to the east of the 1913 central building.[241]

Dexter School Site

The Dexter School was founded in 1926 and the eldest Kennedy sons attended Dexter during its inaugural school year before moving to New York in September 1927. Following the Kennedys' move, one major change occurred at the Dexter site in the decades leading up to 1960. Near the center of the Dexter property, a structure—arguably the original estate house—appears on historic atlases dating back to 1874 (see Figure 1.16). Based on a photograph and the Sanborn Insurance Maps of Brookline from 1957, the structure was demolished and a new building was added to the eastern edge of the site by the mid-1950s (Figure 1.62).

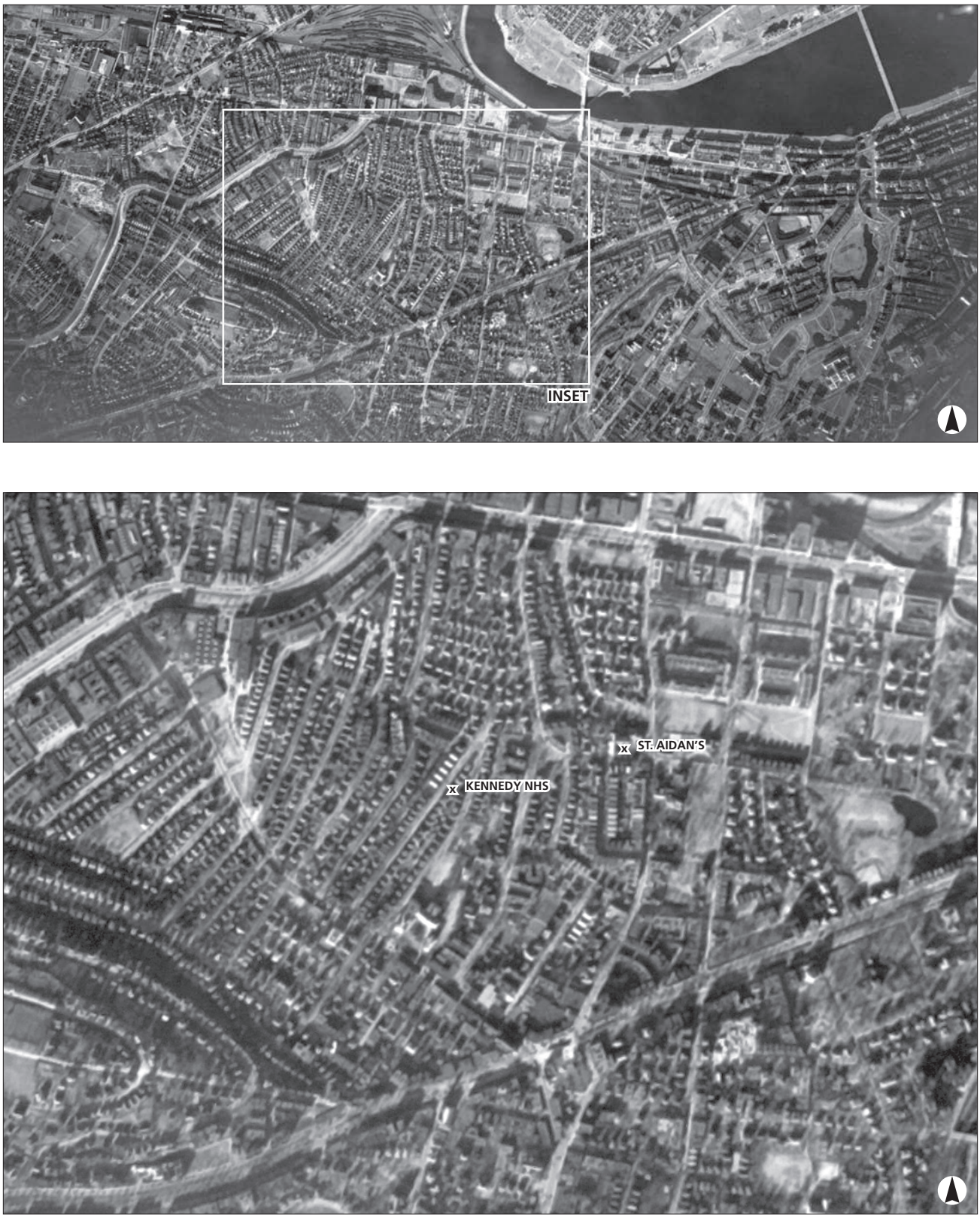


Figure 1.61. Aerial photograph of North Brookline, December 15, 1939. The northern half of the St. Aidan's Roman Catholic Church site, near Crowninshield Road, contained scattered vegetation and lawn. The exact date is uncertain, but by 1960 a parking lot had been installed in the northern half of the parcel (US Geological Survey).



Figure 1.62. The Dexter School, circa 1956. By the mid-twentieth century, the center of site was opened up for athletic fields and a new school building, seen on the right, was constructed (Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History*, Boston: Historical Publishing Company, 1989).

51 Abbottsford Road

Following the Kennedys' move to Riverdale, New York in 1927, no major alterations occurred at 51 Abbottsford. The Graffam Development retained its integrity during the middle portion of the twentieth century. Between 1927 and 1960, only one of the over forty Graffam-built homes was demolished. One block away from 51 Abbottsford, an 1896 house and stable were demolished and a brick apartment complex was constructed at 51-59 Manchester Road in 1929.[242] Removing larger, single-family homes and replacing them with multi-unit apartment complexes was an attractive real estate option in the Graffam Development. Owners and investors could make money by providing more saleable units in a single parcel of land. It is possible that more homes could have been demolished in the Graffam Development for larger residential complexes, however, the Great Depression stopped that practice. Instead of losing existing structures to new construction in the Graffam Development, the economic pressures of the Great Depression and World War II resulted in single-family homes being divided up into multi-unit rental properties.[243]

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

During the first decade of the twentieth century, residential construction in the Beals Street development was concentrated on the southwestern half closest to Harvard Street. Between 1914 and 1920, when the Kennedys lived at 83 Beals, the number of homes on the northeastern half of the development did not change. Unbuilt parcels to the northwest and northeast of 83 Beals created a sense of openness described by Rose Kennedy in her autobiography. In 1927, as the Kennedys were preparing to move to New York, buildings permits were submitted

for the final two properties in the development, and within the year all lots within the Beals Estate subdivision were built upon.

In the decades following the Kennedys' move from Brookline and leading up to John Fitzgerald Kennedy's inauguration, no major construction occurred in the development. This does not mean the physical form of the development was static as minor changes, renovations, and individual embellishments were a normal extension of people's lives. For example, prefabricated steel garages were added at 83 Beals in 1928 and at 66 Beals in 1929.[244]

A photograph of Beals Street in 1935 captures the landscape character of the neighborhood (Figure 1.63). The photograph was taken to the northeast of 55/57 Beals and looks southwest toward Harvard Street. The Kehillath Israel Synagogue, opened in 1925, can be seen in the background of the photograph on Harvard Street. The 1935 photograph shows that Beals Street has been paved, however, there is no curbing material installed at the edge of the street. The five cars seen parked along both sides of the street indicate not every residence had or utilized a driveway and garage and that a one-way traffic flow had not been implemented.

The photograph illustrates the range of surfacing materials used in the 1930s. The 55/57 Beals driveway begins with a concrete apron, but then appears to be packed earth for the rest of its length. Similar to earlier photos, a concrete sidewalk paralleling the street provides pedestrian circulation. In addition to the sidewalk, a raised concrete landing can be seen at 55/57 Beals where the main walk from the house meets Beals Street. These landings appear to be present at each home along the entire length of Beals Street.

The London planes, first documented in a circa 1910 photograph, appear in the 1935 photograph and have achieved a relative level of maturity (see Figure 1.24). In general, the trees are over 50-feet tall, their diameter at breast height (DBH) is approximately 30 to 36-inches, and the canopies have increased in width so that the northwest and southeast side canopies are touching. The tree lawn, also present in earlier photographs, can be seen and is located between the street and sidewalk. The final item related to vegetation seen in the 1935 photograph is that a new street tree planting is visible in



Figure 1.63. View from 55/57 Beals Street looking southwest, 1935. This photograph shows Beals Street has been paved, no curbing material has been installed, the London planes are over 50 feet tall, and utility poles are installed on northwest side of the street. Also on the northwest side, a street light can be seen in the middle of the image. The size of the trees and angle of the photograph make it difficult to determine if there are additional lights (Photograph by H. A. Varney courtesy of the Office of Planning and Community Development, Town of Brookline).

left foreground. Judging by the branching structure of this young tree, it is also a London plane. The characteristic peeling and mottling bark of the London planes is something that develops with time. The photograph precedes the 1938 Hurricane but written records indicate the London planes on Beals were not extensively damaged in this storm.[245]

In addition to information on circulation and vegetation, the 1935 photograph provides details on the small-scale features and utilities for the Beals Street development. The photograph shows electric utility poles on northwest side of the street with overhead wires crossing to the homes on the southeast. A street light with a cylindrical globe can be seen in the middle of the image on the northwest side of the street. Another pair of lights can be seen on the northwest and southeast sides of the street approaching the Harvard Street intersection. The size of the trees and angle of the photograph make it difficult to determine if there are additional lights and if the lights were installed as pairs opposite each other or laid out in a staggered arrangement.

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY BIRTHPLACE

In September 1920, the Kennedys sold the 83 Beals property to close family friends Edward and Mary Moore.[246] Eddie Moore, in addition to working for Mayor John Fitzgerald and becoming a confidant to Joseph Kennedy Sr., was assigned to assist the family in their move to New York by locating homes for them in Riverdale and later Bronxville, New York. The Riverdale home was a temporary accommodation the family lived in for two years until a "proper mansion" was located in Bronxville.[247]

After leading the effort to find the Kennedys housing in New York, the Moores sold the 83 Beals property to Lucy Myerson on August 14, 1928.[248] Myerson, her husband Simon, and their three sons lived at 83 Beals until February 1944. At that time, Louis and Sarah Pollack purchased the 83 Beals property from the Myersons.[249] The Pollack family owned 83 Beals until 1966 when it was sold to Kennedy relative, Joseph Gargan, in preparation for memorial activities and transfer to the National Park Service.

The Pollack family retained ownership of 83 Beals throughout the 1950s, though there is some confusion in the deed records. In 1950, Sarah Pollack died and during the next couple of years, Louis Pollack married a second wife, Martha.[250] On January 20, 1953, Louis and Martha Pollack, listed as a married couple, sold the 83 Beals property to Alice Farrell. That same day, Farrell sold the property back to Louis and Martha Pollack.[251] There is no information in the deeds why the Pollack-Farrell back-and-forth transaction took place.

The appearance of the landscape at 83 Beals from the late 1920s through 1950s is documented in still images captured from a home movie recorded by the Myerson

family and by working back from early to mid-1960s photographs.[252] These combined sources provide information on buildings and structures, circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features in the landscape.

Shortly after their purchase of the property in 1928, the Myersons added a garage to the south corner of the site. In September of that year, the Myersons submitted a permit for a one-car garage. Under the designation for builder, the permit indicated the garage was manufactured by the Whittredge Portable Garage Company. Based north of Boston in Lynn, Massachusetts, Whittredge began manufacturing steel garages in 1919.[253] A circa 1930s film shot by the Myersons and later a plan prepared for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1966 confirm the location of the garage in the south corner of the 83 Beals property (Figure 1.65).

In addition to the Myersons, the owner of 66 Beals Street purchased a one-car Whittredge garage in 1929. The garage at 66 Beals remains extant and illustrates the long and narrow building footprint, relatively short height, and barn-door entry that were features of the Whittredge garage (Figure 1.64).

In addition to visually documenting the garage, the Myerson film provides information on circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features in the rear yard landscape (Figures 1.65 through 1.68). Unfortunately, the film does not captured detailed views of the side or front yards. The film was taken in the rear yard of 77/79 Beals and looks northeast into the 83 Beals rear yard. The position of the camera can be confirmed by examining the upper left of one of the frames. In this frame, there are scroll-cut boards under the window that match the current detailing on the house at 83 Beals. Furthermore, photographs from the 1960s show the same number of shingle courses from the exposed foundation to the bottom of window (see Figure 1.66).



Figure 1.64. Extant Whittredge one-car garage at 66 Beals Street, 2002. This prefabricated metal garage is similar to one added at the Birthplace by the Myerson family in September 1928 (Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House: A Guide to Brookline's Transportation Buildings to 1940*, Brookline: Brookline Preservation Commission, 2002).

Northwest of the garage, the film captured the driveway added for vehicular access. Paralleling hedge material planted at the property line, glimpses of a light color surfacing can be seen (see Figure 1.66). Further detail cannot be gleaned from the film, however, photographs in the next section from the 1960s indicate two paved tracks provided access from Beals Street to the garage.

The 1930s Myerson film also captures vegetation in the backyards, including a hedge, most likely privet (*Ligustrum* sp.), planted between the 77/79 Beals and 83



Figure 1.65. View looking northeast from 77/79 Beals Street, circa 1930s of the prefabricated metal garage added at 83 Beals by the Myersons in September 1928 at right (Film courtesy of Richard L. Myerson).



Figure 1.66. View looking northeast from 77/79 Beals Street of 83 Beals, circa 1930s. Note the scroll work on the house, the hedge material between the two properties, and the driveway to the garage (Film courtesy of Richard L. Myerson).

Beals properties, which was visible in a 1916 Kennedy family photograph (see Figure 1.43). The privet hedge was not clipped in a formal fashion and individual plants vary in height from three to five feet (see Figures 1.65 and 1.66). Another vegetation feature that can be attributed to the Myerson's tenure at 83 Beals was the addition of a spruce tree (*Picea* sp.) in the rear yard. The park's Historic Resources Management Plan cites 1928 to 1943 as the timeframe that the spruce was added.[254] The spruce cannot be seen in the Myerson film, but may be blocked by other elements in the foreground. Based on the size of the spruce in the 1964



Figure 1.67. View looking northeast from 77/79 Beals Street, circa 1930s. Note the square, rotary clothesline in the 77/79 Beals Street rear yard (Film courtesy of Richard L. Myerson).



Figure 1.68. View looking east from 77/79 Beals Street, circa 1930s. Note the chain link fence along the 77/79 Beals Street southeast property line. It is difficult to determine if the fence ends at the Birthplace garage or continues behind it following the Birthplace property line (Film courtesy of Richard L. Myerson).

photographs, it was not present when the film was shot. Judging from the 1964 size, circa 1950 seems a more likely date for when the Myersons added the spruce.

As will be discussed in further detail in the next section, additional photographs from the early 1960s indicate that foundation plantings were added to the front of 83 Beals, likely during the Pollack's ownership of the property.

The final landscape features recorded in the 1930s Myerson film are small-scale features most clearly seen at the 77/79 Beals property. The house at 77/79 Beals had a square, rotary clothesline in the rear yard and what appears to be a chain



Figure 1.69. Aerial photograph of North Brookline, 1955 (US Geological Survey).

link fence along the southeast property line. It is difficult to determine if the fence ends at the 83 Beals garage or continues behind it following the 83 Beals property line (Figures 1.67 and 1.68). Although not visible in the film, it seems logical that the Myersons also had a clothesline of some sort in their rear yard. Following the Myersons, when the Pollacks owned the 83 Beals, a square, rotary clothesline was either added or retained and recorded in the 1964 photographs, which are included in the next section of the site history.

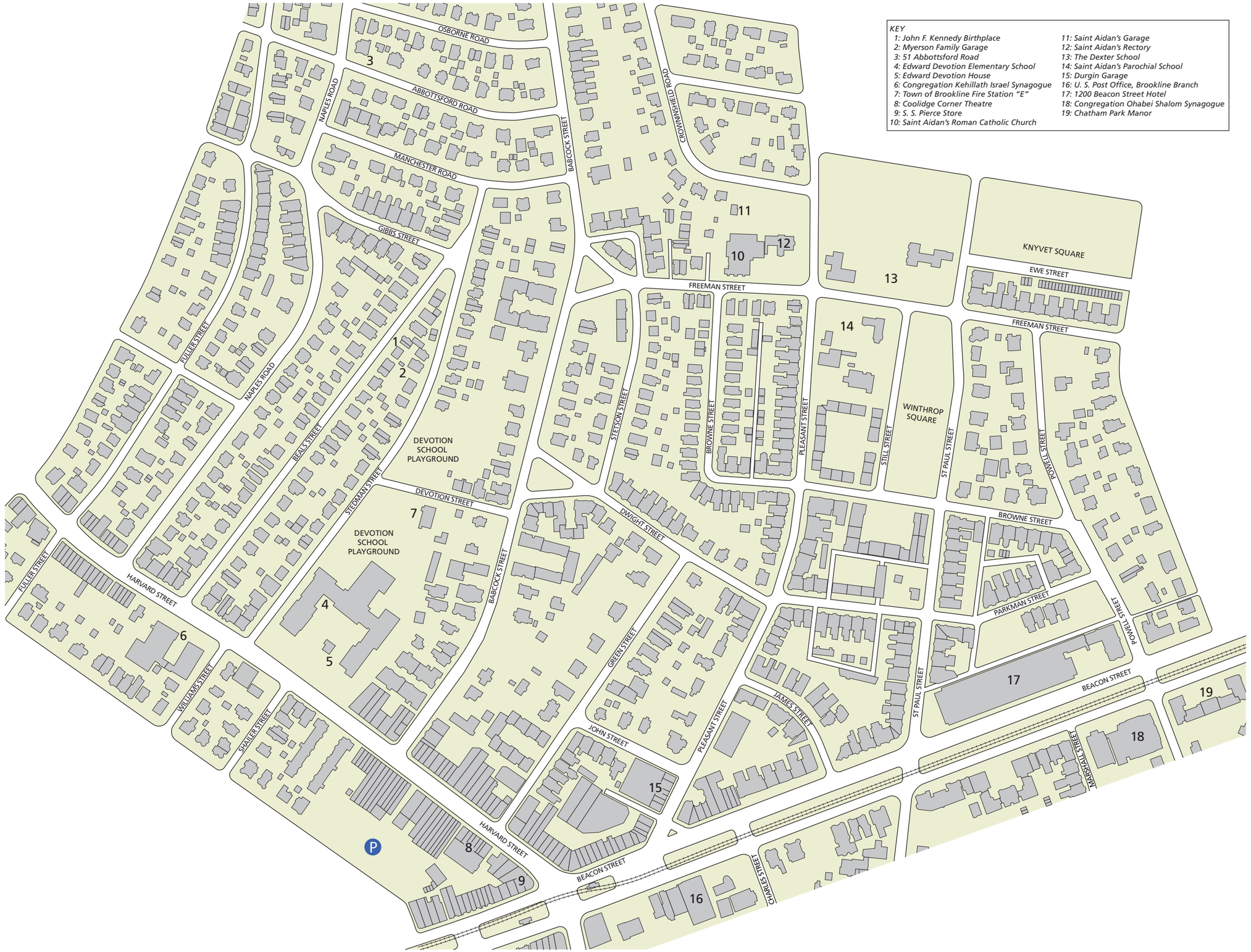
SUMMARY

As shown in a 1955 aerial photograph, North Brookline was built out and part of the urban fabric of Boston (Figure 1.69). Drawing 8 illustrates the configuration of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood in 1960, the year in which Kennedy was elected President of the United States and when the home at 83 Beals was recognized as the birthplace of the nation's thirty-fifth President. While nearby Boston experienced radical changes brought about by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 and the urban renewal initiatives of the Boston Redevelopment Authority in the late 1950s, North Brookline and the Coolidge Corner neighborhood remained stable. The Great Depression and World War II curbed the widespread replacement of single family homes with apartment complexes.

By 1960, changes in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood included the conversion of the Beacon Universalist Parish to a theater and additional commercial buildings along the east side of Harvard Street and along both sides of Beacon Street. To the south of Saint Aidan's Parochial School and Convent, a new cluster of apartment buildings replaced two large residences, while to the north, the original Dexter School buildings were replaced. At the northeast end of Beals and Stedman Streets, all of the vacant lots were built upon, completing the 1897 Beals Estate subdivision plan.

The loss of street trees as a result of the Great New England Hurricane of 1938 substantially altered the character of some streets. The seventy-year old London planes along Beals Street remained firmly anchored, with their hefty trunks and wide reaching canopies largely obscuring the adjacent home facades.

A notable change at the 83 Beals property was the addition of a garage and concrete driveway strips along the southwest side of the house (Drawing 8). As detailed in the previous section, vegetation on the property during this period included a privet hedge on the southwest side of the property, a spruce tree in the rear yard, and a fairly symmetrical planting of evergreen and deciduous shrubs in front of the home.



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

1960 Period Plan Coolidge Corner Neighborhood Context

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Insurance Maps of Brookline, Massachusetts, Sanborn Map Company, 1957

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Buildings
- Streetcar Rail Lines
- Public Parking Lot

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0' 75' 150' 300'

Drawing 8

COMMEMORATION AND MEMORIALIZATION 1960–1969

At the age of 43, John Fitzgerald Kennedy became the nation's youngest elected president. Although he won by a narrow margin, a national interest developed around his presidency not because of policy or initiatives, but largely due to his youth, Catholic faith, and the telegenic image he and his family conveyed. In leaving his position as a senator, he spoke eloquently about his connection to Massachusetts.

> And so it is that I carry with me from this state to that high and lonely office to which I now succeed more than fond memories and fast friendships. The enduring qualities of Massachusetts—the common threads woven by the Pilgrim and the Puritan, the fisherman and the farmer, the Yankee and the immigrant—will not be and could not be forgotten in the nation's Executive Mansion. They are an indelible part of my life, my convictions, my view of the past, my hopes for the future.[255]

At the time that the Kennedys moved into the White House, an elderly widow resided at 83 Beals Street. Although the Kennedys had only lived there for six years, and John for his first three years, the Brookline community took action and began commemorating 83 Beals as the president's birthplace by performing exterior maintenance, planting and rehabilitating the privet hedge and foundation shrubs, and installing a granite marker and bronze plaque.

Tragically, Kennedy's presidency lasted less than three years and is often referred to as the "thousand days." On November 22, 1963, preparing to meet with local politicians and business leaders, President Kennedy was assassinated when his motorcade entered Daley Plaza in Dallas, Texas. The shock of losing a youthful, American President thrust the country into mourning, while his family and political leaders sought tangible ways to grieve his loss.

Immediately following his assassination, Beals Street served as the corridor for a procession to Kennedy's birthplace. A black bunting was hung over the granite marker and beside it mourners laid a wreath and flowers. Brookline residents and town officials contemplated an appropriate memorial, including a proposal for a memorial park. Ultimately, the house at 83 Beals Street became a site to commemorate Kennedy's rise to the highest elected office in the country, mourn his untimely passing, and finally serve as a memorial to his early years in Brookline.

THE COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

The quiet setting of Beals Street increasingly contrasted with the growing commercial hub at Coolidge Corner. To improve traffic flow, the Town of Brookline altered the configuration of two neighborhood roads and moved the fire station. Initially located on Devotion Street, mid-block between Babcock



Figure 1.70. Sanborn Insurance Maps of Brookline, 1957, revised 1969. By 1969, minor changes to the Coolidge Corner neighborhood have occurred including the extension of John Street to Babcock Street (#1) and the construction of a new fire station on Babcock (#2). The former fire station on the Devotion Playground was removed and Devotion Street was closed off (#3). The Kennedy Birthplace is shown at #4. Note the map shows a garage at the southern corner of the Birthplace lot. Although not updated as part of the 1969 revisions, the garage was removed between late 1966 and the dedication ceremony in May 1969 (State Library of Massachusetts).

and Stedman Streets, the town demolished Fire Station E in 1965 and constructed a new fire station on Babcock Street that same year and to facilitate better access to the neighborhood. The town extended John Street from its old terminus at Green Street up to Babcock Street.[256] With the fire station no longer located on Devotion Street, the town removed approximately half of this street from Stedman Street to the mid-block point. Closing this portion of Devotion Street allowed the town's Parks Department to connect the two previously separated parcels of the Devotion School Playground. The Sanborn Insurance Maps of Brookline, last updated in 1969, confirm these changes and show the new fire station, extension of John Street, and closure of Devotion Street (Figure 1.70).

In addition to the changes for the new fire station, public parks and squares were updated during the 1960s. Knyvet and Winthrop Squares, originally laid out in the 1840s by David Sears, received irrigation and pedestrian lighting. Beginning in the 1960s, Winthrop Square received updated playground equipment approximately every ten years.[257]

Coolidge Corner

With the arrival of the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center in 1955 and competition in downtown Boston, Brookline residents could purchase goods and services beyond Coolidge Corner. Even though consumers had an option to shop elsewhere, Coolidge Corner was the largest commercial area in Brookline in the early 1960s. A survey completed in 1963 estimated that over 9,000 shoppers visited retailers in Coolidge Corner on a daily basis and praised the area for being "the one center in which a relatively full range of shopping goods and services are provided."[258]

In addition to providing access to the new fire station, the John Street extension to Babcock also improved vehicular circulation and off-street parking in Coolidge

Corner. The extension created a "shoppers' scanning loop" allowing a driver to proceed north on Harvard Street and loop around south on John Street. The loop created more opportunities to window shop and increased chances of finding a parking space.[259]

Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church

Saint Aidan's continued to operate throughout the 1960s. In 1968, the church added a one-car garage in the area north of the rectory. Unlike the garage constructed in 1917 that matched the Tudor Revival style church, this new structure was a utilitarian addition. More recently, in assessing the church, rectory, and associated outbuildings, the 2001 report for Saint Aidan's determined the 1968 garage to be of "no architectural or historical significance."[260]

Edward Devotion School

The Edward Devotion School had been extensively renovated in the 1950s and there were no major changes during the 1960s (Figure 1.71).[261]



Figure 1.71. Pierce and Pierce, Korslund, Lenormand, and Quann, "Devotion School Feasibility Study: Town of Brookline" (photocopy, Brookline Public Library, no date, annotated by OCLP).

The Dexter School Site

In 1966 the Dexter School, which Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. and John F. Kennedy attended during the 1926 school year, purchased a 36-acre property in South Brookline. The purchase provided the school with substantially more land and an opportunity to develop a campus that was not available on the four-acre site on Freeman Street.[262]

In a January 1968 letter to the National Park Service Northeast Regional Director, Minute Man National Historical Park Superintendent Benjamin Zerby noted that the Dexter School grades one through three had moved to a new location in Brookline and that grades four through eight were scheduled to move by September 1968 if the facilities were ready. Commenting on the Freeman Street property the letter continued, "The property has already been sold and according to unofficial speculation at the school, apartment houses will be built on the site."[263]

51 Abbottsford Road

The Kennedys' second home at 51 Abbottsford did not receive commemoration following Kennedy's inauguration or draw mourners following his assassination. Local residents still identified 83 Beals as Kennedy's birthplace and childhood home, and it became the focus for commemorative and memorial activities.

The ensemble of Graffam-built 1890s homes remained relatively intact during the first half of the twentieth century. Only one of the Graffam homes was demolished and replaced by new construction in 1929. In 1962, a fraternity from a nearby university demolished a second Graffam home and constructed a large brick house at 58 Manchester. There were no further demolitions or new construction in the Graffam development during the 1960s.[264]

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

At the time of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's election in 1960, the Beals Street development was well established. All of the lots from the 1897 subdivision were developed with single-family homes, multi-family homes, and apartment buildings by the late 1920s. During the 1960s, no major changes occurred to the layout of Beals and Stedman Streets, the setbacks from the streets to the buildings, the density of lots and buildings, or the scale of the buildings. One change evident by 1969 was the slight increase in the number of garages in the development, which totaled about twenty-five behind Beals Street residences. The change primarily occurred at homes on the southeast side of Beals. Comparing the 1927 Bromley Town Atlas and the 1969 Sanborn Insurance Maps of Brookline, the five garages added during that time were mostly on the northeastern end of Beals where the last homes were constructed in the late 1920s. Even with major public transportation lines available to the north on Commonwealth Avenue and to the south on Beacon





Figure 1.72 (above). View of Harvard and Beals Streets, November 25, 1963. Following news of President Kennedy's assassination, members of Temple Kehillath Israel left their synagogue on Harvard Street and proceeded down Beals to place a wreath at the Birthplace (Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History*, Boston, 1989).

Figure 1.73 (below). View looking southwest on Beals Street, November 25, 1963. The London plane in the left foreground is the street tree in front of the Birthplace. The fluted columns on the porch of 79/77 Beals can be seen just beyond the plane-tree (Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History*, Boston, 1989).

Street, the slight increase of garages demonstrates how established automobile ownership was in this dense urban environment.

Photographs from the 1960s show little change to Beals Street compared to a 1935 photograph (see Figures 1.63, 1.72, and 1.73). The 1960s photographs show no granite curb or other curbing material along Beals Street. The tree lawn—the narrow lawn strip between the sidewalk and street—slopes from the sidewalk down to the street. Concrete walks, raised about six inches above the grade of Beals Street, cut across the tree lawn and lead to each house. The gas lights visible in a 1935 photograph have been replaced with cobra-head street lights mounted to wooden utility poles.

On the afternoon of November 25, 1963, three days after Kennedy's assassination, members of Temple Kehillath Israel left their synagogue on Harvard Street and proceeded down Beals Street to place a wreath beside the commemorative marker (see Figure 1.72). As the week continued, the street filled with mourners from end to end, marking the first time the street, intended for vehicular use, was used as a pedestrian corridor to the site (see Figure 1.73).

Following the assassination, the importance of 83 Beals Street as a place of mourning soon prompted more formal attempts to create a memorial at Kennedy's birthplace. On November 26, a Brookline World War I veterans' organization proposed the town obtain eight houses adjacent to the 83 Beals property through eminent domain to and raze them to construct a memorial park.[265] In December, the town selectmen appointed a John F. Kennedy memorial committee to acquire the home. On April 7, 1964, their proposal to take by eminent domain or purchase 83 Beals was defeated at a town meeting. The defeat resulted primarily because local residents feared it would set a precedent for acquiring neighboring homes on Beals Street.[266]

Other plans considered for the northeastern end of Beals Street also would have removed homes adjacent to 83 Beals. These proposals, as well as the option of the town acquiring 83 Beals, were defeated and the density of homes at the northeastern end of Beals Street has remained unaltered from the completed build-out of the development in the late 1920s.

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY BIRTHPLACE

At the time of Kennedy's election and inaugural, Mrs. Martha Pollack owned the 83 Beals property. On October 6, 1961, Pollack became a co-owner with her son Alvin Clark. The deed listed Clark and Pollack as joint tenants and not tenants in common and further identified Pollack as a widow.[267] Although not stipulated in the deed, Clark may have initiated the commemorative activities at the site, also in the fall of 1961.

Based on tax listings from 1960 through 1965, Pollack had a number of boarders, relatives, or possibly caretakers living with her in the three bedroom house, including Jerome and Miriam Hurwitz in 1960 and 1961 and Sarah Freeman in 1962 and 1963. Ruth Oppenheim, Pollack's daughter, lived at 83 Beals shortly after President Kennedy's assassination and was listed in 1964 and 1965.[268] The 1966 listing was unavailable and in 1967, no resident was listed. The lack of an entry in 1967 is consistent with the Kennedy family purchase of the property and preparations to open it to the public as the presidential birthplace.[269]



Figure 1.74. House at 83 Beals prior to the installation of the commemorative marker, circa 1960–61. Note the overgrown deciduous and evergreen shrubs and hedge, and the small trellis below the living room window (JOFI Management Records, Box 14, Folder 2).



Figure 1.75. Volunteer crew painting 83 Beals, undated, likely summer 1961. The commemorative marker, installed on September 21, 1961, is not visible in the image (Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History*, Boston: Historical Publishing Company, 1989).

No information has been discovered to date about how the Pollacks used or modified the landscape during the early 1960s. Photographic documents from the 1960s record the Town of Brookline activities at the property. With the election and inauguration of Kennedy, Brookline showed its pride that a native son had risen to the presidency and the town began commemorative activities in 1961. The Brookline Town Report records that the Board of Selectmen appointed a five-person committee "to recommend a suitable recognition of the birthplace of John F. Kennedy at 83 Beals Street."[270]

The park's 1976 Historic Resources Management Plan provides a chronology of modifications to the landscape and house based on interviews from early park staff. This document, in conjunction with period photographs, provides the foundation for determining the early commemorative activities.

The 1976 Historic Resources Management Plan notes that a local painters union painted the exterior of the house in 1961. The Town of Brookline carried out landscape improvements between 1961 and 1966 including the improvement or installation of a hedge of California privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*) along the front sidewalk.[271] The house painting and hedge improvements took place no later than September 1961, before the installation of the Kennedy commemorative marker. A photograph taken prior to 1961 shows an unkempt privet hedge, deciduous and evergreen shrubs in the front yard, and a small trellis under the living room window (Figure 1.74). An undated photograph from the Brookline Citizen shows a painting crew at the 83 Beals home and the privet hedge along the sidewalk as well as three evergreen shrubs under painting tarps. No other small-scale features are apparent (Figure 1.75).



Figure 1.76. View of northwest elevation, December 9, 1963. This photograph confirms the installation of the privet hedge, commemorative marker, and yew planting. The image also reveals that in the weeks following President Kennedy's assassination, wreaths continued to be placed or were maintained beside the commemorative marker. The marker itself was draped in black bunting. Note the concrete tracks leading to a one-car garage at the southern corner of the property (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 1.77. View looking south, December 9, 1963. Note the privet hedge—thin in places, commemorative marker with black ribbons, and yew planting (JOFI Management Records).

On September 21, 1961, the Town of Brookline installed a commemorative granite marker and bronze plaque. By this time, crews planted several yew shrubs (*Taxus* sp.) framing the sides and back of the marker and added sod to the front area.

On December 9, 1963, two weeks after President Kennedy's assassination, photographs of the front of the house confirm the presence of the privet hedge, commemorative marker, and yew planting. The image also reveals the continued placement or maintenance of a wreath beside the commemorative marker, shown draped in black bunting (Figures 1.76 and 1.77).

October 1964 photographs show vegetation, circulation, and small-scale features (Figures 1.78, 1.79, 1.80, and 1.81). A photograph of the front of the house does



Figure 1.78. View of northwest elevation, October 1964. Note the privet hedge, commemorative marker, and yew planting. Although the angle of the photograph does not show new sod or lawn, note to the left of the commemorative marker a "please keep off grass" sign has been added. Additionally, note the single paved track in the lower right that led to a garage at the southern corner of the property. An overgrown privet stands on the property line (Irene Shwachman, 1964, Private collection of Mr. Robert Berliner, copies reside in the JOFI Management Records).







Figures 1.79, 1.80, and 1.81. Views of northeast, southwest, and southeast elevations, October 1964. Plants do not grow along the northeast or southwest foundation walls. A spruce grows in the backyard (Irene Shwachman, 1964, Private collection of Mr. Robert Berliner, copies reside in the JOFI Management Records).

not directly show the lawn, but includes a "please keep off grass" sign. The same photograph shows a single paved track to the southwest of the house. Most likely concrete, this is one of two tracks leading to the garage installed by the Myerson family in 1928 at the south corner of the property. The garage is not visible, but an overgrown privet grows along the property line, which is likely a remnant of the 1910s privet hedge between 77/79 and 83 Beals (see Figure 1.78). In addition to the image of the front of house, photographs taken in 1964 show the northeast side elevation and rear elevation, providing additional information about circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features. Visible in the rear elevation photograph is the spruce planted by the Myerson family in about 1950, a square rotary clothesline, and low foundation plantings. The rear and northeast side elevations show a concrete walk near the dining room bay window that wraps around and expands to a landing at the kitchen entry stairs (see Figures 1.79 and 1.80). Earlier photographs from the Kennedy Family Collection, dating to about 1920, display the same walk at the rear of the house. A photograph of the southwest side of the house shows privet growing along the back boundary of 83 Beals and a lilac in the foreground. The lilac is most likely at the north corner of the foundation at 77/79 Beals (see Figure 1.85).

In 1965, the Beals Street home was featured in the local newspaper. Jackson and Perkins Rose Company developed a new hybrid rose named in honor of the late President John F. Kennedy. The Town of Brookline parks superintendent, Daniel Warren, Jr., planted several of the roses in front of the commemorative marker as shown in a July photograph (Figure 1.82). Subsequent photographs suggest that the roses were moved within a year or two, and certainly by 1969. As the front yard lacks direct sun, the roses may have been moved to the southwest side of the house.

Figure 1.82. Brookline newspaper article dated July, 8, 1965. Daniel Warren, Jr., Town of Brookline parks superintendent, plants roses by the commemorative marker. The roses were donated by grower Jackson and Perkins and named in honor of the late President John F. Kennedy (Newspaper file, Brookline Public Library).



The garage is not visible in the 1964 photographs but appears on a Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) plan drawing for the property dated September 1, 1966 (Figure 1.83). Photographs taken in about 1968 do not show the paved tracks leading from Beals Street to the corner of the property (Figures 1.84 and 1.85). Sometime after the completion of the drawings and before the dedication event, the garage and paved tracks were removed.[272]

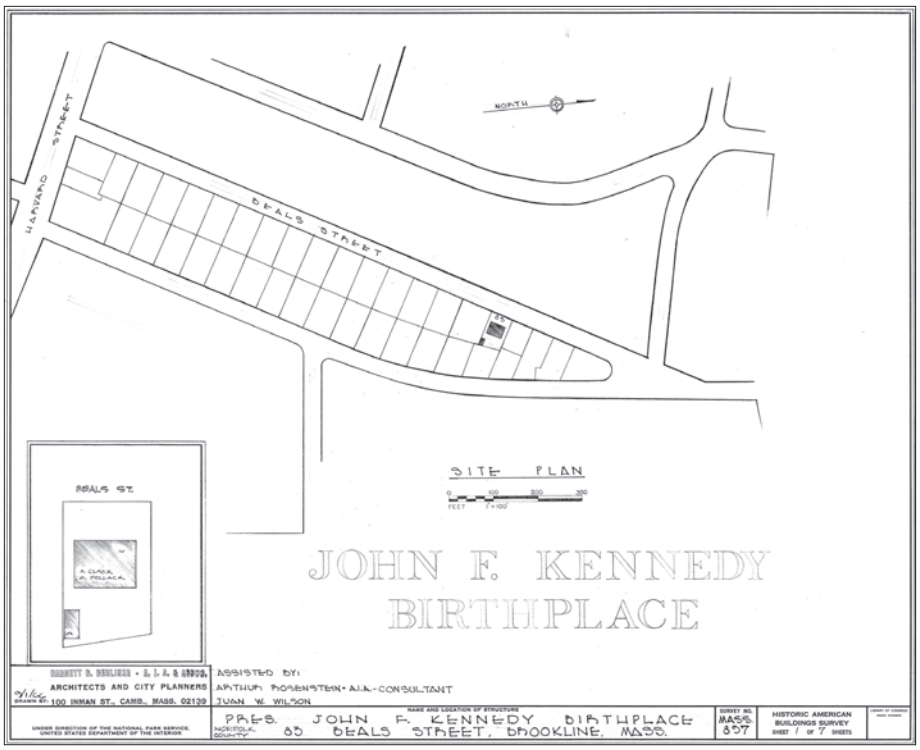


Figure 1.83. Historic American Buildings Survey, John F. Kennedy Birthplace, September 1, 1966. Although not documented in the HABS photographs from October 1964, this plan recorded the garage at the southern corner of the property. Sometime after this plan was prepared and before the dedication ceremony on May 29, 1969, the garage was removed ("American Memory from the Library of Congress," The Library of Congress, http://memory.loc.gov/).

As highlighted in the previous section, the Town of Brookline considered more formal actions to memorialize the 83 Beals home following President Kennedy's assassination. On April 7, 1964, town residents rejected a proposal brought to the Brookline Town Meeting to take by eminent domain or purchase the 83 Beals property.[273] Even though this measure did not pass, Brookline still contributed to the memorial efforts at the site. Brookline installed the reproduction gas light in front of the property in August 1967.[274] At that time, the local gas company connected service to the light and also provided a new service line to 83 Beals.[275] The original gas street lights were located on the other side of Beals Street.

Commemorative and memorial activities by the Town of Brookline and residents demonstrated the local pride in the home's association with President Kennedy and their connection to the site. Initially the town envisioned a larger memorial, but ultimately the Kennedy family assumed a leadership role in preserving the site. Although the catalyst for her involvement is not documented, by 1966 Rose Kennedy, who was known by everyone as Mrs. Kennedy, began plans for the Kennedy family to purchase the site and restore it to its appearance in 1917, the year of her son's birth.

Kennedy family involvement began on November 1, 1966, when Joseph Gargan, Mrs. Kennedy's nephew, purchased the property from Martha Pollack and Alvin Clark.[276] Restoration work commenced shortly after the purchase as indicated by receipts and correspondence in the Joseph P. Kennedy Papers at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. The goal was to complete restoration work and have the house open to the public on May 29, 1967, which would have been President Kennedy's fiftieth birthday.[277] The status of the property was recorded in the Town

of Brookline annual report for 1966. "The property was purchased during the year by the Kennedy family, who intend to preserve it as an historic shrine. The Town had been requested by the Kennedy family to postpone any action at the local level until it was determined what disposition might be made of the property. The purchase has, of course, obviated any necessity of its acquisition by the Town, as was proposed a few years ago."[278]

In March 1967, Mrs. Kennedy wrote to Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall stating, "…I have realized that this house, because it was a birthplace of a President of the United States, is of historic value to the American people." She further articulated her goals for restoring the property by noting, "…that future generations will be able to visit it and see how people lived in 1917 and thus get a better appreciation of the history of this wonderful country."[279]

A cabinet member initially appointed by President Kennedy, Stewart Udall served as Secretary of the Interior from 1961 to 1969. Udall was an outspoken environmentalist and conservationist, as well as a preservationist. Coincidental with the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service, Udall supported the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which provided a framework for the protection of historic sites. Under Udall's leadership twenty historic sites and many other properties were added to the National Park System. Udall was displeased with the proliferation of statuary memorials in Washington, D.C. and favored historic sites as memorials. Furthermore, he felt that political figures should be dead at least fifty years before being memorialized.[280] Despite this sentiment, Udall supported the addition of the Kennedy birthplace to the National Park Service as it provided a place for mourning and was endorsed by the Kennedy family.

Figure 1.84. Photograph on cover of dedication ceremony program, likely taken in 1968. Note the arborvitae on the corners of the foundation (JOFI Management Records).



Shortly after Mrs. Kennedy corresponded with Secretary Udall, Joseph Gargan transferred the deed for the 83 Beals property to the Department of the Interior on March 17, 1967.[281] However, continuation of restoration work and acquisition of objects for furnishing delayed plans to open the property to the public on May 29, Mrs. Kennedy's intended date. In a letter to a friend dated May 2, 1967, Mrs. Kennedy states "We have postponed the opening of the Beals Street house until the fall. There seems to be too much going on near Jack's birthday which is the end of the month and which is the date that we originally had planned. …We do not want to have the house furnished until there is police protection, etc., and there are a great many details to work out."[282] Based on a CBS News interview of Mrs. Kennedy at the house on October 31, 1967, an invoice for landscape improvements



Figure 1.85. Photograph before dedication ceremony, likely taken in 1968. Note the arborvitae on the corners of the foundation, the small shrubs growing along the southwest foundation wall (likely roses), and the dense vegetation in the backyard, which has the leaf texture of privet and lilac. Note the presence of a yew in the front west corner of the property but not in the rear south corner (JOFI Management Records).

dated November 28, 1967, and accounts of National Park Service staff, the house appeared ready for opening in November 1967.[283]

During the course of the restoration project, Mrs. Kennedy worked with Jordan Marsh & Company interior decorator Robert Luddington on the acquisition, selection, and placement of furnishings and fixtures in the home. Luddington's role related to the landscape is unclear, as there is no documentation that he discussed the appearance, alteration, or role of the landscape in presenting the 1917 home to the public. In fact, in preparation of the 1976 Historic Resources Management Plan, Unit Manager Maurice Kowal stated that, "In his 'restoration' of the grounds in late 1960s, Mr. Luddington continued the town's landscaping scheme, simply removing dead shrubs and hedge bushes and replacing them with specimens of the same variety."[284] Robert Luddington is listed on the November 28, 1967 invoice as the project "Architect."

Robert Luddington's personal papers and files on the restoration project have not been turned over to the National Park Service. It is possible that records exist related to landscape activities in these documents that would add more detailed information to confirm Kowal's assertion. The invoice in the Joseph P. Kennedy papers from November 28, 1967, lists a series of "grounds care" activities, presumably conducted throughout the entire year that included:

> Planting six lilacs 3-4' high, five arborvitae 7-8' high, ten spreading yews 18-24" spread, 18 red geraniums for Memorial Day, and 50 pachysandra; Installing 300 square yards of Merion Blue Sod and maintenance; Moving and extending yew hedge; Removing large shrubs and roots and disposed; Trimmed shrubs along rear fence, also Spruce tree; Planting four additional arborvitae, 7-8' high, for the adjoining property; and replacing geraniums with bronze queen chrysanthemums on October 15.[285]

The "moving and extending yew hedge," likely refers to the privet hedge already present and its extension across the former driveway entrance. The overgrown shrubs likely refer to the overgrown privet along the southwest property line. The trimming of shrubs along the rear fence indicates that vegetation screening existed at this time. The four arborvitae planted "for the adjoining property" were most likely planted along the southwest property line on the neighbor's side of the chain link fence.

Invoices and receipts for work on the house at 83 Beals continued through December 1967 for labor, books, and small items. An invoice for electrical work, carpentry, and painting dates to January 22, 1968, which is followed by a gap until another grounds care invoice in December 1968. The lack of activity on the home and delay in opening it to the public can be attributed to Robert Kennedy's decision to enter the 1968 Democratic presidential primary. In her autobiography, Mrs. Kennedy notes that she tried to "…cover as much ground and contact as many people as possible in the time available."[286] Immersed in the rigors of a campaign schedule, the home at 83 Beals became less of a priority. While campaigning in California on June 5, 1968, Robert was assassinated, bringing more grief to the Kennedy family.

As Mrs. Kennedy and the Kennedy family weathered another tragic loss, work continued on the landscape as indicated by a grounds care invoice from December 13, 1968:

> 125 square yards Merion blue sod; Potted geraniums for memorial marker; Trimming shrubbery; Cutting and raking lawn.[287]

The 1968 invoice highlights two important features in the landscape. This was the third invoice to note problems with the sod. In the years of National Park Service administration, establishing and maintaining a lawn area at the front of the house continued to be a problem due primarily to the shade cast by the London plane.[288] The second invoice item, geraniums intended for the "memorial marker," records the purchase of annuals for the front of the commemorative marker with yew shrubs bordering the sides and back of the marker. Adding annuals at the front of the marker is a practice that continues at the park today.[289]

In advance of the dedication ceremony, two photographs—taken the same day—portray the landscape with the 1967 and 1968 improvements. One of the images

is used on the dedication ceremony program, thus the pictures predate May 29, 1969. The second photograph shows the fifth arborvitae planted at the south rear corner of the house, low shrubs that appear to be roses—possibly the transplanted Jackson and Perkins John F. Kennedy roses— growing along the southwest foundation wall, and dense vegetation along the rear backyard, most likely privet and possibly lilac. A lilac also grows at the north corner of the house at 77/79 Beals (Figures 1.84 and 1.85).

Many photographs were taken during the dedication ceremony on May 29, 1969, and show the small-scale features and vegetation added during the 1960s. These included the commemorative marker, the privet hedge along the front sidewalk, the yew and arborvitae plantings, the front lawn, and even the geraniums planted in front of the marker (Figures 1.86, 1.87, and 1.88). Also seen in these photographs is a three-foot high chain link fence near the property line. No documentary record of when or why the fence was installed has been discovered, however, it was most likely put in place along the southwest, southeast, and northeast property lines as a precaution to keep visitors off of neighboring properties. It is unclear why the fence along the southwestern side of the property lay over a portion of the former driveway rather than along the property line. However, the 1967 landscape improvements paid for by the Kennedys included adding four arborvitaes for screening along the strip of park owned land, on the neighbor's side of the fence.

For the dedication event, a podium was set up on the entry walk. In photographs showing the podium and front facade of the house, a United States flag is



Figure 1.86. View of northwest elevation, Dedication Ceremony, May 29, 1969. The photograph shows in place the small-scale features and vegetation added during the 1960s including the commemorative marker, the privet hedge along the front sidewalk, the yew and arborvitae planting, the front lawn, and geraniums planted in front of the marker (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 1.87. View looking southwest on Beals Street, Dedication Ceremony, May 29, 1969. Note the three-foot high chain link fence along the southwestern property line and the hedge extends to the corner. A yew grows at the corner of the lawn. No documentary record of when the fence was installed has been discovered (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 1.88. View east of the commemorative marker, geranium planting, arborvitae, and podium for the Dedication Ceremony, May 29, 1969. Note the Department of the Interior flag to the right of the podium set on a pedestal and not installed into the landscape (JOFI Management Records).

visible on the left and a Department of the Interior flag is visible on the right. Additional photographs show these flags were on pedestals and not installed into the landscape. The porch handrails were temporarily removed for the event (see Figures 1.85 and 1.86). Installation of the flagpole near the commemorative marker occurred after the dedication event. During her dedication, Mrs. Kennedy spoke of her aspirations for the new public park site, "When the youngsters come I hope they will develop a love of history and literature which Jack developed here and I hope the older people (the parents) will be imbued with the spirit of optimism which my husband and I shared."[290]

After the dedication, Mrs. Kennedy sent several thank-you notes to individuals involved in the restoration and dedication project. Individuals recognized included: Mr. Robert Luddington, Jordan Marsh Company, Boston, MA for his "punctilious attention to details" and "unstinted efforts to restore the early atmosphere of the house;" Mr. Jack Dixon, no address, for finding various photographs and newspaper articles about Rose Kennedy's father, Rose and Joe's wedding, and the births of the Kennedy children—also for the gas light in front of the house and the old gas stove in the kitchen; Miss Patricia Twohig, Boston, MA for her help in obtaining early sinks for the house; Mr. Eugene and Mr. William Williams, Canton, MA for period doilies and an early refrigerator; Mr.

Herbert Lawson, Boston Gas Company, Boston, MA for making it possible to rebuild the heating system in the house and also the gas light installation; Mr. Thomas Nutile, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston, MA for supplying early sinks for the house restoration; and Mrs Carlin A. Gasteyer, Museum of the City of New York, for supplying early toys for the house restoration of the President's boyhood bedroom.[291]

Mrs. Kennedy also corresponded with Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel, who was listed as a participant in the dedication ceremonies. Secretary Hickel could not attend the event and Under Secretary Russell Train attended in his place.[292]

SUMMARY

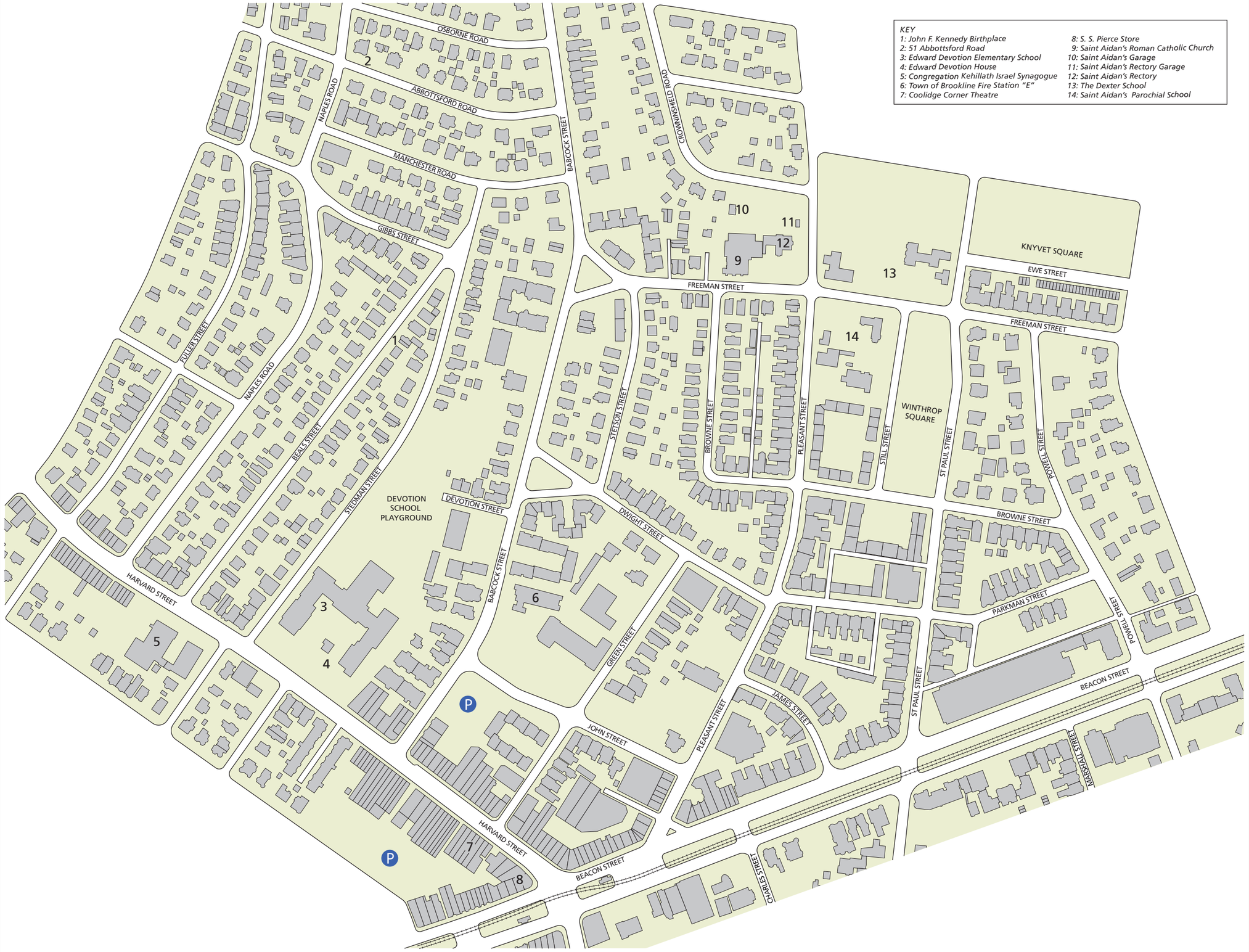
Drawings 9, 10, and 11 illustrate the 1969 layout of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, Beals Street development, and Kennedy National Historic Site. Through the 1960s, Coolidge Corner remained a thriving commercial district. The Town of Brookline implemented several changes in the neighborhood, such as the extension of John Street to improve vehicular circulation, the relocation of the fire station, and the closure of a section of Devotion Street to allow the expansion of the Devotion School fields. The relocation of the Dexter School, and subsequent redevelopment of the parcel, resulted in the loss of a large area of open space in the neighborhood.

The demolition of the Graffam-designed home at 58 Manchester in 1962 ultimately served as a catalyst for listing the neighborhood as a National Historic District. In the same decade, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall and historic preservationists across the country took a more proactive role in the preservation of historic structures with the creation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Physical changes to the Beals Street development in the 1960s were minimal, and included the construction of a few more garages. The symbolic transformation, however, was tremendous. Brookline celebrated the birthplace of its first native-born president. And, Massachusetts claimed its third native president as Kennedy followed in the footsteps of John Adams and John Quincy Adams. The home received a fresh coat of paint, new landscape plantings, and a commemorative marker. In November 1963, the tenor of events changed dramatically when the site and the street became a place of mourning. The cathedral-like quality of the mature London planes framed the somber procession of the thousands of people that visited the home. The commemorative marker was draped in a black bunting, and a wreath placed beside it.

While the interior of the home was restored to its 1917 appearance as remembered by Mrs. Kennedy, the landscape received a different treatment. Enhancements

made by volunteers in the Town of Brookline in 1961 were updated by the Kennedys prior to the 1969 dedication with the addition of new vegetation including arborvitae, yews, pachysandra, red geraniums, lilacs, and sod. The lilacs were planted at the back and northeast side of the house, and would have been in bloom for the Memorial Day dedication. The lush landscape set under the canopy of the enormous London plane differed greatly from the thin lawn and chicken wire fence that provided a play area for the eldest Kennedy children.



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
Brookline, Massachusetts

1969 Period Plan
Coolidge Corner Neighborhood Context

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Insurance Maps of Brookline, Massachusetts, Sanborn Map Company, 1957, Revised 1969

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Buildings
- Streetcar Rail Lines
- Public Parking Lot

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in apprximate scale and location.

0' 75' 150' 300'

Drawing 9



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
Brookline, Massachusetts

1969 Period Plan
Beals Street Development

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Insurance Maps of Brookline, Massachusetts, Sanborn Map Company, 1957, Revised 1969.

DRAWN BY

Tim Layton, AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

Property Line

Buildings

Deciduous Tree

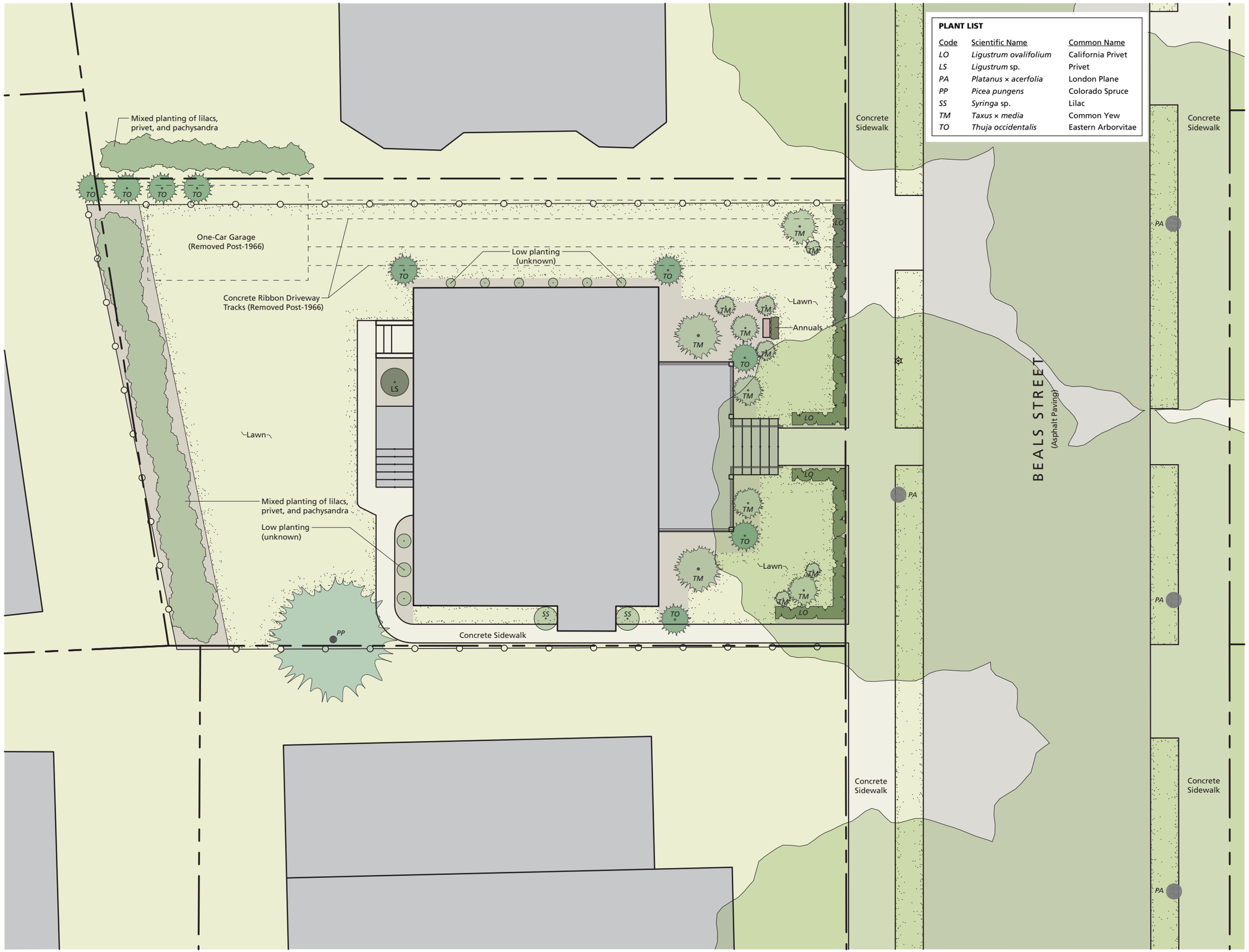
NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0′ 37.5′ 75′ 150′

Drawing 10



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

1969 Period Plan John Fitzgerald Kennedy Birthplace

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. Pres. John F. Kennedy Birthplace, Historic American Buildings Survey, Sheet 2 of 7, 1966
3. Plot Plan 83 Beals Street, Brookline, Mass. by Somerville Engineering Services, Inc., 1976
4. Insurance Maps of Brookline, Massachusetts, Sanborn Map Company, 1957, Revised 1969
5. JOFI Management Records Photographs

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Deciduous Tree
- Planting Bed
- Reproduction Gas Light
- JFK Commemorative Marker
- Chain Link Fence

NOTES

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2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

0′ 2.5′ 5′ 10′

Drawing 11

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MANAGEMENT 1969–PRESENT

On May 29, 1969, the Kennedy National Historic Site formally opened for visitors. The site received over 30,000 visitors a year during its first years of operation. At this time, pressing issues included management of large groups of visitors to the small house, vehicular and bus traffic flow, parking, safety, security, and directional signage. The small park was initially managed as part of a group of parks in the Boston area, and was under the jurisdiction of the Minute Man National Historical Park superintendent. Later the park became a third site in a unit with the Frederick Law Olmsted and Longfellow House Washington's Headquarters national historic sites. In 1975 a fire bomb caused significant damage to the 83 Beals house, resulting in its closure for over a year. Subsequent budget constraints diminished the hours and duration of public tours of the house. From the time of its establishment, as reiterated in its statement for management in 1970, the park emphasized the Kennedy's connections to the Coolidge Corner neighborhood and walking tours.

THE COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

From the park's inception, visitors were encouraged to explore the neighborhood. The press release for the dedication ceremony stated "At the site, visitors are encouraged to take the neighborhood walking tour past the Dexter School (now closed), St. Aidan's Church, and view the suburban environment where John F. Kennedy grew up. Inside the house, Mrs. Rose Kennedy's taped voice remembers life with a young growing family."[293] The taped recollections played in the house also emphasized the importance of the Kennedy children's enjoyment of the outdoors: "As you leave by the back door, imagine with me the laughter of these children as they played in the warm spring sun or built snowmen in the winter. I would look out the window occasionally to see that all went well."[294] Her recorded tapes also spoke of family's daily walks and the site's proximity to public transportation.

In December 1969, the Town of Brookline revised traffic flow in the Beals Street neighborhood. Beals Street, Stedman Street, and the small portion of Stedman Street between Gibbs Street and Manchester Road were made one-way "to encourage tourist traffic to leave the neighborhood by way of Babcock Street rather than drive past the school and also to eliminate Stedman Street as a short cut between Babcock and Harvard streets." Based on a trial period in the winter of 1969–70, the changes became permanent the following spring.[295] Visitors were encouraged to

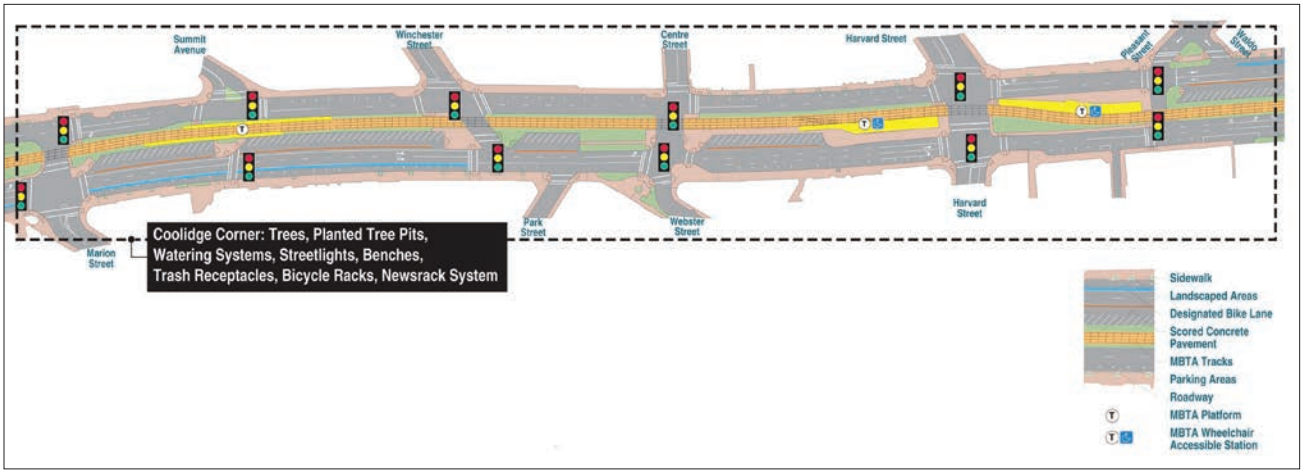


Figure 1.89. Beacon Street Historic Transportation and Landscape Enhancement Project, 2005, which minimizes contemporary conflicts among pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and streetcars and provides a consistent palette of site fixtures and furnishings. (Drawing by VHB, Inc. http://www.town.brookline.ma.us/Dpw/BeaconStreet.html).

park in three nearby municipal lots.[296] The park initially projected that visitation would grow from 45,000 visitors a year to over 86,000 visitors a year, though actual numbers fluctuated between 28,000 and 33,000 during the first five years of park operations. To provide guidance, the park collaborated with the traffic commissioner to install twelve "JFK Birthplace" directional signs in the community in 1970.[297]

From the dedication ceremony for the Kennedy National Historic Site in 1969 to the early years of the twenty-first century, the Coolidge Corner neighborhood remained an affluent urban neighborhood, despite regional fluctuations in housing prices. Proximity to Boston, public transportation, an excellent school system, and a reputation as a premier town helped the area retain a population and counter dips in housing prices. For example, the 2005 average assessed value of a single-family home in Brookline was $1.26 million, while in Coolidge Corner the average assessed value was $1 million. Similarly, condominiums throughout Brookline held an assessed value of $458,000, versus $442,000 in Coolidge Corner.[298] Indeed, the profitable real estate market in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood led to the residential development of two key sites in the Kennedys' daily life in Brookline, the Dexter School and Saint Aidan's properties.

Offsetting the loss of some structures in the neighborhood were the efforts to preserve historic resources and reintroduce street trees. For its entire length in Brookline, Beacon Street was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. Frederick Law Olmsted's 1886 plan for widening Beacon Street sought to create a formal boulevard for one of Brookline's major thoroughfares. A central green corridor separated east bound and west bound vehicular traffic, which historically contained the streetcar lines and bridle paths. To create more parking spaces, the Town of Brookline removed the area that was intended for street tree planting and a buffer between vehicular traffic and streetcar lines. The result was a gradual loss of character up until the early 2000s.

Recognizing the loss of the character, Brookline began a project in the early 2000s along the entire length of Beacon Street to upgrade traffic signals, install



Figure 1.90. View of new ornamental planting at Beacon and St. Paul Streets including Cornelian cherry dogwoods (*Cornus mas*) and shrubs in the median strip. Restoring four historic rows of large street trees along the entire transportation corridor was not a goal of the project (Olmsted Center, 2008).

accessible pedestrian crossings, add bike lanes, and provide new planting and site improvements along the historic corridor as specified in a 2005 plan (Figure 1.89).[299] The goal of the Beacon Street project was not to restore the Olmsted plan, but rather to minimize contemporary conflicts among pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and streetcars and provide a consistent palette of site fixtures and furnishings. The Town installed street trees and ornamental plantings, but did not install the four historic rows of street trees along the entire corridor (Figure 1.90).

Coolidge Corner

From the 1969 dedication ceremony to the early years of the twenty-first century, the street layout and block configuration for the Coolidge Corner neighborhood did not change. However, changes occurred within individual blocks, at specific sites, and various retailers and residents joined or left the neighborhood. As cited in the 2007 Coolidge Corner District Plan, the neighborhood contained 36.5 percent of the town's businesses and a very low vacancy rate for commercial properties of four percent.[300]

In the late 1990s, a real estate boom in the Metropolitan Boston area made converting commercial property in Coolidge Corner to residential units an attractive option. Responding to this pressure, the town changed a zoning by-law in 2004 to encourage commercial use in commercial zoned districts.[301] Between 2002 and 2005, Coolidge Corner witnessed an increase in national chain-store retailers. However, at the conclusion of 2005 over 70 percent of retail businesses in Coolidge Corner were locally or regionally owned.[302]

Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church Site

In 1970 Saint Aidan's closed their parochial school and convent located on southeast corner of Freeman and Pleasant Streets. In 1971, the school and convent facilities were demolished and two apartment buildings constructed. Unlike the



Figure 1.91. St. Aidan's parochial school site as viewed from the Pleasant and Freeman streets intersection looking southeast at an apartment complex. In 1971, the school buildings were demolished and the apartment complex was constructed (Olmsted Center, May 2008).

residential-scale buildings they replaced, the apartment buildings had larger footprints, increased lot coverage, and taller building heights (Figure 1.91).

Changes at Saint Aidan's were not limited to the school and convent. The parish faced challenges that confronted many urban churches at the end of the twentieth century. Like other urban churches, Saint Aidan's relied on the congregation for financial support but faced declining membership due to more diverse religious groups entering the neighborhood, the passing away of older congregants, and members moving to suburban locations. As congregations grew smaller, there were fewer financial resources for older ecclesiastical structures that required higher facility and maintenance budgets. In addition, the Archdiocese of Boston faced a declining number of priests to serve the parishes.[303]

In 1996, the Archdiocese began exploring plans to merge parishes.[304] At the time, Brookline had four parishes— Saint Mary of the Assumption and Saint Aidan's serving North Brookline, and Saint Lawrence and Infant Jesus serving South Brookline. The Archdiocese's merger plan intended to combine Saint Aidan's and

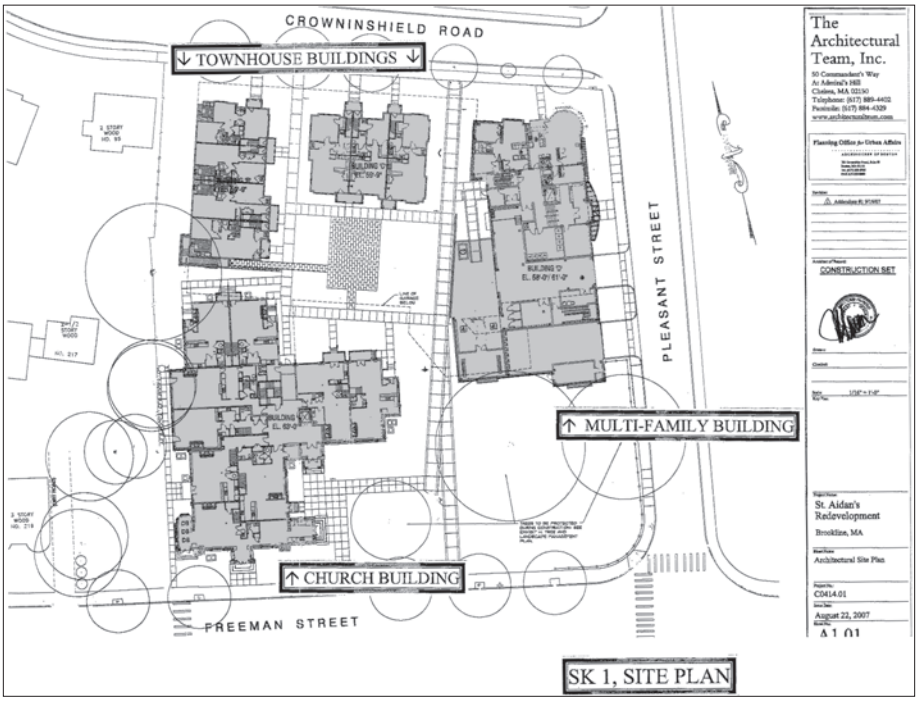


Figure 1.92. St. Aidan's Redevelopment, Site Plan, 2007. Following the closure of the church, a mixed income housing development was approved for the site. The multi-family building and an underground parking garage are shown where the rectory and rectory garage were formerly located. The townhouse buildings are shown where the church garage and parking area were formerly located. Demolition occurred in early 2008 and construction was completed in early 2009 (*Construction Management Plan*, http://www.townofbrooklinemass.com/planning/PDFs/StAidansConstructionManagmentPl2.pdf, gray tone added to buildings by the author).

Saint Mary's into one parish and Saint Lawrence and Infant Jesus into another. The plan called for both buildings to be utilized in South Brookline. However, Saint Aidan's closed in July 1999 and congregants joined Saint Mary's, Brookline's oldest Catholic parish.

Following the announcement and closure, Mass continued to be held once a week at Saint Aidan's until July 2000.[305] After that final event, the Archdiocese's Planning Office for Urban Affairs proposed a series of options and ultimately received town approval for a mixed income housing development that would introduce three new structures to the site and an underground parking garage (Figure 1.92). The rectory, rectory garage, and church garage were demolished in early 2008 as part of the new housing development completed a year later.

Edward Devotion School

The last major changes at the Devotion School occurred in 1952 when the 1892 building was demolished and replaced, a new gym was added to the east of the 1913 building, and lavatory, plumbing, and mechanical equipment were updated.[306] In plan view, the conglomerate of buildings was U-shaped with a central block and gym to the east, a connecting 1898 wing near the northern lot line, and a connecting 1952 wing near the southern lot line.

By 1972, major maintenance concerns needed to be addressed regarding the deterioration of wood window sashes, interior doors, and vandalism to the glass block clerestory above the 1952 gym. An architectural partnership of Pierce and Pierce and Korslund, Lenormand, and Quann prepared a feasibility study

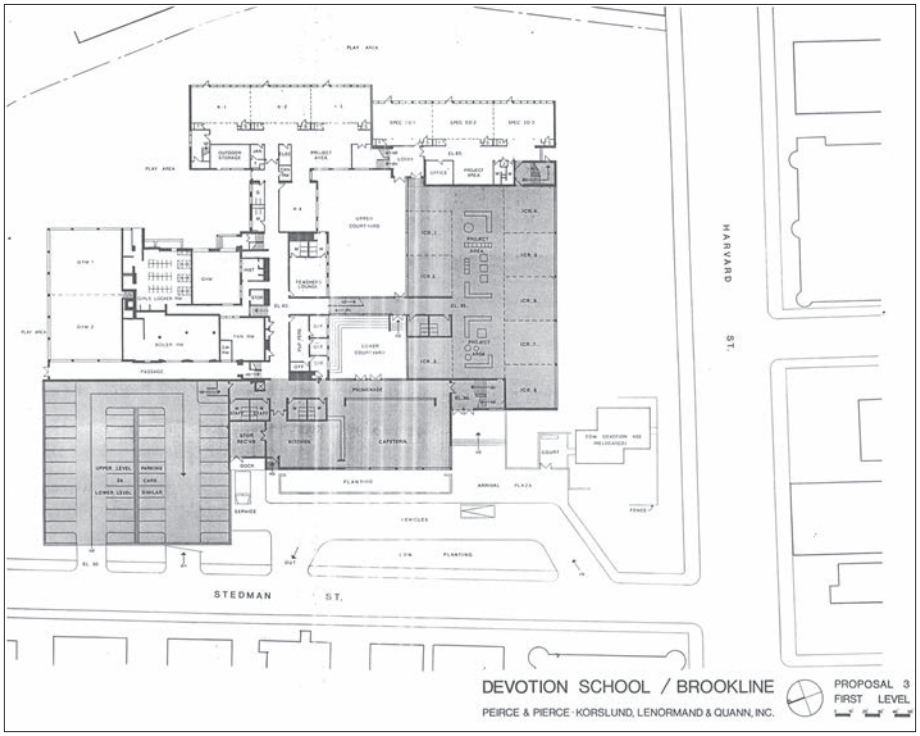


Figure 1.93. Devotion School Feasibility Study, Proposal 3, circa 1972. Although never implemented, this plan was one of several options prepared that explored new classroom, parking, and circulation configurations. Note that in this proposal, the Edward Devotion House would be moved to the corner of Harvard and Stedman Streets (Pierce and Pierce, Korslund, Lenormand, and Quann, "Devotion School Feasibility Study: Town of Brookline" (photocopy, Brookline Public Library, n.d.).

to address these problems, expand on the school's area for curriculum needs, and bring other components of the buildings up to current safety codes.[307] A majority of the proposals prepared for the study recommended the demolition of the 1898 wing. Two of the proposals either moved, or suggested moving, the mid-eighteenth century Edward Devotion House from its location in front of the school's central block to the corner of Harvard and Stedman Streets (Figure 1.93)

The final plan required the demolition of the 1898 wing. Construction of the new additions and updates was completed in 1974. The Devotion House remained in its location set back from Harvard Street, flanked by the wings and central block of the school.

Dexter School Site

In addition to the loss of Saint Aidan's parochial school, convent, and status as an independent parish, the Dexter School left the Coolidge Corner neighborhood all together. In 1969, the Dexter School was in the process of moving its classes to a larger campus in South Brookline. In the early 1970s, the Dexter School buildings were demolished and an H-shape apartment complex was constructed. In a nod to the former school, the complex was named "Dexter Park" (Figure 1.94).

The new apartment building stayed within the same block as the former school buildings and athletic fields. Although larger commercial and institutional buildings had been constructed, Dexter Park represented a new residential building type in the neighborhood. The apartment buildings introduced larger footprints, increased lot coverage, and taller building heights than previous residential structures in the neighborhood.



Figure 1.94. Dexter School site as viewed from the Still and Freeman streets intersection looking north at the Dexter Park apartment complex. After moving their school to a larger campus in South Brookline, the Dexter School buildings were demolished in the early 1970s and the apartment complex was constructed (Olmsted Center, May 2008).

51 Abbottsford Road

Starting during the Great Depression and continuing after World War II, single-family homes in the Graffam-McKay development were often converted into multi-family rental units. During the late twentieth century this trend reversed as single-family homes with proximity to Boston became a desired commodity. Houses in the Graffam-McKay development that had been divided up were subsequently consolidated back into single-family homes.[308]

The house at 51 Abbottsford was one of over forty homes built by Peter Graffam in North Brookline between 1894 and 1898. Only two of the homes attributed to Graffam were demolished. The first took place in 1929 and the last occurred in 1962 when a fraternity house was constructed at 58 Manchester Road.[309] Recognizing the significance of a contiguous group of late nineteenth century homes by one builder, the residents collaborated to list the Graffam Development in the National Register of Historic Places, which was accepted by the Keeper on October 17, 1985. Furthermore, local residents identified a local historic district in 2004 that expanded the boundaries of the Graffam nomination to include homes constructed by David McKay during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Figure 1.95).[310]

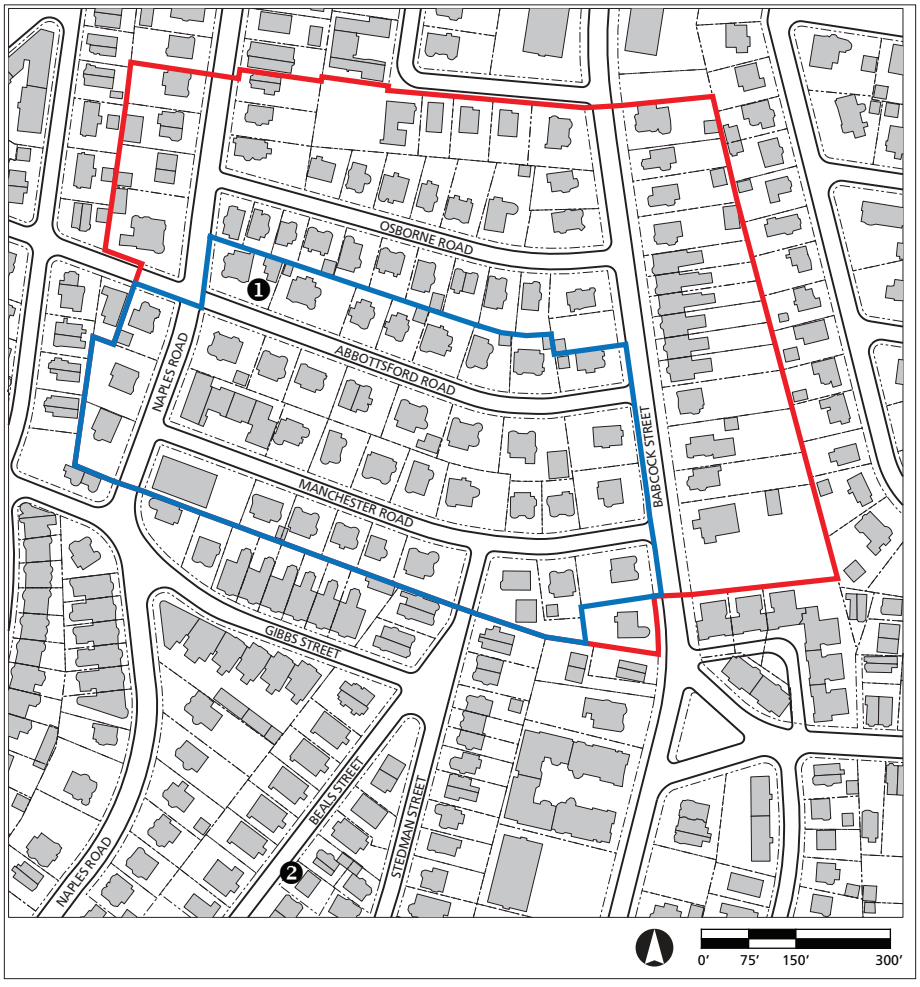


Figure 1.95. Graffam Development National Register boundary. The Graffam Development was listed in 1985 recognizing the significance of a contiguous group of late nineteenth century homes by one builder, Peter Graffam. The National Register boundary is shown in blue and includes the Kennedys' second home at 51 Abbottsford Road (shown at #1). The red outline shows the Graffam-McKay local historic district listed by Brookline in 2004. South of both boundaries is the Birthplace on Beals Street shown at #2 (Town of Brookline GIS Data).

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

From the late 1960s to the present, changes to the Beals Street development have been minimal. The lot sizes, density of lot coverage, and building setbacks have been retained. One exception was a garage removed from 49 Beals, which the Brookline Preservation Commission deemed non-significant.[311] In about 1980, the Town of Brookline installed granite curbing along Beals Street between the road and sidewalk.[312] Breaks were incorporated into the curbing to allow for the expansive roots of the London planes, which spilled into the street and lifted sections of sidewalk.

The Town of Brookline, in cooperation with the University of Massachusetts, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, conducted a street tree inventory in 1994. The tree locations and data from this inventory were incorporated into the town's Geographic Information System (GIS) records. The older trees on Beals Street were recorded as sycamores (*Platanus occidentalis*) and the young replacement trees as London plane trees (*Platanus* × *acerifolia*). The inventory was not consistent with Cumming's 1938 *Trees of Brookline* and earlier historic photographs indicating Beals Street had a monoculture planting of London plane trees.[313] Subsequent research by the Olmsted Center in collaboration with the Harvard University Herbaria confirms that the older trees are London plane trees.

The Town of Brookline tree inventory also noted the addition of elm replacement trees on the northeastern end of Beals Street. The exceptions to this monoculture reveal alterations made during the late twentieth century and reflect a change in philosophy for street tree planting. The inventory recorded two American elms (*Ulmus americana*)—one located in front of 85 Beals and the other in front of 88 Beals.[314] In 1994 both were field measured and recorded as having a 12-inch diameter at breast height (DBH). The field measurement size was much larger than typical nursery-grown trees and indicates the elms were planted at least a decade before the 1994 inventory. In addition the elm plantings show a decision was made, or a request was granted to a homeowner, to interrupt the consistent form and rhythm of a monoculture street tree planting. The loss of street tree monocultures due to the rapid spread of species-specific afflictions such as Dutch elm disease were prominent examples that have persuaded some municipalities to adopt mixed species planting strategies.

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY BIRTHPLACE

The year before the dedication ceremony, the park began preparations for management of the site. The park sought funding to produce a narrative study and plan of the landscape at 83 Beals as it appeared on May 29, 1917, the day of the late President's birth. The intent was to restore the lawn furnishings, utility fixtures, fences, walkways, and plantings. The authors of the proposal, Andrew

Loveless, Supervisory Historian, and Benjamin Zerbey, Superintendent, stated the "restoration will be highly significant since the circulation plan has the visitors exiting from the back door, around the [southwest] side of the house, and out to the sidewalk in front. The major source of information for many details will undoubtedly be Mrs. Rose Kennedy and older relatives and friends whose advanced years highlight the need for early investigation."[315]

Despite the urgency for a restoration plan that was articulated in the 1968 proposal, the park proceeded with alterations that rehabilitated (i.e. allowed for compatible alterations and additions) rather than restored (i.e. returning the landscape to its prior historic conditions) the landscape to accommodate park operations. When the Historic Resources Management Plan was produced in 1976, the emphasis was on maintenance and preservation rather than restoration to 1917 (Figure 1.96).[316]

Following the dedication ceremony on May 29, 1969, a series of landscape alterations took place as the Kennedy National Historic Site was opened to public visitation. Less than a month after the dedication, a purchase order was submitted to remove the existing walk on the northeast side of the house and add a new walk on the southwest side of the house. The purchase order does not provide more description of the walks. However, later park documents confirm that in 1969, a concrete walk was installed on the southwest side of the house to provide visitor circulation from the back steps and the basement to the Beals Street sidewalk. To complete the connection to the existing sidewalk, four privet hedge plants were removed, and most likely transplanted to the backyard rear property line.[317] The northeast walk removed was shown 1910s Kennedy family photographs and in a 1964 photograph (see Figure 1.79). The new walkway is shown in a diagram in the park's Historic Resources Management Plan (see Figure 1.96) Although documentation does not exist, a decision was arguably made to route visitor circulation on the southwest side, where there was space from earlier vehicular circulation to the garage, instead of on the northeast side where passage is constricted by the dining room bay window. At about the same time, the tree lawn strip was paved.

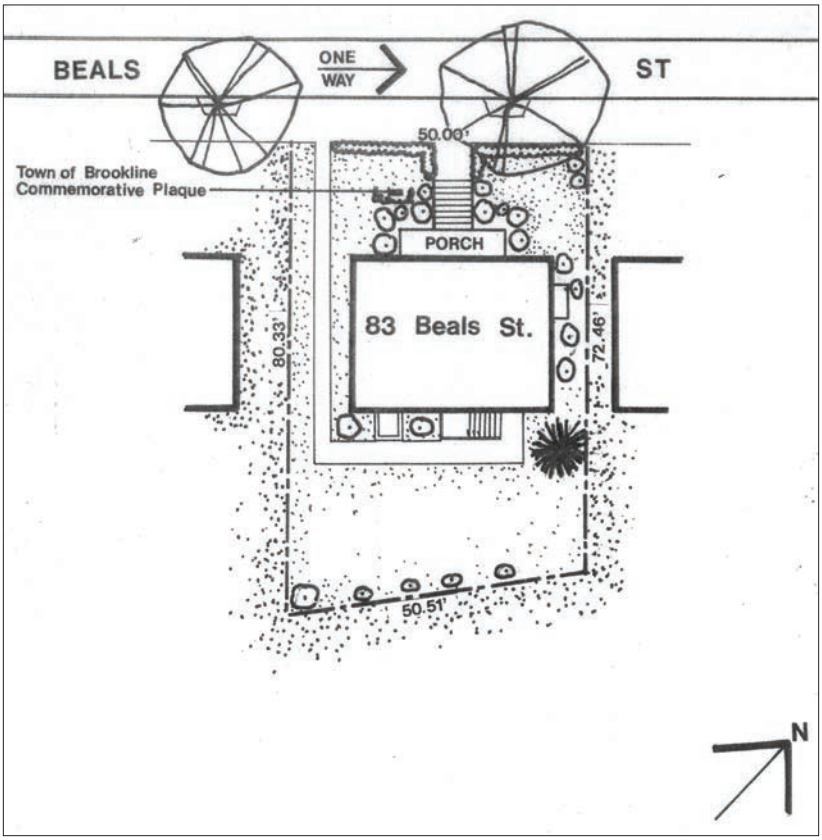


Figure 1.96. Diagram in the park's Historic Resources Management Plan showing the arrangement of trees and shrubs on the property in the early 1970s (JOFI Management Records).

In addition to circulation changes, the park service added a flagpole to the front of the house after the dedication. Two purchase orders in the site's management records document the flagpole's installation—purchase of the flag and flagpole in late August 1969 and installation of the flagpole in early September. At the earliest, the flagpole was added to the site four months after the dedication.[318]

Utility alterations also began shortly after the dedication. In late June 1969, the cold water main was re-piped.[319] A large-capacity dry well was installed in the rear yard in 1987 to collect runoff from the rear half of the roof. In addition to the roof leaders, a drain inlet at the bottom of the basement access stairs was connected to the dry well.[320]

Many changes following the dedication ceremony concerned vegetation. The 1976 Historic Resources Management Plan describes alterations to vegetation in 1969 including the transplanting of four arborvitae from the front yard to the backyard, the removal of lilac shrubs from the northeast side of the house, and the addition of four yews to the front of the house to replace the arborvitae (Figure 1.96).[321] No further information is provided in the report as to when in 1969 or why these activities took place. Reviewing historic photographs in the park's management records confirms the transplanting and new planting took place after the dedication ceremony. Photographs from the dedication show the four arborvitaes were present at the front of the house, at the front corners of the porch and house. The Kennedys has paid for the installation of four arborvitae along the park service owned strip of land on the southwest side of the chain link fence in 1967. Photographs from early 1975 confirm the addition of four yews to the front of the house. A distinction can be made between the arborvitae and yews





Figures 1.97 and 1.98. Views of the John F. Kennedy Birthplace and adjacent homes, January or February 1975. Yew foundation planting and privet hedge are visible in front of the house. An arborvitae grows at the rear south corner of the house. A yew has been transplanted to the south corner of the backyard, arborvitaes have been replaced with yews on the front porch and house corners, and the flagpole stands in the front yard (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 1.99. View looking southeast of yew foundation plantings, privet hedge, and arborvitae in backyard along chain link fence, January or February 1975 (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 1.100. View looking south of the yew foundation planting, the kitchen window with small lilac shrubs growing below, and a Colorado blue spruce in the backyard in January or February 1975 (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 1.101. View looking northwest of the kitchen window with lilac shrubs growing below in January or February 1975 (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).

in the photographs by examining differences in their height and texture. A fifth arborvitae remained at the back south corner of the house through the 1970s, and was removed by the time the basement steps were reconfigured in 1986 (Figures 1.97 through 1.101).

In addition to changes in evergreen material at the front of the house, park records indicate that changes were made to the front hedge. The initial hedge was documented as California privet. A 1971 purchase order specifies eight additional privet for planting in the front hedge.[322]

Photographs of the front of the house during the dedication and for the subsequent twenty years do not show a site sign. Instead, the park relied on the commemorative maker, flagpole, and gaslight for wayfinding. At an undetermined date, possibly 1975, the park added a green sign with white letters to the porch railing. In about 2008, the park updated the sign to meet the new National Park Service sign standards.

Maintaining a lawn at the front of the property continued to be a challenge. Twice before the dedication ceremony, in 1967 and 1968, new Merion blue grass sod was installed in the front yard. The sod was again replaced in 1969 following the dedication, possibly due to damage caused by the number of people present at the ceremony or the ongoing site work for visitor access to the backyard. The practice



Figure 1.102. Graffiti outside the Birthplace, September 1975. After throwing a Molotov cocktail through the rear door, suspects spray painted "Bus Teddy" on the Beals Street sidewalk. Although the fire caused considerable damage to the interior and furnishings, no substantial damage to the landscape was reported. The attack and vandalism were directed at Senator Ted Kennedy's support of a desegregation plan for Boston's schools. ("JFK Home in Brookline Firebombed," *Boston Herald American*, September 9, 1975).

of installing new sod continued in May 1971 and June 1972, and has continued up until the present, reflecting the ongoing difficulty encountered by park staff in establishing a healthy lawn.

The Kennedy National Historic Site was damaged on September 8, 1975, when two unidentified suspects parked a car on Stedman Street, made their way between the houses at 82 and 86 Stedman, and threw a Molotov cocktail through the rear door of the home at approximately 10:15 pm, which ignited a fire that was quickly contained by the Brookline Fire Department. In addition to the fire, the suspects spray painted "Bus Teddy" in black paint on the sidewalk in front of the home (Figure 1.102). "Bus Teddy" was an anti-busing slogan expressing opposition to Senator Ted Kennedy's support of the program. The firebombing occurred on the first day of school under an expanded desegregation plan for Boston's schools.[323]

The fire was concentrated in the rear vestibule and kitchen, however, smoke damage was extensive throughout the house. George Stevens, a NPS Regional Architect, reported thirty square feet of the exterior wood shingles had been damaged. Stevens' report and other accounts of the event did not document any damage to landscape features other than the rear entry to the kitchen.[324] Until the end of September, emergency law enforcement officers were at the site for added security. The site did not reopen until December 1976.[325]

Undated photographs of the backyard, possibly taken in the late 1970s based on the size of the spruce, show a single row of privet growing along the rear property line (Figures 1.103 and 1.104). One small plant, either privet or lilac, grows along the northeast property line near the east corner. This plant was not present in a 1975 photograph (see Figure 1.100).

By the early 1980s, the remaining arborvitae at the south corner of the house was quite large as were the shrubs on the property (Figures 1.105 and 1.106). The park removed the arborvitae and nearby privet during this period and improved visitor access by a reconfiguration and expansion of the basement steps and landing in 1986. The reconfiguration of the steps to run alongside the house allowed for a

Figures 1.103 (left) and 1.04 (right). Views of 83 Beals, possibly in the late 1970s. The spruce is almost touching the house. A single row of privet grows along the rear property line. The yew at the south corner of the lot is visible at the far right (JOFI Management Records).







Figures 1.105 (above) and 1.106 (below). Views of 83 Beals in about 1980. The arborvitae at the south corner of the house is about eleven feet tall, the Colorado blue spruce fills the backyard and screens 85 Beals, the privet by the basement door fills the small bed, and the shrubs along the southwest foundation wall are gone (JOFI Management Records).

more gradual descent to the basement level, installation of a retaining wall in an L-shape and a wider, more generous landing at the basement level. This was an improvement over the previous steps, which descended quickly from the backyard to the basement level. The reconfiguration was made in preparation to use the basement for programming, which began in 1990.

In the backyard, a spruce tree (*Picea* sp.) planted by the Myerson family near the end of their tenure at the home was removed in March 1984. Approximately 30 to 40 years old at that time, the tree had grown taller than the house and neighboring home at 85 Beals Street (see Figures 1.106 and 1.107). Both the National Park Service and neighbor were concerned about potential damage and continuing maintenance to their roofs and gutters. Estimates were received from local arborists to remove the tree.[326] At the same time a young Colorado blue spruce was planted on the park service-owned strip of land on the southwest side of the chain link fence, in line with the columnar arborvitaes. While the arborvitaes never thrived in this location, the Colorado blue spruce flourished and soon provided a screen between the visitor entrance and the neighbor's backyard (Figure 1.109). Privet also thrived along the rear property line (Figure 1.110).

Sometime in the 1980s, some of the upright yews in the front yard were removed, eliminating the vertical elements in the foundation planting. Granite curbing ran along the entire street, with a break for the London plane roots. The curbing is







Figures 1.107 (left) and 1.108 (right). The Colorado blue spruce near the 85 Beals property line, just prior to removal, December 1983 (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 1.109. A young Colorado blue spruce was been planted in the back yard between 77/79 Beals and 83 Beals along the southwest side of the chain link fence. The property line is almost three feet to the southwest (right) of the chainlink fence. Privet, yew and arborvitae are also visible in the backyard, December 1983 (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 1.110. View of dense vegetation along the rear property line in the backyard, which appears to be privet, December 1983 (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 1.111. View of northwest elevation, John F. Kennedy Birthplace, April 1983. A television crew filmed Joseph Kennedy, Robert Kennedy's son, at the Birthplace as part of a twentieth anniversary program on John F. Kennedy's assassination. This photograph shows the first evidence of vertical granite curbing being installed on Beals Street (JOFI Management Records).

shown in an April 1983 photograph of Robert Kennedy's son, Joseph, who was filmed outside the home at 83 Beals as part of a twentieth anniversary program on John F. Kennedy's assasination (Figure 1.111). The photograph also shows that the Town of Brookline paved the tree lawn strip with concrete.

Additional removals and replacements continued into the 1990s with the replacement of the privet hedge along the back of the property and several overgrown yews in the front of the property and at the rear southwest corner.

SUMMARY

During the last decades of the twentieth century and the outset of the twenty-first century, Coolidge Corner has remained a cosmopolitan neighborhood. Two redevelopment projects, the 1970s Dexter Park apartments and the 2000s Saint Aidan's apartments, increased the number of residential units in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood. The Beals Street development remained unchanged, with the exception of a garage removal. Traffic patterns were altered to simplify the flow of visitor traffic. Change to the historic site itself since 1969 has been minimal. Some vegetation has been moved, removed, or replaced as have the site signs. A more detailed description of the present appearance of the property follows in the next chapter on existing conditions.

ENDNOTES

1 Massachusetts Historical Commission, "Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Boston Area: A Framework for Preservation Decisions," (Office of the Secretary of State, Massachusetts Historical Commission, January 1982), 10.

2 The drumlins today contain a thin layer of topsoil, up to ten inches thick, on top of compacted, mixed till. A result of the glacial activity, the till is comprised of unsorted and variably sizes of cobbles, gravel, and other soil particles. Massachusetts Historical Commission, "Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Boston Area," 10.

3 In comparison, the three hills of Boston on the Shawmut Peninsula in the 1600s, Pemberton, Beacon, and Mount Vernon rose respectively in elevation 80, 138, and 130 feet. Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History,* second edition. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1968), 6-7.

4 Aspinwall Neighborhood Association, "Natural History," Town of Brookline, http://www.town.brookline.ma.us/neighborhoods/Aspinwall.html.

5 John Gould Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline Massachusetts* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), 32.

6 The soils in this area are primarily identified as urban land complexes containing a component soils that include Merrimac, Canton and Newport. All three component soils are classified as prime farmland by the US Department of Agriculture provided they are on land that slopes from three to eight percent. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, "Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database for Norfolk and Suffolk Counties, Massachusetts," http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/Survey.aspx?State=MA

7 Holly Herbster, *John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site Archaeological Overview and Assessment* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, draft January 2007), 20.

8 Ibid, 19.

9 Ibid, 20.

10 Eric B. Schultz and Michael J. Tougias, *King Philip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict* (Woodstock, VT: The Countryman Press, 1999), 14; Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 20.

11 Schultz, *King Philip's War,* 75; Herbster, Archaeological Overview and Assessment, 20; Daniel Gookin, Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Inidans in New England in the Years 1675-1677, 435.

12 King Philip was the colonial name given to Metacom, a Wampanoag sachem. King Philip's War began in June 1675 following the murder of John Sassamon, subsequent trial, and execution of three Wampanoags. Following the execution, Wampanoags raided several farms near Plymouth and tensions quickly escalated into prolonged conflicts in southeastern Massachusetts, northern Rhode Island, the Connecticut River valley, and southeastern Maine. See Schultz, *King Philip's War*, 22.

13 Jill Lepore, No Safety for Us: The Internment of Native Americans on the Boston Harbor Islands during King Philip's War, 1675–1676 (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, December 1998), 25-30.

14 Schultz, *King Philip's War*, 74-75.

15 Ibid, i.

16 Quote from Report of the Record Commissioners, Volume II, in Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History,* 12.

17 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 1-3.

18 Ibid, 7. The bridge was completed six years later.

19 Ibid, 9.

20 Ibid, 9.

21 Ibid, 15-18.

22 Ibid, 36.

23 Ibid, 37.

24 Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House: A Guide to Brookline's Transportation Buildings to 1940*, (Brookline: Brookline Preservation Commission, 2002), 1; Greer Hardwicke and Roger Reed, *Brookline*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1998), 87.

25 Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 21.

26 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 47.

27 Ibid, 53-57.

28 Ibid, 61-62. Judge Sewall later served as one of the officials presiding over the Salem witch trials.

29 Charles Knowles Bolton, *Brookline: The History of a Favored Town* (Brookline: C. A. W. Spencer, 1897), 17-18.

30 Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 23.

31 Ibid, 23.

32 Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History,* 90.

33 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 213.

34 Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 23.

35 Ibid, 23; Reed and Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House*, 1.

36 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 197-198.

37 Quote from William Lawrence, *Memories of a Happy Life,* 1926, 3-4, in Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History*, 141.

38 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 93.

39 Ibid, 197.

40 Reed and Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House*, 1.

41 Sam Bass Warner Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston (1870-1900)*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 16.

42 Incorporated in 1831, Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History*, 101.

43 Reed and Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House*, 1.

44 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 16-17.

45 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 298.

46 Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History* (Boston: Historical Publishing Company, 1989), 102; Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 318; Hardwicke and Reed, *Brookline*, 88.

47 Jane Holtz Kay, *Lost Boston*, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980, revised 1999) 141-43.

48 Whitehill, Boston, *A Topographical History*, 94.

49 Quote from Justin Winsor, *Memorial History of Boston,* Volume VI in Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History*, 150.

50 Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History,* 146-49.

51 Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts,* 37.

52 Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History*, 149-50.

53 Town of Brookline, Department of Public Works, Division of Parks and Open Space, Department of Recreation, *Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategic Master Plan*, (Brookline, 2006), 123, 162.

54 Quote by E. W. Howe in Proceedings of the Bostonian Society, in Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History*, 180.

55 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 22-23.

56 Alexander von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace: A Presidential Home in History and Memory* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 2004), 19-20.

57 Confirmation is needed whether Whitney as an individual or the West End Rail Company commissioned Olmsted. Reviewing the Olmsted Master List, job #01172.

58 Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts*, 103; Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 298.

59 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 20.

60 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 25-26.

61 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 20.

62 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 28-29.

63 Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 10-11, 51-52. Thomas Fitzgerald lived in the North End and Patrick Kennedy settled in East Boston.

64 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 11-12, 162.

65 Ibid, 26-27.

66 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 247.

67 Ibid, 286.

68 Ibid, 295-296.

69 Cynthia Zaitzevsky, "Boston's Emerald Necklace: An Historic Perspective," in *The Emerald Necklace Parks Master Plan* (Boston: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Environmental Management, 2001), 32-33.

70 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 290.

71 Henry C. Binford, *The First Suburbs: Residential Communities on the Boston Periphery 1815-1860* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 11.

72 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 279.

73 Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs,* 164.

74 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 279-283. Starting with the Panic of 1873, an economic depression lasted until 1878 and effectively ended the annexation efforts of Boston and other major cities. For further information, see Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*, 163.

75 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline,* 213.

76 Frederick Law Olmsted, "Parks, Parkways and Pleasure-Grounds," *The Engineering Magazine,* Volume IX, April to September 1895.

77 Hardwicke and Reed, *Brookline,* 123.

78 Mac Griswold, "Afterward," in *Fairsted: A Cultural Landscape Report for the Fredrick Law Olmsted National Historic Site* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997), 144-145.

79 Brookline Preservation Commission, Study Report on the Establishment of Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District (Brookline, 2001), 3.

80 Emma G. Cummings, *Brookline's Trees: A History of the Committee for Planting Trees of Brookline, Massachusetts and a Record of Some of Its Trees* (Cambridge, MA: The Brookline Historical Society, 1938), 38.

81 Ibid, 11.

82 Ibid, 14. Cummings notes that the majority of these trees were American elms and sugar maples.

83 Town of Brookline, *Report of Selectmen*, multiple reports spanning 1908-1915. In the March 16, 1909 report, $26,000 was appropriated for "suppressing" gypsy and brown-tail moths.

84 Griswold, "Afterward," 145-146.

85 Robert Lang, Jennifer LeFurgy, and Arthur C. Nelson, "The Six Suburban Eras of the United States," *Opolis* 2, no. 1 (2006): 68.

86 Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts*, 104; von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 57-58.

87 Reed and Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House*, 15-16.

88 Town of Brookline, *Report of Selectmen, March 2, 1910*, 10-11.

89 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District*, 4.

90 Ibid, 4.

91 Ibid, 6.

92 Ibid, 8.

93 Ibid, 4.

94 http://www.onbrookline.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/sa-fact-sheet.pdf, accessed November 2, 2008.

95 Brookline Preservation Commission, "Devotion House to John F. Kennedy Birth Place," Brookline Historical Society, http://www.brooklinehistoricalsociety.org/history/presComm/devotion.asp; Town of Brookline, *Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategic Master Plan*, (Brookline, 2006), 131.

96 Brookline Preservation Commission, "Devotion House to John F. Kennedy Birth Place;" Town of Brookline, *Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategic Master Plan*, 131-132.

97 Brookline Preservation Commission, "Devotion House to John F. Kennedy Birth Place."

98 Town of Brookline, *Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategic Master Plan*, 131.

99 Ibid, 131; Cummings, *Brookline's Trees*, 15.

100 Richard T. Flood, *The Story of Noble and Greenough School, 1866-1966* (Dedham, MA: Noble and Greenough School, 1966), 3-4.

101 Ibid, 34.

102 Ibid, 43; 58-59.

103 Ibid, 58-59.

104 Roger Reed, *Study Report on the Establishment of the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2004), 10.

105 Reed, *Graffam-McKay Local Historic District*, 1.

106 Hardwicke and Reed, *Brookline*, 124; von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 43.

107 Reed, *Graffam-McKay Local Historic District*, 4-5.

108 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 43.

109 Norfolk Registry of Deeds (hereafter NRD), (Record Book) 150: 44. Documents were obtained from the Historic Architecture Program, Historic Structure Report files.

110 Brookline Historical Commission, "History of Beals Street" (photocopy, Brookline Preservation Commission, n.d.), 1.

111 NRD 369: 1; Brookline Historical Commission, "History of Beals Street," 1.

112 Brookline Historical Commission, "History of Beals Street," 1; von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 27. These two sources disagree as to whether the property was sold or Beals and Newhall entered into a partnership. Discrepancy needs to be cleared up.

113 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 94-95.

114 Ibid, 98, 100, 228-229.

115 Ibid, 124-125 and referenced newspaper photograph, 1895.

116 NRD 800: 640.

117 Brookline Historical Commission, "Beals Street Inventory" (photocopy, Brookline Preservation Commission, 1978-79).

118 Ibid, #50-3, #50-4, #51-50, and #51-51.

119 Ibid, #51-42–#51-45.

120 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys,* 234-237.

121 Ibid, 239.

122 Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Times to Remember* (1974; reprint, New York: Doubleday, 1995), 61.

123 NRD 989: 639; 1036: 181.

124 NRD 1068: 571-574.

125 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 28.

126 Roger G. Reed, "83 Beals Street" (photocopy, Brookline Preservation Commission, n.d.), 1.

127 Town of Brookline Permits.

128 Reed, "83 Beals Street," 1-2.

129 NRD 1121: 266-267.

130 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District*, 10.

131 Quoted in Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 260.

132 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 260.

133 Ibid, 261.

134 Ibid, 271-275.

135 John Gould Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline Massachusetts* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), 334.

136 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* 276, 281.

137 Ibid, 277; Alexander von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace: A Presidential Home in History and Memory* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 2004), 91.

138 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 291-95; von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 92.

139 Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline*, 321.

140 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 22.

141 Public Administration Service, *Survey of the Organization and Administration of the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1940), 2.

142 Utility work continued in Coolidge Corner during the 1910s and in her autobiography, Rose Kennedy recounted a public works-related accident on Harvard Street the evening her husband purchased a Model T Ford. Having arrived home with the new car in the summer of 1919, Rose recalled a trip, "...toward a neighborhood shopping center called Coolidge's Corner. That very afternoon I had walked there to buy a few things and on the way had noticed workmen digging a ditch preparatory to laying some water pipe. They had left two or three kerosene lanterns to mark the excavation" (qtd. in Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 62-63). The Kennedys did not see the lanterns and drove into, and eventually out of, the excavated ditch. The story helps indicate that the Coolidge Corner commercial area was not static, but continued to experience development, maintenance, and alterations during the Kennedys' years at 83 Beals.

143 Quoted in Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 259.

144 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Study Report on the Establishment of Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2001), 8.

145 Ibid, 11.

146 Ibid, 8.

147 Richard T. Flood, *The Story of Noble and Greenough School, 1866-1966* (Dedham, MA: Noble and Greenough School, 1966), 58.

148 Ibid, 60.

149 Ibid, 60-61.

150 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 34.

151 Ibid, 43.

152 Brookline Historical Commission, "Beals Street Inventory" (photocopy, Brookline Preservation Commission, 1978-79).

153 Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Times to Remember* (1974; reprint, New York: Doubleday, 1995), 61-62.

154 Emma G. Cummings, *Brookline's Trees: A History of the Committee for Planting Trees of Brookline, Massachusetts and a Record of Some of Its Trees* (Cambridge, MA: The Brookline Historical Society, 1938), 14. The author notes that as horses disappeared, so did the practice of installing the protective guards. Whether due to continuing a common practice, or possibly the presence of horses, a guard was still in use on Beals Street in the late 1910s.

155 See Cummings, *Brookline's Trees,* 19-20 for an explanation on Brookline's standard practice of installing tree lawns.

156 Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House: A Guide to Brookline's Transportation Buildings to 1940*, (Brookline: Brookline Preservation Commission, 2002), 46.

157 Copies of the photographs were obtained from the Historic Architecture Program, Historic Structure Report files. The original photographs are held by the Kennedy Family Collection at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston.

158 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 61.

159 Ibid, 61.

160 Ibid, 71.

161 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 305. The author attributes Rose's separation to her disappointment in wanting more out of life than the sedentary repetition she was beginning to experience as a young mother.

162 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 73-74.

163 NRD 1448: 393. The purchase was made in Rose Kennedy's name. This was most likely done to separate the home from Joe's financial dealings.

164 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 65.

165 Janice Hodson, *Historic Furnishings Assessment: John F. Kennedy National Historic Site* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, April 2005), 4.

166 NRD 1468: 73-74.

167 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 333-334; Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 77; Holly Herbster, *John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site Archaeological Overview and Assessment* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, January 2007), 35.

168 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 313.

169 Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 64-65. Located on a corner parcel of land, 51 Abbottsford Road has been occasionally referred to as 131 Naples Road. House numerals seen in 1920s photographs indicate the property was known as "51 Abbottsford" during the Kennedys' tenure. See Figure 1.51 for photographic detail.

170 For a detailed discussed please see *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace: A Presidential Home in History and Memory* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 2004), 33-46.

171 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 45.

172 Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 310.

173 Ibid, 312, 313, 368.

174 Ibid, 367.

175 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Study Report on the Establishment of Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2001), 10.

176 *Coolidge Corner, Brookline, Mass.: Past-Present-Future*, (Boston: Hewitt Publishing Co., 1926), 21.

177 Ibid, 21.

178 Tom Condon, Town of Brookline Engineering Department, e-mail message to author, April 22, 2008.

179 Greer Hardwicke and Roger Reed, *Brookline*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1998), 119; Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History* (Boston: Historical Publishing Company, 1989), 137.

180 Temple Ohabei Shalom, "Ohabei Shalom - Our Building | Temple Ohabei Shalom," http://ohabei.org/ohabei/building.php. The Marshall Street building, later to become the congregation's private school, was completed in 1925. East of the Marshall Street building, the main structure was completed in 1928 and is still used for services today.

181 Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts*, 137.

182 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District*, 2.

183 Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House: A Guide to Brookline's Transportation Buildings to 1940*, (Brookline: Brookline Preservation Commission, 2002), 53.

184 Reed and Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House*, 69.

185 Ibid, 68.

186 Ibid, 69.

187 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 72.

188 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 310.

189 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District*, 5.

190 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 355-56.

191 Richard T. Flood, *The Story of Noble and Greenough School, 1866-1966* (Dedham, MA: Noble and Greenough School, 1966), 70.

192 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 141.

193 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 355. Goodwin cites that the decision was made to send Joe and Jack to the Dexter School in 1924. The Dexter School was not founded until 1926, therefore, the school the boys attended was the Noble and Greenough lower school.

194 Flood, *The Story of Noble and Greenough School*, 79.

195 Flood, *The Story of Noble and Greenough School*, 79; von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 56-57. von Hoffman implies that Joe and Jack were going to Beacon Hill to attend Noble and Greenough. Since the lower school moved to Brookline in 1921 and the boys began attending in 1924, this implication is incorrect.

196 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 368.

197 Roger Reed, *Study Report on the Establishment of the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2004), 5.

198 Brookline Historical Commission, "Beals Street Inventory" (photocopy, Brookline Preservation Commission, 1978-79).

199 John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site (JOFI) Resource Management Records, Box 1, Folder 4.

200 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 44.

201 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 72.

202 Brookline Historical Commission, "Beals Street Inventory" (photocopy, Brookline Preservation Commission, 1978-79).

203 NRD 1468: 73-74.

204 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 77.

205 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 334.

206 Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 77.

207 Ibid, 84 and 144-145.

208 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 334; 396-397; 430; and 450-451.

209 Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Papers, John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, Subseries 2.3, Box 12, Married Life, 1914–40.

210 Public Administration Service, *Survey of the Organization and Administration of the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1940), 1.

211 The 1926 Supreme Court case was the Village of Euclid, Ohio v. Ambler Realty Company. The court ruled in favor of the village and their zoning regulations that prescribed the type of development that could take place on Ambler Realty's land.

212 Public Administration Service, *Survey of the Organization and Administration of the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1940), 1.

213 Public Administration Service, *Survey of the Organization and Administration of the Town of Brookline*, 2. Snow removal from the sidewalks was not new a public service. Frederick Law Olmsted observed sidewalks being cleared and was impressed by Brookline's snow removal program when he visited the town in 1881. See Cynthia Zaitzevsky, *Fairsted: A Cultural Landscape Report for the Fredrick Law Olmsted National Historic Site* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997), 9.

214 Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, "History of The Central Artery / Tunnel Project," http://www.masspike.com/bigdig/background/history.html.

215 Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 270.

216 Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston, A Topographical History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 201.

217 Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 653.

218 For additional detail on John's World War II training and service, see Goodwin, 645-60.

219 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 686-688; Kennedy, *Times to Remember*, 256-57.

220 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 709-10.

221 Ibid, 744.

222 Ibid, 746-48.

223 Ibid, 765.

224 Ibid, 782-84.

225 Ibid, 793.

226 Ibid, 804.

227 Ibid, 805-06.

228 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Beacon Street Historic Neighborhood Brochure: Coolidge Corner/Lower Beacon* (Brookline, 1996).

229 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Beacon Street Historic Neighborhood Brochure*

230 Temple Ohabei Shalom, "Ohabei Shalom - Our Building | Temple Ohabei Shalom," http://ohabei.org/ohabei/building.php.

231 Temple Sinai, "About Temple Sinai, A Reform Congregation in Brookline MA-History," http://www.sinaibrookline.org/page.php/id/122.

232 Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts*, 137.

233 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Beacon Street Historic Neighborhood Brochure*.

234 Emma G. Cummings, *Brookline's Trees: A History of the Committee for Planting Trees of Brookline, Massachusetts and a Record of Some of Its Trees* (Cambridge, MA: The Brookline Historical Society, 1938), 86.

235 Cummings, *Brookline's Trees*, 86-87.

236 Ibid, 39-40.

237 Richard L. Barber, "The History of Boston's Crosstowns the Allston-Dudley Route," *Rollsign*, May/June 1985.

238 Tom Condon, e-mail message to author, June 11, 2008.

239 Greer Hardwicke and Roger Reed, *Brookline*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1998), 93.

240 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District*, 12.

241 Pierce and Pierce, Korslund, Lenormand, and Quann, "Devotion School Feasibility Study: Town of Brookline" (photocopy, Brookline Public Library, n.d.), 6.

242 Roger Reed, *Study Report on the Establishment of the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2004), 6-7.

243 Roger Reed, *Graffam-McKay Local Historic District*, 1.

244 Roger Reed and Greer Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House: A Guide to Brookline's Transportation Buildings to 1940*, (Brookline: Brookline Preservation Commission, 2002), 48.

245 Cummings, *Brookline's Tree*, 86-87.

246 NRD 1468: 73-74.

247 Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 368; Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Times to Remember* (1974; reprint, New York: Doubleday, 1995), 144-145.

248 NRD 1809: 25-26.

249 NRD 2475: 364-368.

250 NRD 4392: 485.

251 NRD 3148: 384-386.

252 The Myerson home movie images were obtained from the Historic Architecture Program, Historic Structure Report files.

253 Reed and Hardwicke, *Carriage House to Auto House*, 48.

254 *Kennedy National Historic Site Historic Resources Management Plan* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, June 1976), 602.

255 From the Press office of John F. Kennedy, for release on delivery, January 9, 1961. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Papers, TTR Background Materials, Autobiography-General Correspondence, 1965-74, Section 2.3, Folder 1 of 5.

256 Town of Brookline, Department of Public Works, Division of Parks and Open Space, Department of Recreation, *Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategic Master Plan*, (Brookline, 2006), 131-132; Tom Condon, e-mail message to author, April 22, 2008.

257 Town of Brookline, *Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategic Master Plan*, 123.

258 Brookline Planning Board, *Coolidge Corner* (Brookline: The Brookline Planning Board, 1963), 4.

259 Ibid, 13.

260 Brookline Preservation Commission, *Study Report on the Establishment of Saint Aidan's Church Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2001), 12.

261 Pierce and Pierce, Korslund, Lenormand, and Quann, "Devotion School Feasibility Study: Town of Brookline" (photocopy, Brookline Public Library, n.d.), 6.

262 Dexter and Southfield Schools, "Dexter Southfield School ~ History," http://www.dexter-southfield.org/podium/default.aspx?t=10644.

263 Benjamin Zerby to Northeast Regional Director, January 23, 1968, JOFI Management Records.

264 Roger Reed, *Study Report on the Establishment of the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2004), 7. Two years after construction, the fraternity house was sold and continues to be occupied by a MIT fraternity.

265 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 149-150.

266 Ibid, 150.

267 NRD 3935: 197. Pollack's husband, Louis Pollack, died sometime between 1955 and 1959 based on an entry and then no entry in the Brookline tax listings for those years. For further information, see Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 37.

268 "Brookline Acts to Save Home," *Boston Herald*, 3 December 1963.

269 Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 37.

270 Committee members included George V. Brown, Jr, Chairman, Thomas J. Noonan, Eugene P. Carver, Jr, James A. Lowell, and Van Ness Bates. Town of Brookline, 256th Brookline Report for the year ending December 31, 1961, 15.

271 Catalano and Sabin, *Kennedy National Historic Site Historic Resources Management Plan*, (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1976), 602.

272 Herbster, *Archaeological Overview and Assessment*, 41. Herbster notes, "To date, no information has been obtained as to when this garage was removed from the site, or in what manner."

273 von Hoffman, *John F. Kennedy's Birthplace*, 150.

274 Kathleen Catalano and Douglas P. Sabin, *John F. Kennedy National Historic Site Historic Resources Management Plan*, (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Draft, April 1975), 1; Letter from Herbert Lawson, Community Relations Assistant, Bostongas to Charles E. McCabe, City of Boston Public Works Department-Street Lighting, August 9, 1967 in JOFI park files.

275 Catalano and Sabin, *Historic Site Historic Resources Management Plan*, 1; Keyspan Maps and Records Department, telephone conversation with author Layton, June 23, 2008. Keyspan did not have an earlier record on file for service installation at 83 Beals. The lack of an earlier record likely resulted from the local gas provider changing several times during the twentieth century as smaller companies were absorbed into larger ones.

276 NRD 4392: 485-488.

277 Janice Hodson, *Historic Furnishings Assessment: John F. Kennedy National Historic Site*, (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, April 2005), 14-15.

278 Town of Brookline, 1966 Town Report, 28.

279 Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, *A Bill to Establish the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Hearings on S. 1161*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., March 20, 1967, 5.

280 L. Boyd Finch, *Legacies of Camelot: Stewart and Lee Udall, American Culture, and the Arts.* 2008, 66-67, 105-107.

281 NRD 4461: 665-666.

282 Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy to Mrs. Edward (Ruth) Scott O'Keefe. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Papers, Series 3.2, Box 15, Modern Times, 1964-71 (incl Beals Street).

283 *Historic Furnishings Assessment*, 15-17.

284 *Historic Resources Management Plan*, (Draft, April 1975), 1.

285 "Attachment 2" in *Historic Furnishings Assessment*, 16.

286 Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Times to Remember* (1974; reprint, New York: Doubleday, 1995), 401-402.

287 "Attachment 2" in *Historic Furnishings Assessment*, 17.

288 Charles Pepper, interview with author Layton, May 21, 2008.

289 Ibid.

290 Diane Winter, Secretary of Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy to Winston Engravers, July 30, 1969. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Papers, Series 3.1, Box 37, Outgoing Letters July 1969.

291 Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy correspondence, June and July 1969. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Papers, Series 3.1, Box 37, July 1969.

292 Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy to The Honorable Walter J. Hickel. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Papers, Series 3.1, Box 37, July 1969.

293 JOFIManagement Records, Box 1, Folder 9.

294 Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy papers, Box 2, Folder 12, recorded tapes.

295 Letter from the Town of Brookline to residents, December 10, 1969, signed by John E. Woodward, Planning Director; Michael L. Burke, Director of Traffic and Parking; and Leo D. Picardi, Commissioner of Public Works. Map included. JOFI Management Records, Box 1, Folder 4.

296 Fuller Street 40 Cars; Harvard and Babcock, 60 cars; off Center Street, south of Harvard Street, 120 cars for a total of 220 parking spaces. JOFI Management Records, Box 1, Folder 12.

297 JOFI Management Records, Box 5, Folder 2.

298 Coolidge Corner District Planning Council, *Coolidge Corner District Plan* (Brookline, May 2007), 18. In the district plan document, the boundaries of the Coolidge Corner district are greater than the ones presenting in this report and include an area south of Beacon Street heading toward Brookline Village.

299 District Planning Council, *Coolidge Corner District Plan*, 25; "Beacon Street Transportation Improvements" at http://www.townofbrooklinemass.com/Dpw/BeaconStreet.html.

300 Ibid, 21.

301 Ibid, 21.

302 Ibid, 21.

303 Ricki Morell, "From Four Parishes to Two Archdiocese to Merge 4 Churches in Brookline; [City Edition]," Boston Globe, 25 April 1999, http://www.proquest.com.

304 Ibid.

305 Kay Lazar, "Church Closings Bring Pain to Parishioners," Boston Herald, 27 February 2000, http://www.proquest.com.

306 Pierce and Pierce, Korslund, Lenormand, and Quann, "Devotion School Feasibility Study: Town of Brookline" (photocopy, Brookline Public Library, n.d.), 6.

307 Pierce and Pierce, "Devotion School Feasibility Study," 6-10.

308 Roger Reed, *Study Report on the Establishment of the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District* (Brookline, 2004), 1.

309 Reed, *Graffam-McKay Local Historic District*, 7.

310 Ibid, 2.

311 Coolidge Corner District Planning Council, *Coolidge Corner District Plan* (Brookline, March 2007), 31.

312 Additional information on streets and utilities is contained in the Town of Brookline, Department of Public Works records.

313 The Beals Street trees were identified as *Platanus x acerifolia* with the assistance of Walter Kittredge, Harvard University Herbaria, June 29, 2012.

314 Field observations in May 2008 note the street tree in front of 88 Beals is a *Tilia* species. The current field size indicates it was planted prior to 1994 and the inventory identification of *Ulmus* was incorrect.

315 JOFI Management Records, Box 2, Folder 14.

316 JOFI Management Records, Box 8, Folder 1.

317 JOFI Management Records, Box 8, Folder 1; *Kennedy National Historic Site Historic Resources Management Plan* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, June 1976), 602.

318 JOFI Management Records, Box 8, Folder 2.

319 JOFI Management Records, Box 8, Folder 1.

320 Charles Pepper, interview with the author, May 21, 2008.

321 *Historic Resources Management Plan*, June 1976, 602.

322 JOFI Management Records, Box 8, Folder 2.

323 JOFI Management Records, Box 4, Folder 14 FBI Report; Box 8, Folder 9 undated newspaper clippings.

324 Ibid.

325 Box 4, Folder 15 "Cleaning and Restoration of Objects Damaged in Firebombing, 9/8/1975" (no author or page numbers). Vehicles matching the partial license and physical description provided by witnesses were thoroughly investigated, however, no suspects were arrested or prosecuted. A recent article cited fugitive Boston mobster James "Whitey" Bulger as one of the perpetrators of the crime. See Shelley Murphy "Bulger Linked to '70s Antibusing Attacks; [Third Edition]," *Boston Globe*, 23 April 2001, http://www.proquest.com.

326 JOFI Management Records, Box 3, Folder 4.

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter describes the current landscape characteristics and features of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, Beals Street development, and the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site as documented in the spring and fall of 2012. Features documented include spatial organization, topography and natural systems, circulation, buildings, utilities, views, vegetation, and small-scale features.

The Coolidge Corner neighborhood is in North Brookline, which falls within the northeastern corner of Norfolk County and is just west of Boston. The study area to be described in greater detail below lies to the north of Beacon, east of Harvard Street, west of St. Paul, east of Naples, and south of Abbottsford Road and Freeman Street—covering an area of slightly over 200 acres (Drawing 14). The Kennedy National Historic Site is situated along a quiet residential street within this area. The park is open to the public from spring until fall. Annual visitation in recent years has ranged from 14,000 to 16,000 visitors during a six-month programming season plus visits by special appointment. Overall the property is in good condition.

COOLIDGE CORNER NEIGHBORHOOD

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

Based on a loose grid-like network of streets, the majority of which are residential connector streets, the spatial organization of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood has remained nearly unchanged for the past century (see Drawing 14). The Coolidge Corner neighborhood radiates approximately one half mile from the



Figure 2.1. View northeast of the intersection of Beacon and Harvard streets at Coolidge Corner. Beacon Street is over one hundred feet wide with lanes for vehicles, trolleys, bicyclists, parking, and pedestrians (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Figure 2.2. View south of Harvard Street looking toward the intersection with Beacon Street (Olmsted Center, May 2012).

hub created by the intersection of Harvard and Beacon streets. The neighborhood to the north of Beacon Street exhibits a range of development types and styles, which contribute to its vitality.

Anchored by commercial, institutional, and apartment buildings, Beacon and Harvard streets provide a popular social center for the surrounding area (Figure 2.1). Beacon Street is a broad corridor characterized by its mature street tree canopy and wide sidewalks with ample width for vehicles, streetcars, parking, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Harvard Street is also lined with assorted young street trees and functions similarly to Beacon Street, but on a smaller scale without streetcar lines (Figure 2.2). The surrounding residential area contains an array of parks, squares, and playgrounds, which provide green space for the neighborhood.

TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL SYSTEMS

Prior to its development, the Coolidge Corner neighborhood was characterized by a mixture of wetland and drumlin features. Speculative developers in the late 1800s filled Babcock Pond and accompanying minor waterways in North Brookline, and leveled the once prominent Babcock's Hill. Due to the density of the neighborhood development, these key natural features are difficult to discern.



Figure 2.3. View looking northwest at the Devotion School playground and athletic fields. Devotion Street was closed and no longer divides the fields, but the street trees and sidewalk remain and cross the open space (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

CIRCULATION

Though the neighborhood has changed in density, circulation has remained nearly the same. Today, Beacon and Harvard streets remain major corridors in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, with the constant din of passing cars and trucks. The commercial area is heavily visited and mid day street parking is highly sought after, though town parking lots ring the commercial area. Four vehicle lanes on Beacon Street plus parking and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Green Line trolley convey a high volume of traffic to, through, and from the Coolidge Corner neighborhood (see Figure 2.1). On a smaller scale, Harvard Street also provides two-way traffic and parking on either side of the tree-lined street (see Figure 2.2). Other main streets, including Pleasant, St. Paul, and Babcock streets, serve as connectors between Beacon and Harvard streets and Commonwealth Avenue to the north of the neighborhood.

Several smaller residential connector roads further subdivide the neighborhood. These narrow roads, loosely organized in a north-south and east-west orientation, typically allow parking on one side of the street and many are one-way. Devotion Street, once a through street, now dead-ends at the Devotion School playing fields, though the sidewalk continues across the field (Figure 2.3). On the other hand, John Street has been extended. Originally only connecting Pleasant Street and Green Street, now John Street also connects to Babcock Street (see Figure 2.17).

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Throughout the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, clusters of buildings reflect their building style, purpose, and period of development. The Coolidge Corner neighborhood was built in stages, with architecture ranging from the Queen Anne style of Abbottsford and Manchester roads, to the Colonial Revival style of Beals Street, and the townhouses and apartments of the early 1900s to the east (Figures 2.4 and 2.5). The more recent apartment complexes overshadow older

Figure 2.4. (left) View north across Abbottsford Road of the Queen Anne style house where the Kennedy family resided from 1920 to 1927 (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

Figure 2.5. (right) View north of the 1920s three-story Mayflower Court apartment complex from Freeman Square at the intersection of Babcock (left) and Freeman (right) streets (Olmsted Center, May 2012).







Figure 2.6. View north across Freeman Street at the intersection of Still Street of the nine-story Dexter Park apartment building on the former site of the Dexter School (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Figure 2.7. View north across Freeman Street of Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church, which was closed in 1999. The Kennedys were members of the church when they lived in Brookline from 1914 to 1927. The property behind the church was developed for apartments (Olmsted Center, May 2012).

residential structures. For example, on the original site of the Dexter School now stands the modern, planar, multi-story Dexter Park apartment complex (Figure 2.6). Its unornamented exterior reflects its period of design and construction, and contrasts with the older fenestrated buildings that surround it. A portion of the Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church site was recently redeveloped with multi-story apartment buildings to provide mixed income housing. The multi-story building is tucked in the corner of the site and concealed by mature trees (Figures 2.7 and 2.8).

The commercial buildings along Beacon and Harvard streets have similar setbacks and the buildings are relatively low, ranging from one to three stories (see Figure 2.1). Similarly, residential areas are differentiated by varying setbacks, building heights, and styles. The 1890s Graffam and McKay homes along portions of

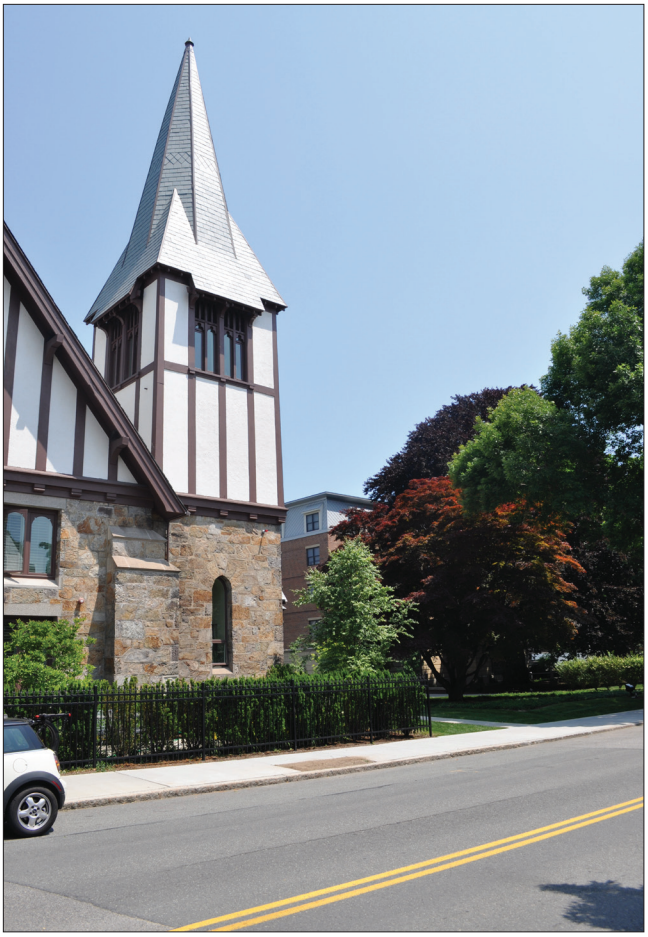


Figure 2.8. View northeast of Saint Aidan's Roman Catholic Church (left) and the recently built mixed income apartment complex in the distance at center (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

Babcock Street, Manchester, Abbottsford, Osborne, and Naples roads are similar in lot size, setback, scale, and architectural detailing (see Figure 2.4). The 1920s three-story Mayflower Court apartment complex represents a denser pattern of development (see Figure 2.5). The 1970s nine-story Dexter Park apartment building is one of the largest and tallest buildings in the neighborhood (see Figure 2.5). As will be described in more detail later in this chapter, the homes on Beals and Stedman streets contain a mix of townhouses, duplexes, and single family homes that are similar in setback and scale.

The most striking contrasts between adjacent developments are properties that have been redeveloped. Examples include the Dexter Park apartment complex, the Saint Aidan's parcel redevelopment, and the brick fraternity house within the Graffam development (see Figures 2.6, 2.8, and 2.9).

Since the green spaces within the Coolidge Corner neighborhood were set aside during the peak development period of the late 1800s, most are surrounded by fairly uniform clusters of buildings and townhouses built during the same time period. Open spaces within the neighborhood include the Devotion School entrance and playing fields, Freeman Square, Dwight Square, Winthrop Park, Knyvet Square, and a small public space at the intersection of Beals, Stedman, and Gibbs streets (Figures 2.10 to 2.15).



Figure 2.9. View south of the Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity House of Massachusetts Institute of Technology that was build within the Graffam development in the 1960s at the intersection of Manchester and Naples roads (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.10. View east of the open space in front of the Edward Devotion School (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.11. View northeast of Freeman Square, a triangular area of green space with benches, flower beds, and a commemorative sign at the intersection of Freeman and Babcock streets. The Mayflower Court apartments are visible across Freeman Street (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

Figure 2.12. View northeast of Dwight Square, a triangular area of green space with benches and flower beds at the intersection of Dwight and Babcock streets (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.13. View looking north of Winthrop Park, formerly known as Winthrop Square, which includes a popular playground area, rose garden (right, not visible) and athletic field (behind playground). The Dexter Park apartment building is visible in the distance (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



VIEWS

Notable views within the Coolidge Corner neighborhood include streetscapes of varying width and character, ranging from the narrow tree-lined residential streets such as Beals Street to the broad tree-lined boulevard of Beacon Street. Other notable views include views across the green spaces. In particular the view across Knyvet Square is striking because of its simple design, mature trees, and sense of openness heightened by the contrast of surrounding apartments (see Figure 2.15).

VEGETATION

Street trees are central to the character of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood. Beacon Street, which was originally planted in elms, is now predominantly lined with oaks, though a number of other species are also present (see Figure 2.1). Likewise, Harvard Street and other streets in the neighborhood have



Figure 2.14. View looking northeast of Knyvet Square (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.15. View southwest of small public space at the intersection of Beals, Stedman, and Gibbs streets. A circular island is edged with granite and filled with ornamental trees and shrubs (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.16. View looking northwest of the mixture of street tree species along Harvard Street (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.17. View looking south on John Street. Similar to Harvard Street, John Street displays a mixture of street tree species (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

an assortment of street trees, such as gingko, honeylocust, crabapple, and Norway maple (see Figures 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.16 and 2.17). Beals Street is unique with its monoculture of London planes lining almost the entire street (Figure 2.18). Individual properties are filled with an assortment of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants. Most common species used for hedges and foundation plantings include yew, privet, and boxwood.

Figure 2.18. View northeast down Beals Street of an allee of plane-trees arching over the street (Olmsted Center, July 2009).



SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

The neighborhood is filled with small-scale features typically found in an urban setting. In addition to street lights and planters, the most relevant features are the "Welcome to Brookline" sign, located at St. Mary's and Beacon streets and the directional signs to the Kennedy National Historic Site on Harvard Street (Figure 2.19). Regulatory signs are placed along most streets to enforce parking restrictions and parking meter pay stations are found along the commercial streets (Figure 2.20). Benches are located at bus stops and in parks (see Figures 2.11, 2.12, and 2.20). Commemorative markers are also placed in parks. Both Winthrop Park and the Devotion School grounds contain playgrounds (see Figure 2.13).

ARCHEOLOGICAL FEATURES

Archeological features were not documented as part of this study. However, extensive building activity and urban development over the past two centuries has likely impacted early historic archeological resources.

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

The Beals Street development encompasses the residences along Beals and Stedman streets that are within the 1890s thirteen-acre Beals Estate subdivision (Drawing 13). The busy commercial setting of Harvard Street, with its wide sidewalks and young trees of mixed species contrasts markedly with the quiet residential character of Beals Street, with its narrow sidewalks and mature London planes (see Figure 2.18). Stedman Street, with the Edward Devotion School and athletic fields along its southeastern side and residences to the northwest, has a semi-private character (Figure 2.21). While the Beals Street development is entirely residential, nearby institutional buildings include the Edward Devotion School to the southeast and the Congregation Kehillath Israel Synagogue to the southwest, both of which face onto Harvard Street.

TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL SYSTEMS

The topography of the Beals Street development is fairly level. To the northwest of the Kennedy National Historic Site, the remaining knoll that used to be Babcock's Hill gives insight into what the land looked like before the hill was used as fill for Babcock Pond and its associated wetlands. A low point is present on Stedman Street northeast of the Devotion School Playground and the topography rises to the northwest from Beals Street to Naples Road. Many properties on the northwest side of Beals Street have retaining walls to hold the change in grade (Figure 2.22). Several homes near the intersection of Beals, Stedman, and Gibbs Street appear to have settled, suggesting that they were built on filled wetlands associated with the former Babcock Pond and Smelt Brook.

Figure 2.19. View looking northwest of National Park Service directional sign along the east side of Harvard Street at the intersection of Beals Street. Also note the street lamp, planter, and parking meter (Olmsted Center, May 2012).

Figure 2.20. View north on Harvard Street of small-scale features along the street including parking meters, regulatory signs, street lights, traffic lights, and benches. (Olmsted Center, May 2012).







Figure 2.21. (left) View looking southwest on Stedman Street. A portion of the Edward Devotion Elementary School can be seen on the left (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.22. (right) View looking northwest on Beals Street. Note the retaining wall behind the brown house and the roof line height of the red house in the background in comparison to the homes on Beals Street (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.23. View looking southwest up Beals Street toward Harvard Street showing the similar setback of homes along the street. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

The soils in the development are primarily identified as urban complexes containing component soils that include Merrimac, Canton, and Newport. All three component soils are classified as prime farmland by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, provided that they are on land that slopes from three to eight percent.

CIRCULATION

Harvard Street serves as a gateway to the Beals Street development and Beals Street is a one-way connector street running northeast from Harvard Street to meet Stedman Street and Gibbs Street. Because the street is narrow, parking is only allowed on the southeast side of Beals Street. In addition to light automobile traffic, Beals Street also receives light foot traffic. Lined with mature trees, Beals Street is a popular and picturesque street to stroll down (see Figures 2.18, 2.23, 2.24, and 2.25). Though the streetscape is striking, the wide trunks of the London planes and bulging roots have impacted the sidewalks, which are uneven, cracked, and patched with asphalt (Figure 2.26). Private front walkways extend perpendicular from each home to the Beals Street sidewalk and street curb. Usually paved with concrete, bluestone, or pre-cast concrete unit pavers, these smaller and less frequently used walks remain consistent in condition and style with the homes they serve (Figure 2.27).

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Individual lots within the development are generally uniform in architectural style principles. Each single family home or duplex is nearly centered, on a one-tenth acre site. Setbacks from the street and spacing between the homes are modest,



Figure 2.24. Houses in the Beals Street development are typically two and one half stories and spaced 15 to 20 feet apart. Houses on the southeast side of Beals Street typically have open porch entries. Also note the elm planted as a replacement for a London plane along the street. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.25. Houses on the northwest side of Beals Street typically have enclosed projecting porch entries. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

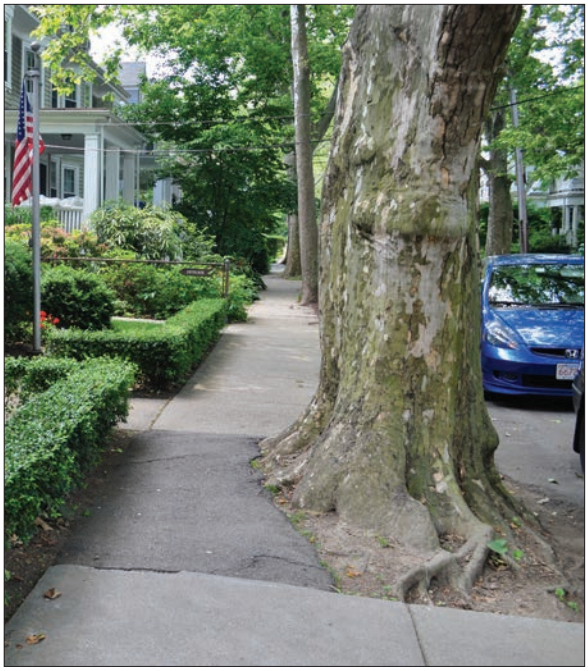


Figure 2.26. View looking southwest up Beals Street toward Harvard Street showing lifting of the sidewalk caused by the plane-tree roots and trunks, and the resulting unsightly asphalt patches, June 2012).



Figure 2.27. View looking northeast down Beals Street from the Kennedy National Historic Site. Note the concrete sidewalk and the connecting concrete walk leading to the front porch of the neighboring house at 85/87 Beals (Olmsted Center, May 2008).



Figure 2.28. Overhead utility lines travel above the northwest side of Beals Street on telephone poles. Lines cross over Beals Street to connect to the Kennedy National Historic Site, pictured here during a special event (Olmsted Center, May 2008).

yet generally consistent between each property (see Figures 2.23 and 2.24). At the same time, there are some slight differences between groups of houses. Houses on the southeast side of Beals Street, especially on the northeastern end of the development, typically have open porch entries (see Figure 2.24). In contrast, homes on the northwest side of the street tend to have enclosed, projecting entries (see Figure 2.25).

UTILITIES

Overhead utility lines run along the north sides of Beals and Stedman streets. Gas and sewer lines run underground down the center of the streets. In addition to the overhead lines on their respective streets, some older utility lines still run along the back lot boundary between the houses that front on Stedman and Beals (Figures 2.28 and 2.29).

VIEWS

With relatively level topography and dense development, there are limited views in the Beals Street development. The most notable views are down Beals Street. The mature trees that line Beals Street frame a vista to the southwest of the Congregation Kehillath Israel Synagogue on Harvard Street (Figure 2.30). A similar tree-framed vista is present looking northeast; however, there is no prominent terminus at this end of the street.

VEGETATION

Vegetation in the Beals Street development is comprised primarily of street trees, hedges, and small patches of maintained lawn and herbaceous plant beds. Most



Figure 2.29. View looking south from the rear yard of the Kennedy National Historic Site. Note the utility line at the far left running along the back of the properties on Beals and Stedman streets (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

striking are the nearly 110-year-old London planes (*Platanus x acerifolia*) that line Beals Street (see Figures 2.18 and 2.23). The London planes are distinguished by their greenish-gray peeling bark, high upper leaf lobe with teeth, and dissected rather than broad overall leaf shape. The small lawns fronting each building, each with an assortment of plants, are generally well kept and create a repetitive and cohesive pattern in conjunction with the early twentieth century architecture (see Figures 2.24, 2.25 and 2.27). At the convergence of Stedman, Gibbs, and Beals streets, a raised planter bed with granite edging contains a variety of plants, ranging from commonly used yews to more ornamental rhododendrons and a magnolia (see Figure 2.15).

Along the southwestern half of Beals Street, the rhythm of mature London planes is interrupted by a recent planting of shade trees as foundation plantings (Figure 2.32). On the northeastern end of the Beals Street development, near the 83 Beals property, two street trees planted as replacements for plane trees interrupt the intended monoculture. On the southeastern side of the street, an elm was planted in the place of an original Beals Street London plane (see Figure 2.24). Directly



Figure 2.30. View southwest up Beals Street toward Congregation Kehillath Israel Synagogue, framed by plane-trees (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.31. View looking northeast on Beals Street. Note the small-scale features along the street, including signs, vegetation, low walls and fences. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.32. Fence and screening hedge in front of a Beals Street home. Shade trees are planted beside the foundation rather than in the tree lawn (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

opposite, on the northwestern side of the street, a linden replaced one of the original London planes. Though two of the original trees have been replaced, the integrity of the street tree collection is superior to any of the other streets in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood.

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

Small-scale features found within the Beals Street development include street signs, regulatory and directional signs, and flags. Between properties, a combination of driveways, fences, hedges, or other vegetation delineate the accepted boundaries of each parcel (Figure 2.31). More recently, some homes have added fences, vegetation as a privacy screen, and trees to front yard landscapes (see Figure 2.32). Some homes have an American flag attached to the front of their home or porch post (Figure 2.33). Generally mounted on the home itself, 83 Beals is the only home with an in-ground flag pole.



Figure 2.33. Flags attached to the front of the home at 80 Beals Street (Olmsted Center, September 2010).

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

Less than one-tenth of an acre in size, the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site can be divided into four spaces: the front yard, the southwestern side yard, the northeastern side yard, and the backyard (Drawing 14). Located at 83 Beals Street, the inconspicuous site where the thirty-fifth President was born could easily be overlooked from the street or sidewalk if not for four unique features: the National Park Service sign affixed to the porch railing, the commemorative marker installed by the Town of Brookline in 1961, the flagpole in the front yard, and the gas light along the sidewalk (Figures 2.34 and 2.35).

The front yard serves as the public face of the site and is open to the street and neighborhood. The entry porch and walk divide the yard into nearly equal halves,



Figure 2.34. View southeast of the Kennedy National Historic Site, which is distinguished from other houses on Beals Street by the gas light, flagpole, commemorative marker, and park sign (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.35. Front facade and yard of the Kennedy National Historic Site at 83 Beals Street and adjacent home during a special event (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Figure 2.36. North corner of the front yard at the Kennedy National Historic Site during a special event. The porch is partially obscured by a row of yews. An incomplete low privet hedge lines the sidewalk. The property is separated from the neighboring property to the northeast by a chain link fence. Note the exposed roots of the large plane-tree in the sidewalk (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Figure 2.37. Angled view of the front yard of the Kennedy National Historic Site during a special event (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Figure 2.38. View south of the west corner of the front yard of the Kennedy National Historic Site. A walkway extends along the side yard and a chain link fence separates the property from the neighboring house to the southwest (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.39. Angled view of the front yard of the Kennedy National Historic Site (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

and while not perfectly symmetrical, the front yard is balanced in its organization. The yard is adorned with yews, small panels of turf, colorful annuals (during the summer months), and sparse yet tightly cropped privet hedges. The shrubs wrap around and frame the commemorative marker to the southwest of the flagpole and the short height of the privet allows views to the marker from the street and sidewalk (Figures 2.36 to 2.39).

Partially shielded by the yew plantings along the front house foundation, the southwestern side yard includes the walk that leads to a more private space at the back, which is now used as the main visitor entrance in the basement. Comprised of a thin turf strip and a concrete walkway running from the front yard to the rear yard, the side yard's sole purpose is to convey visitor and staff foot traffic. Though in full view of the neighboring house, a three-foot high chain link fence provides a degree of separation (see Figure 2.37). The narrow bed at the base of the fence contains pachysandra on the park side of the fence and impatiens, rose, raspberry, and perennial plantings on the neighbor's side (Figures 2.40 and 2.41).

Figure 2.40 (left). Entrance to the walk along the southwest side of the Kennedy National Historic Site with the neighbor's porch in the background (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

Figure 2.41 (right). View from the rear yard of the park toward Beals Street showing the side yard and walk used to access the visitor center in the basement (right). The park planted pachysandra along the chain link fence and the neighbor maintains impatiens, roses, raspberries, perennials, and evergreens (Olmsted Center, June 2012).





Although it once served as the primary route to the rear yard, the east side yard is now seldom used. The neighboring home is in close proximity and the side yard is almost completely hidden when viewed from Beals Street. This side yard is narrower than the southwestern side and is bounded by the northeastern side of the house and a three-foot high chain link fence approximately four feet away. The narrow side yard is screened by the yew plantings in the front yard and serves as a storage space for garbage cans, garden hoses, and other maintenance items (Figures 2.41 and 2.42).

The rear yard is broken into three distinct spaces: a mulched planting bed, lawn, and a concrete walk. The lawn is small and level, and serves as a place for outdoor congregation (Figure 2.43). A concrete path connects the kitchen door and basement door with the walk along the southwest side of the house (Figure 2.44). Similar to the southwestern side yard, the rear yard maintains a sense of separation and privacy from the nearby neighboring homes with chain link and wood board fences. In addition, evergreen vegetation on the southwest side provides a degree of screening and privacy.



Figure 2.42. The northeast side yard is four feet wide, bounded by a chain link fence, and is used for storing garbage cans, tools and watering hoses (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.43. View looking toward Beals Street of the utilitarian northeast side yard (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

TOPOGRAPHY

The site is predominantly flat, though the property drains slightly to the northeast towards a former wetland area associated with Babcock Pond, which was filled as part of the development of the site and surrounding neighborhood.

CIRCULATION

Circulation at the site consists of a network of walkways that connect to the public sidewalk. The front walk extends from the public sidewalk, where it is five feet wide, and bisects the front yard. At the foot of the steps that lead up to the porch and front door, the concrete walkway widens to six feet. All tours begin of the front porch of the home. There are no major cracks or hazards apparent (see Figure 2.39).

Along the southwest side of the site, the four foot wide concrete walkway extends from the sidewalk to the rear yard, and leads to the basement entrance, back door, and the backyard paved area and landscape (Figure 2.46). Originally laid in 1969, just after the dedication ceremony, the southwest side walkway is in good condition with only a few minor cracks (see Figure 2.42).

The only other hardened surface on the property is a short flagstone walkway, located in the western side of the front yard. The walkway, only twenty inches wide and five feet long, facilitates staff access to the flagpole, and is in good condition. It is not a connective path but is used by staff as a place to raise and lower the flag, as well as by visitors to access the marker on the lawn (Figure 2.47).

Staff also access the northeast side of the property by a wood-chip mulched corridor that extends between the house and chain link fence to the outdoor water faucet, hose, and trash and recycling storage containers. The area is often muddy and lacks a drip strip along the foundation.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

The house is the only building at the site, after the removal of a one-car garage between 1966 and 1969. Minor remodeling has occurred over the years and overall the house is in good condition (see Figure 2.36). Reaching high over the gabled peak of the house, the trees drop seasonal leaf litter, sometimes clogging the gutter system. As the gutters fill with run-off during rainstorms, they overflow and spill water to the ground, two and a half stories below. In an effort to avoid splashing at the foundation of the house, a stone drip strip was installed that provides a uniform finish immediately surrounding the structure (see Figure 2.46).

VIEWS

There are no true notable views of or from the property, but the mature tree-lined sides of Beals Street create a unique vista from the property when one looks either northeast or southwest on the street (see Figures 2.18 and 2.23). The relatively short setback of the house from the street and proximity of neighboring homes limits a notable view of the Kennedy National Historic Site (see Figure 2.35).

VEGETATION

For its small size, the site contains a variety of plants and an abundance maintenance related challenges. The trees along the street and surrounding the property contribute shade in the summer months. However, retaining understory vegetation is difficult. In the front yard, the shade of the massive London plane impairs the growth of the turf, hedge, and yew shrubs. Though healthy and well



Figure 2.44. View of the east corner of the rear yard. A chain link fence and wood board fence separate the park from the neighboring properties. Note the overhanging branches of a large silver maple and adjacent oak. A row of privets is thin and barely visible in front of the board fence. The neighbors backyard is highly visible. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.45. View looking northwest of the basement entry and concrete walk in the foreground that leands to the kitchen door (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.46. View of the stone drip strip that surrounds the house along its foundation. The drip strip reduces splashing on the house when the gutters clog with leaves and overflow. The concrete walk to the kitchen door is visible on the left and the eastern corner of the house and downspout is on the right, and a bicycle rack (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.47. Flagstones lay on the west side of the front yard that lead to the base of the flagpole (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 2.48. A healthy Colorado blue spruce stands in the south corner of the rear yard. The three unhealthy eastern arborvitae that are growing under the canopy of a silver maple lean northwest for more sunlight (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

tended, the separate hedges on either side of the front entry are different widths and are not uniform, as their layout suggests they should be (see Figures 2.37 and 2.38). At some point, single plants were removed due to damage or death, leaving holes in the privet hedge. The massing of yews, tolerant of low light conditions, is in good health, though leggy. Presently, the yews are overgrown for their intended purpose of screening the foundation. The yews are now obscuring the porch railing, park sign, house siding, and commemorative marker (see Figures 2.34 and 2.36). In 2008, maintenance crews began a selective pruning program to care for the yews. At the northern corner of the front yard, three yews were replaced in kind and are in good condition.

In addition to shading out some of the vegetation in the front yard, the London plane roots have lifted the concrete sidewalk, and as mentioned previously, leaves often clog the gutters, causing other issues for the site. At the base of the tree, an asphalt patch has replaced a section of the concrete sidewalk (see Figure 2.36). The granite curb that runs along the street is absent for the length of the tree's planting area and is due to the tree's extreme girth and bulging of the root system (see Figure 2.26).

While the southwestern side yard experiences some shade, the effects are not nearly as severe as in the rear yard. On the side yard, the lawn is in fair condition as is the recently planted pachysandra groundcover along the base of the fence (see Figure 2.42).

In the rear yard, a large two silver maple and a leggy pin oak overhang the property line from adjacent parcels. The trees capture most of the light and soil moisture in the rear yard. Understory plantings, including a row of privet and three eastern arborvitae, are stressed due to lack of light and moisture. Intended for screening, the privet and arborvitae are thin. The arborvitae located closest to the rear fence is least healthy. It reaches for sunlight, bending to the northwest and out of the southeastern neighbor's silver maple canopy. Progressively, as sun becomes more available, the health and vigor of each plant increases. The third arborvitae to the northwest is in the best condition with denser foliage and a fuller crown. Similarly the privet, known for their hardiness and vigor, appear ragged due to the difficult growing conditions (see Figures 2.44 and 2.45). The rear lawn also lacks vigor. The only plant seemingly unaffected by the rear yard shade is a 25 to 30 foot-tall Colorado blue spruce. Loosely limbed up to about three feet, the spruce is a healthy specimen with dense frosty blue needles (Figure 2.48).

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

The site is small and uncluttered, and contains only a few small-scale features. For example, in the rear yard, a teak table and set of four teak chairs are the only site furnishings available. Currently situated in the southern corner of the yard, the



Figure 2.49. Commemorative marker in the front yard installed by the Town of Brookline in 1961 (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

teak furniture provides outdoor seating for the property's staff, but blocks the sunlight to the lawn below. For this reason, the furniture is typically stored on the edge of the lawn area (see Figure 2.48).

Among the most important features at the site is the commemorative marker. Comprised of a vertically set granite block, fronted with a bronze plaque, the marker measures 24 ¼ inches wide, by 36 inches tall, by 9 inches deep. The plaque contains a bas-relief profile of John F. Kennedy, and a brief description recognizing the site as his birthplace. It is located in the front yard, nestled into a mass of yews (Figure 2.49). Also in front of the house, a reproduction gas light stands on concrete pavement, where a swath of lawn for the street trees was originally located. The light post is fluted, tapers from top to bottom, and has a black finish. The luminaire is cylindrical and the mantles are lit throughout the day. Though historically, no gas lamps existed on the southeastern portion of Beals Street, the intent is to call attention to the time of the Kennedys' residence (see Figure 2.34).

An eleven and one half-foot flagpole was installed in the front yard after the site dedication. Set in concrete surrounded by an exposed, corrugated metal sleeve, it is located at the end of the flagstones that lead off of the main entry walk (see Figure 2.34 and 2.47). Located on the front porch, the National Park Service sign and accompanying brochure rack offer additional and in-depth information about the site (Figure 2.50).

The chain link fence, installed before the 1969 dedication ceremony, lines the sides and rear of the lot, but not the actual property lines. At the western corner of the property, the fence is two and one half feet northeast of a National Park Service survey monument (Figure 2.51). This indicates that many of the neighbor's plantings along the fence line lie on park property.

For special events, chairs are set in the street, a podium is set on the front walk, and the house is draped with flags, which hearken back to the appearance of the property on its dedication day on May 29, 1969 (Figures 2.52).



Figure 2.50. A new National Park Service sign was installed on the front porch in 2008. (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Figure 2.51. The National Park Service bronze boundary marker, the small disc visible in the foreground, is two and one half feet beyond the chain link fence on the southwest side of the property (Olmsted Center, October 2008).



Figure 2.52. Devotion School students participate in the essay and poetry program held annually in May. Set up for this special event includes flags draped from the second story porch and porch columns, a podium on the front walkway, and chairs on Beals Street (Olmsted Center, May 2012).



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

Existing Conditions Coolidge Corner Neighborhood Context

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Beacon Street Historic Transportation and Landscape Enhancement Project, September 2005
4. Construction Management Plan, St. Aidan's, Brookline, MA, February 2008.

DRAWN BY

Matthew Morgan & Tim Layton
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Buildings
- Walking Tour Route
- Streetcar Rail Lines
- Public Parking Lot

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

3. Map represents landscape conditions inventoried in October 2008.

0′ 75′ 150′ 300′

Drawing 12



Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
Brookline, Massachusetts

Existing Conditions
Beals Street Development

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. MassGIS 1:5,000 Color Ortho Imagery Captured April 2005
3. Field Inventory, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, October 2008

DRAWN BY

Tim Layton, AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

Property Line

Buildings

Deciduous Tree

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

3. Map represents landscape conditions inventoried in October 2008.

0′ 37.5′ 75′ 150′

Drawing 13

PLANT LIST

Code	Scientific Name	Common Name
AS	*Acer saccharinum*	Silver Maple
LS	*Ligustrum* sp.	Privet
PA	*Platanus × acerfolia*	London Plane
PPG	*Picea pungens glauca*	Colorado Blue Spruce
QP	*Quercus palustris*	Pin Oak
TM	*Taxus × media*	Common Yew

Eastern Arborvitaes
(Thuja occidentalis)
(Removed 2010)

Concrete Sidewalk

Granite Curb

Pachysandra
(Pachysandra terminalis)

Concrete Sidewalk

Lawn

Annuals

Flagpole

Lawn

Annuals

BEALS STREET
(Asphalt Paving)

Asphalt Patching

Lawn

Compacted Earth Surface

Concrete Sidewalk

Granite Curb

Concrete Sidewalk

Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

2012 Existing Conditions John Fitzgerald Kennedy Birthplace

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. Town of Brookline GIS Data
2. Pres. John F. Kennedy Birthplace, Historic American Buildings Survey, Sheet 2 of 7, 1966
3. Plot Plan 83 Beals Street, Brookline, Mass. by Somerville Engineering Services, Inc. 1976
4. Field Inventory, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, October 2008

DRAWN BY

Tim Layton & Cassandra Bosco
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Deciduous Tree
- Planting Bed
- Stump
- Reproduction Gas Light
- JFK Commemorative Marker
- Flagstones
- Chain Link Fence
- Water Valves
- Utility Pole
- Stone Drip Strip

NOTES

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3. Map represents landscape conditions inventoried in April 2011.

0' 2.5' 5' 10'

Drawing 14

Chapter 3. Analysis and Evaluation

Upon John Fitzgerald Kennedy's election to the presidency in 1960, those places associated with his earlier years took on new meaning. Brookline celebrated his association with the town by painting his birthplace home and installing a commemorative marker. In 1963, the site became a place of mourning and a shrine after Kennedy was assassinated. The Kennedy family ensured that the site would be preserved for future generations by acquiring the site in 1966, gifting the site to the National Park Service in 1967, and formally dedicating the site on May 29, 1969, which would have been John F. Kennedy's fifty-second birthday.

This Analysis and Evaluation chapter provides an overview of the historical significance of John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site in accordance with the 2011 draft National Register of Historic Places documentation. The first section reviews the National Register status, areas of significance, and overall integrity of the historic landscape. The second section describes the landscape characteristics and features that contribute to the significance of the property. A summary table at the end of the chapter lists all documented landscape characteristics and features. The area documented includes the 0.09-acre National Historic Site, as well as a broader character analysis of the Beals Street development and the Coolidge Corner neighborhood within the study area of some 200 acres.

NATIONAL REGISTER AND LANDMARK STATUS

The National Park Service evaluates the historical significance of properties through a process of identification and evaluation defined by the National Register of Historic Places program. The National Register recognizes properties that are significant to our nation's history under the following criteria: (A) Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; (B) Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; (C) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or (D) Yield or may be likely to yield information from the pre or post-contact periods of history.

EXISTING DOCUMENTATION FOR KENNEDY NHS

The property at 83 Beals was designated a National Historic Landmark on July 19, 1964 for its association with John Fitzgerald Kennedy. It was administratively listed

in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966 upon passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The property was designated as a National Historic Site on May 26, 1967. The National Register documentation, initially completed in 1976, was updated in 2011 in conjunction with the site's General Management Plan. The amended registration adds new areas of significance, a new period of significance, and an additional contributing site, associated feature, and object.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 2011 draft documentation recognizes the property as significant under Criterion A in the area of social history as the birthplace of a president and for the memorial aspect of the site, and Criterion B for its association with both John Fitzgerald Kennedy, thirty-fifth President, and Rose Kennedy, the family matriarch who played a central role in the rise of America's prominent political family. The first period of significance extends from May 29, 1917, the birth of John Fitzgerald Kennedy at the site, to 1920, when the Kennedy family moved from the home. The second period of significance begins on November 22, 1963, when Kennedy was fatally shot, and extends to May 29, 1969, when Rose Kennedy, who was personally involved with the site's memorialization, formally transferred the property to the National Park Service, and the site opened to the public.[1]

As will be detailed later in the chapter, the landscape more closely reflects the physical changes that took place during the 1960s. The site served as a place of mourning following Kennedy's assassination in 1963 due in large part to the commemorative activities undertaken by the Town of Brookline, notably the installation of the commemorative marker. After the Kennedy family purchased the home in 1966, they donated the property by deed to the National Park Service in 1967, though the park did not take custody of the house until 1969. The site opened to the public in May 1969 after the extensive renovations were complete.

Extant features on the 3,820 square foot (0.09-acre) property that contribute to the significance of the landscape for the early period of Kennedy ownership include the house, front walk, and yard areas. Extant landscape features that contribute to the second period of Kennedy ownership in the 1960s and the associated memorial landscape include the house, ornamental shrub plantings in the front yard, the front walk, commemorative marker, and chain link fence. As will be described in more detail in this chapter, some 1960s landscape features are no longer present.

Landscape features and characteristics that contribute to the broader character of the Beals Street development and the Coolidge Corner neighborhood include spatial organization, land use, streetscape, street trees, sidewalks, lighting, utilities, building setbacks and height, lot size, density of lot coverage, outbuildings, views,

and small-scale features. In particular, notable streetscape features include the London plane and gas light in front of the 83 Beals house. The following section details each area of significance for the Kennedy National Historic Site.

National Register Criterion A: Commemoration of John Fitzgerald Kennedy

The property at 83 Beals Street is significant under Criterion A for its association with the commemoration and memorialization of John Fitzgerald Kennedy from his assassination on November 22, 1963 to the official transfer of the national historic site administered by the National Park Service at the dedication on May 29, 1969.

Kennedy was born in the 83 Beals Street house on May 29, 1917 and resided there until the family moved to Abbottsford Road in 1920. Despite the short duration of young John's years at 83 Beals, many Brookline residents associated the property with him as he rose through the political ranks. Although the house was still a private residence in the early 1960s, the Town of Brookline received permission to install a commemorative marker, paint the house, and redesign the front yard landscape plantings in 1961—after Kennedy's presidential inaugeration. When Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, people gathered at 83 Beals to mourn and honor him, and almost immediately regarded the site as a shrine. Local efforts to create a memorial in the neighborhood were unsuccessful. In 1966, the Kennedy family purchased the home. Rose Kennedy took a lead role in refurbishing the house and then donated the property to the National Park Service in 1967. Work progressed slowly, due in part to Robert Kennedy's campaign for President and assassination in 1968. The dedication ceremony took place on May 29, 1969, at which time the birthplace was open to the public.

National Register Criterion B: Association with President John Fitzgerald Kennedy

John Fitzgerald Kennedy (May 29, 1917 – November 22, 1963) was a nationally significant figure in American history. After graduating from Harvard in 1940 with a degree in international affairs, he joined the Navy in 1941. He served as a lieutenant in command of a motor torpedo boat during World War II and was honorably discharged in 1945.

Kennedy's political career began in 1946 when he successfully ran for the U.S. House of Representatives—taking office in January 1947 and serving three successive terms. He then ran for the U.S. Senate in 1952 and beat the incumbent, Republican Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. While serving his second term as senator, Kennedy authored the Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Profiles in Courage*, and narrowly missed becoming the Democratic candidate for vice-president. Based on his broad popularity and audience appeal in the first televised presidential debate, the nation elected John Fitzgerald Kennedy as its thirty-fifth President on November 8, 1960, when he beat the Republican nominee Richard Nixon. Taking

office on January 20, 1961, Kennedy became the youngest elected and first Roman Catholic president. Kennedy served for slightly less than three years, or one thousand days, before he was fatally shot while on a political visit to Dallas, Texas.

National Register Criterion B: Association with Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy

Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy (July 22, 1890 – January 22, 1995) was a nationally significant figure in American history as the family matriarch and public figure who played a central role in the rise of America's most prominent political family. Born Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald, she was the eldest child of Mary Josephine Hannon Fitzgerald and the charismatic Boston politician John Francis Fitzgerald. Known as "Honey Fitz," he served in the U.S. Congress and was the first Irish Catholic to serve as mayor of Boston. Rose was educated at the Dorchester High School, the convent school Kasteel Bloemendal in the Netherlands, the New England Conservatory in Boston, and the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart in New York. Her marriage in 1914 to Joseph Kennedy expanded Rose's social and political sphere. While she raised their nine children, Joseph's success in banking, business management, liquor importing, and the film industry made them one of the country's wealthiest families. The Kennedys lived with increasing prosperity as they moved from Massachusetts, to New York, to Washington, D.C., and London, while acquiring vacation homes in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, and Palm Beach, Florida.

Rose Kennedy's role in electoral politics expanded when her sons entered public life, and in her increasingly public role, she preferred to be called Mrs. Joseph Kennedy. Speaking of her sons' formative years, she gained votes for them with her speeches and public appearances before religious, political, social, and charitable groups, most notably at women's clubs. After the assassination of John, she assumed a leading role in refurbishing their former home at 83 Beals to become a place where people could experience a tangible link to his life. While the memorial was a tribute to her fallen son, the furnishings, collections, and oral histories—intended to be used as part of the tour—reflect her ideals relating to family and motherhood. A prolific writer and correspondent, Rose Kennedy recorded her experiences in diaries, travel journals, and letters. She used her writings to produce talks and speeches, as well as her 1974 memoir *Times to Remember*. She was also a leading advocate for people with disabilities and for research on mental retardation.[2]

National Register Criteria Consideration G: Significance within Fifty Years

The 83 Beals property meets Criteria Consideration G because it possesses exceptional importance for the period from 1963 to 1969 for its association with the establishment of property as a presidential site and also for reflecting the role of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy as a symbolic figure in American history in her own

right. After President Kennedy's death, the house became a place where people came to experience a tangible link to the slain President during the period of social and political upheaval. In addition, the property is intimately associated with Rose Kennedy as the courageous mother of the slain President when she reacquired the house for the purpose of restoring it as a formal memorial to her son. It reflects, in its furnishings, collections, and oral histories intended for use as part of the audio tour, her own ideals relating to family and motherhood. The site interprets episodes from her own life and as a mother, a role for which she was widely recognized and to which the political success of her sons John, Robert, and Edward provided the most direct testimony. Rose Kennedy spoke at length about the personal meaning of many of the objects in the house and how they reflected her beliefs. The property conveys its "exceptional importance" through its association with Rose Kennedy and its high degree of historic integrity to the 1963 to 1969 period.

NEARBY HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Two other National Register listings are within the study area defined for this report. For its entire length in Brookline, Beacon Street was listed in the National Register in 1985. The Graffam Development was listed in the National Register in October 1985. A larger area was designated as the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District in 2004 (see Figure 1.17).

Beacon Street Historic District

The National Register documentation for Beacon Street describes the area as consisting of Beacon Street from Saint Mary's Street to Ayr Road with a portion of Tappan Street and Garrison Road included to preserve a grouping of townhouses similar to others found on Beacon Street. The period of significance extends from 1890, when Frederick Law and John Charles Olmsted's 1886 plan for Beacon Street was implemented, to 1980—an end date that is not explained in the documentation. The defined area is slightly over two miles in length, cutting across north Brookline from east to west.[3]

Beacon Street's design, noted for its original concept of streetcars running down the center of a residential and commercial boulevard, is derived the Olmsted's detailed plan. The original design was implemented with the financial and political support of Henry Whitney. Frederick Law and John Charles Olmsted proposed turning the narrow county road into a 160-foot-wide boulevard with one avenue for commercial and through traffic and another for pleasure driving, including lanes for cycling, riding, and walking. The 1886 plan is also noted for the inclusion of street trees along each side of the railway track to create a park-like experience and to screen views of the passing streetcars. Although the original cycling and bridle paths have been replaced with parking areas and the original elms have been replaced with mixed species, the concept of the boulevard with streetcar service running down its center is still intact.[4] Three distinct commercial areas occur in

this section of Beacon Street, most notably Coolidge Corner, which is named after the first commercial structure in the area—the Coolidge and Brother store built in 1858. The implementation of the Olmsted's plan for Beacon Street marked Brookline's change from an agricultural community to a streetcar suburb. In 1971 the Brookline Planning Board established a policy to preserve the architectural and visual continuity of Beacon Street and to recognize it as symbolic of Brookline's character.[5]

Graffam Development Historic District

The 1985 National Register documentation for the Graffam Development Historic District describes the area as a residential subdivision developed by Peter Graffam in the 1890s. The area includes the homes on Abbotsford and Manchester Roads, and is bounded by Babcock Street on the east and Naples Road on the west, with three homes on Naples Road included in the nomination. The neighborhood is significant under National Register Criteria A, B, and C. The period of significance extends from 1895 to 1906, spanning the construction dates for homes in the district, though the areas of significance also include the Kennedy's residence within the neighborhood between 1920 and 1927. The Graffam development is noted for being developed entirely by one man within a twenty-two year period and as an example of a streetcar suburb development spurred by the expansion of Beacon Street. The homes are largely influenced by Colonial Revival or Queen Anne styles, and built in similar size lots of six or seven thousand square feet with twenty to twenty-five foot setbacks. The district is also noted for its association with the Kennedy family, who resided at 51 Abbottsford Road.[6] The Town of Brookline also designated the neighborhood as the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District in 2004. The local historic district covers a larger area, which extends further north and east. The local historic district includes the properties along both sides of Manchester, Abbottsford, Naples, and Osborne roads; Babcock Street; and the houses to the south of Winslow Street.

BEALS STREET DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER ANALYSIS

The Beals Street development, also known as the Beals Estate, has not been evaluated for National Register eligibility. The thirteen-acre Beals Street Development is an intact and distinctive streetcar suburban development, begun in 1897 and built out by 1928.[7] The development includes the Kennedy home at 83 Beals and approximately seventy lots on Beals and Stedman streets, between Harvard Street and Manchester Road. The development may be considered in the future for its historic association with the suburbanization of Brookline and for its association with the Kennedy family. The suburban development retains a high level of integrity to its dates of construction, including many of the shade trees installed in about 1900.

The Beals Street development consists of a single residential subdivision that was built along a streetcar line near the edge of the existing city, Boston, from which residents commuted daily to jobs in the central city.[8] These residential landscapes originated in the middle of the nineteenth century as part of the decentralization of the American city. American suburb developments are generally categorized by the form of transportation that spawned them—railroad and horsecar suburbs appeared in the 1830s to the 1890s, streetcar suburbs in 1888 to 1928, early automobile suburbs from 1909 to 1945, and freeway suburbs, developed from 1945 to 1960.[9] By reducing travel time, the railroad, then streetcar, then automobile, opened land further from the city for residential development and allowed middle-class citizens to fulfill their dream of home ownership and material well-being.

The Beals Street development exemplifies broader historical trends for American cities in the 1800s. In the mid 1800s Brookline was a rural town near Boston, with some suburban and urban features. By 1885, Brookline had become densely populated by linear residential neighborhoods that grew up parallel to the streetcar lines, which extended radially from the city. Meanwhile, less accessible areas in Brookline remained underdeveloped.[10] The new residential developments included both upscaled apartment buildings and individual homes, both of which which became synonymous with stylish living. For the growing middle class, the suburban home offered a sanctuary from the city and a safe and proper setting for raising a family, with stores, house of worship, and schools in close proximity.[11]

The cultural landscape of the suburban residential development can be described as three layers imprinted on the land, each of which is described below. [12]

Land Use and Geographical Location

The first layer of the cultural landscape is characterized by its land use and geographical location. The Beals Street development reflects the aspirations of the Kennedy family and many others who traveled by streetcar to Coolidge Corner. The Kennedy's first home at 83 Beals Street was about a fifteen minute walk from the Coolidge Corner streetcar stop. The subdivision is characterized by its origin as an estate—the 76-acre Babcock estate—which was subdivided into smaller regularly sized residential parcels according to a plan that established a street system and utilities, as well as the placement of residential buildings of assorted styles. Unlike more upscaled subdivisions, natural features were not incorporated into the layout of the subdivision—instead, Babcock Pond and the associated wetland area were filled. The grid of lots imposed on the site reflected an efficient and inexpensive template to fulfill the demand for low-cost houses for middle and working-class households.[13] As was characteristic of these developments, multiple story apartment buildings were integrated into the development and placed closer to the streetcar stop and the more heavily traveled road, Harvard Street.[14]

Circulation Network and Utilities

The second layer of the cultural landscape encompasses the plan by which the land was divided and organized, and the provisions made for a circulation network, including streets and pedestrian walks, and utilities, including water, lighting, electricity, telephone, and sewage disposal.

As was typical for streetcar suburbs, the development was fit within an existing gridiron of streets that ran parallel and perpendicular to the streetcar line. The Beals Street development neighborhood is surrounded by Naples Road to the north, Manchester Road to the northeast, Babcock Road to the south, Winchester Street on the southwest, and Harvard Street to the west. Harvard Street is the major commercial thoroughfare passing through North Brookline, while Coolidge Corner, at the intersection of Harvard and Beacon Streets, is the commercial center of North Brookline and the location of the original streetcar stop for the neighborhood (see Figures 1.19 and 1.20).[15]

The Beals Street development, including Stedman Street, was subdivided around the early 1900s by Benjamin Newhall, one of the two principal developers in the area at the time. Beals Street consists of a one block long residential street beginning at Harvard Street and continuing northeast until it merges with Gibbs and Stedman Streets. Poured concrete sidewalks are installed on both sides of the streets. A raised circular planter with ornamental plantings and trees marks its terminus. Shortly after the opening of the Kennedy National Historic Site in 1969, traffic became one-way with parking only permitted on one side of each street.

As is typical of streetcar suburbs, development along Beals and Stedman streets is largely consistent in land use, scale, and density. Most of the properties were built within a twenty year period and have remained minimally altered. The properties are zoned for single or mutli-family use, with lots ranging in size from 3,000 to 6,000 square feet.[16] The property at 83 Beals is one of the smaller lots in the development. The lots are largely rectangular with the longer axis in the southeast/northwest direction. Due to the small overall lot sizes, the development is dense with narrow side yards between neighbors.

Building and Landscape Fabric

The third layer of the cultural landscape consists of the building and landscape fabric, primarily in the form of dwellings, garages, community facilities, vegetation, walls, and fences.[17]

The majority of the structures in the Beals Street development are wood-framed, between two-and-one-half and three stories, and have a largely uniform twenty foot setback from the property line (and almost thirty feet from the street). Most dwellings include a front porch at their entrance and a driveway leading to a detached structure, typically a small garage or shed in the rear corner of the yard.

Stedman Street is similar in lot size and overall scale to Beals Street. The common style for the residences is the vernacular Colonial Revival style with variation in details of Queen Anne, Georgian, or Federal Revival. Most homes also feature wood shingle or wood clapboard siding.[18] Further detailed documentation of the buildings is contained in the draft Historic Structure Report authored by Carole Perrault, Architectural Historian for the National Park Service Northeast Region Historic Architecture Program (draft 2009).

The Colonial Revival dwelling at 83 Beals is a typical streetcar suburb home. Progressive ideals of the late 1800s and early 1900s called for house designs that were simple, efficient, and linked to municipal utilities including phone, electricity, water, sewer, and gas lines. The American foursquare became popular in the 1890s. The typical foursquare was two-and-one-half stories with a raised basement, one-story porch across the front, evenly sized rooms on each floor, and dormers. The most popular style for the foursquare was Colonial Revival.[19]

Garages for the growing number of automobiles became a key element in the suburbs after 1900. The Kennedys purchased a Model T Ford in 1914 and may have been one of the first families in the Beals Street neighborhood to own a vehicle. They did not, however, own a garage until they moved to Abbottsford Road. Garages appeared in the Beals Street development in the late 1910s—there were about four by 1920, but not one at 83 Beals until 1928. Though automobile ownership increased and streetcar use declined nationwide after 1923, the MBTA Green Line continues to operate, thereby preserving the relationship of the Beals Street development to the center city via public transportation.[20] As was typical of the first garages, the garage at 83 Beals was placed behind the house at the corner of the lot at the end of a long driveway that consisted of two tracts of concrete pavement.[21] The garage and concrete tracks were removed just prior to the dedication of the Kennedy National Historic Site in 1969.

Community facilities stand adjacent to the Beals Street development, including the Devotion School and its associated playing fields, several houses of worship, and the nearby stores at Coolidge Corner. Community parks and open spaces also surround the development. A planted island at the intersection of Beals and Stedman offers a small community space. The lack of larger community spaces within the development speaks to its relatively small size and the economics of residential development at the time of construction.

Street trees planted for shade and ornamental purposes reflect a conscious program of civic improvement by the developer and Town of Brookline. Plantings were also considered important for maintaining the long-term real estate value of the neighborhood.[22] Now mature, the street trees contribute to the cohesiveness of the development. Beals Street is lined with approximately 100 year old plane trees whose girth impact the sidewalk but lend an identifiable character to the neighborhood.[23] Trees of mixed species and ages grow along Stedman Street.

Fences and planted screens provide separation between adjacent homes. In some cases these barriers are not present due to the introduction of shared driveways for access to rear yard garages. Retaining walls are prevalent to the north, where lots were cut into the slope of Babcock Hill. Rectilinear lots allow for semi-private rear yard spaces. Vegetation within each parcel reflects the individual tastes and interests of the homeowners and fills front, side, and back yards. Sunlight is dappled due to the density of the development and mature tree canopy.

Summary

The Beals Street development retains its character as an intact example of speculative development and residential expansion of an early twentieth century streetcar suburb. Defining characteristics include its proximity to public transportation, layout parallel to the streetcar line, mixed housing types, slight variation in design styles and materials, similar setbacks and scale, vehicular and pedestrian circulation network, and shared utilities. Additional defining characteristics include the presence of narrow driveways and shared driveways, detached garages, and small back yards, which were characteristic of early twentieth century streetcar suburb developments. The London planes lining Beals Street further lend a unifying character to the neighborhood and a sense of its continuity and age. Indeed, the plane-trees lining Beals Street remain the best preserved example of the initial monoculture street tree plantings for the various streets developed in the area around the early twentieth century. Though Stedman Street was initially planted with silver maples, the trees became brittle with age and were subsequently replaced with mixed species.[24]

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL INTEGRITY FOR KENNEDY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

This section focuses on the historical integrity of the Kennedy National Historic Site. Integrity, as defined by the National Register, is the ability of a property to convey its significance through its physical resources. The National Register recognizes seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Retention of these qualities is essential for a property to convey its significance, though all seven qualities need not be present to convey a sense of past time and place. Using these seven aspects of integrity, the significance of the site, both as a presidential birthplace (May 29, 1917 to 1920) and memorial site (November 22, 1963 to May 29, 1969), is described below and summarized in Table 1.

Location

Location is defined by the National Register as the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Kennedy home at 83 Beals remains in its historic location and the associated landscape is extant.

Evaluation: Retains integrity of location

Design

Design is defined by the National Register as the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The layout of the Kennedy home, its front walkway, sidewalk, and the plane-tree reflects both the 1910s and 1960s appearance, while the secondary walkways, fences, vegetation, and small-scale features reflect the 1960s period. The plane-tree is part of the design of a larger streetscape allee that dates to c. 1900, which is beyond the property boundary.

Evaluation: Retains integrity of design to both the 1910s and 1960s.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment of a property and the general character of the place. During the 1910s period, the residential development was incomplete, with vacant lots to the northeast and northwest on Beals Street. During the 1960s, the residential development was complete and the setting appeared as it does today.

Evaluation: Does not retain integrity of setting to the 1910s; Retains integrity of setting to the 1960s.

Materials

Materials are the physical features that were combined or deposited during the periods of significance in a particular pattern or configuration to give form to the property. In terms of built materials, the 83 Beals property retains the house, front walkway, sidewalk, and plane-tree which are central to the property's significance. However, other landscape materials date to the 1960s rather than 1910s period, including the shrubs, hedges, commemorative marker, gas light, and boundary fence.

Evaluation: Retains integrity of materials to both the 1910s and 1960s.

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts and methods of construction used during the specified historic period of significance. From the 1910s period, the 83 Beals property retains the workmanship evident in the house and

front walk, but the other landscape features present during this period, albeit minimal, are gone, such as the chicken-wire fence and northeast side walkway. Workmanship carried out during the 1960s is still evident, such as the shrub plantings, hedges, commemorative marker, gas light, and boundary fence.

Evaluation: Retains integrity of workmanship to both the1910s and 1960s.

Feeling

Feeling is the expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular time resulting from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey a property's historic character. The Kennedy birthplace evokes the sense of place created by Rose Kennedy in the 1960s, but not the stark open feeling of the new neighborhood in the midst of development in the 1910s.

Evaluation: Does not retain integrity of feeling to the 1910s; Retains integrity of feeling to the 1960s.

Association

Association is the direct link between an important event or person and the property. Although the Kennedy home is no longer a private residence, its unassuming presence, knit into the fabric of a residential neighborhood, is evident and reflective of both the 1910s and 1960s periods.

Evaluation: Retains integrity of association to both the1910s and 1960s.

Overall Integrity

Overall the landscape of the site retains historical integrity including its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to the 1960s period but only its location, design, workmanship, materials, and association for the 1910s period of ownership. The house retains its Colonial Revival design and detailing, while the landscape reflects the commemorative treatment of a small suburban lot, as it appeared in the 1960s, and does not reflect the unadorned appearance of the 1910s. The home remains in its residential setting, though house lots to the northeast and northwest of 83 Beals were built upon after the Kennedys moved in 1920. The landscape retains some of the key materials and workmanship dating to the Kennedys' residency in the 1910s—most notably the plane-tree, sidewalk, and front walk—but many materials were added in the 1960s including the walk on the southwest side of the house, the commemorative marker, as well as the chain link fence, shrubs, hedges, and flowers. Most of the materials and workmanship date to the 1960s period of ownership. The site no longer expresses the feeling of the 1910s landscape, as the houses to the northeast and northwest were not yet built and the plane-trees not mature, creating a feeling

of openness. Similarly, in the 1910s, the street trees were young and barely casting shade, whereas by the 1960s, the trees created a cathedral-like allée down Beals Street. The site retains its association with the Kennedy family, the Beals Street development and the Coolidge Corner neighborhood for both the 1910s and 1960s periods of Kennedy ownership.

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF INTEGRITY, JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Significance	Kennedy Ownership, 1910s	Commemorative Period, 1960s
Overall Integrity	Yes	Yes
Location	Yes	Yes
Design	Yes	Yes
Setting	No	Yes
Materials	Yes	Yes
Workmanship	Yes	Yes
Feeling	No	Yes
Association	Yes	Yes

EVALUATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

This section evaluates the historic character of the Kennedy birthplace landscape and its setting by contrasting historic conditions in the 1910s and 1960s with existing conditions. The evaluation includes a brief history of the landscape characteristic and an evaluation of extant associated features. Extant characteristics and features defined as "contributing" are those that were present during the period of significance of 1917 to 1920 and/or 1963 to 1969 and retain their historic character.

The end date for the period of significance is May 29, 1969, when Rose Kennedy completed renovations to the home and the site opened to the public. Some features are described as "non-contributing," because they were altered or added since this date. These non-contributing features may or may not detract or alter the historical significance and integrity of the landscape. Table 2 contains a summary of the contributing and non-contributing landscape characteristics. Features that are no longer present, but were on the site on May 29, 1969 are also described.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

Spatial organization refers to the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground,

vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. For 83 Beals, the historic spatial organization is intact

As described in the previous section on the Beals Street Development Character Analysis, the former Kennedy home at 83 Beals was one of some seventy lots within a subdivision built between 1897 and 1928 (see Figure 1.19). When the house at 83 Beals was constructed in 1909, it was sited in the center of the property. A central walkway led to the front porch, while a walk on the northeast side of the house led to the back kitchen and basement doors. The lots on the northeast and northwest side were undeveloped while the Kennedys resided there (see Figure 1.31). Homes were not built on the neighboring properties until 1922, after the Kennedys had moved to Abbottsford Road. The London planes that run along Beals Street were planted circa 1900 and were not yet mature when the Kennedys lived at the property (see Figure 1.35).

Residential spatial organization

Evaluation: Contributing

The lot coverage, setback, and physical relationship of the house to the yard and to Beals Street are largely unchanged since the Kennedys resided there. The feeling of openness that surrounded the house changed in 1922 when homes were built on the adjacent northeastern and northwestern properties. The approach to the site similar, as the street alignment and the neighborhood have largely remained unaltered. The plane trees have provided a consistent vertical and overhead plane that has grown more prominent throughout the years. In the 1960s, the front yard took on new meaning as a place of commemoration, and then a place of memorialization. Vegetation and a chain link fence added to the front yard in 1967–68 framed the house, and the front yard became a stage for the dedication ceremony (Figures 3.1 through 3.4). The existing conditions of the site's spatial organization are minimally changed since 1969, but more altered since 1920.



Figure 3.1. View east of the Kennedy National Historic Site in 1968 showing the property shortly before the dedication ceremony. This image was used on the cover of the dedication ceremony program. (JOFI Management Records, Box 1, Folder 9).

The spatial organization of the site reflects its condition in the 1960s, with the lot coverage, setback, and physical relationship of the house to the yard and to Beals Street largely unchanged, and therefore contributes to the character of the historic landscape despite its alteration since 1920 (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2).

TOPOGRAPHY

Topography is the three-dimensional configuration of a landscape surface characterized by slope and orientation. The topography of the site was originally characterized by the nearby drumlin, Babcock's Hill and wetland area known as Babcock Pond (see Figures 1.7 and 1.18). These natural features were regraded during the 1890s as part of the Beals Estate development. The site of the 83 Beals home is just to the northwest of the former wetland area.

Flat topography

Evaluation: Contributing

The 83 Beals site is relatively flat with a slight drop in grade to the southeast. Since construction of the former Kennedy home in 1909, the site's topography has remained largely unchanged. The natural and manipulated topography—now



Figure 3.2. View east of the Kennedy National Historic Site in 1975 showing the flat topography, proximity of adjacent homes, narrow front lawn, the southwest side yard and walk, and the chain link fence. A yew from the west corner has been moved to the south corner. Arborvitae have been replaced with vertical yews and moved from the front of the house to the rear side yard. An arborvitae still grows at the south rear corner of the house (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 3.3. View east of the Kennedy National Historic Site showing the flat topography, proximity of adjacent homes, narrow front lawn, the southwest side yard and walk, and the chain link fence. Note the addition of the Colorado blue spruce, the loss of the arborvitaes in the side yard, and the growth of the yews (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

relatively flat—contribute to the character of the historic landscape (Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3).

CIRCULATION

Circulation is comprised of the spaces, features, and materials that make up the network of pedestrian and vehicular movement. For 83 Beals, circulation within the property was initially limited to the pedestrian walkways that led to the front and back of the house. During the late 1920s, the Myersons added a one-car garage to the south corner of the property and a pair of concrete tracks leading from the street to the garage (see Figures 1.65, 1.67, and 1.76). The garage was present when the property was repurchased by the Kennedys in 1966, but removed by 1968. The front walkway has remained in its original location since the house was built in 1909. The northeast side walkway to the backyard existed during the Kennedy's residence in the 1910s and is visible in family photographs. The walkway remained up through the 1960s, but was removed in about 1969. After the dedication ceremony, the park installed a new concrete walkway along the southwest side of the house. Each circulation feature that was present in 1969 or introduced later is described in greater detail below.

Front concrete walkway

Evaluation: Contributing

The front concrete walk used to access the house from the sidewalk was installed about 1909 and has remained in the same location since the Kennedys residence at the site. Currently the front walk extends from the public sidewalk, where it is four and a half feet wide, and bisects the front yard. At the foot of the steps that lead up to the porch and front door, the concrete walkway widens to five and a half feet, where it meets the six foot wide porch steps. All tours begin of the front porch of the birthplace. Visible in the 1969 dedication photographs, the front walk is at least forty years old and is in good condition (see Figure 1.86). There are no major cracks or hazards apparent. The front yard walkway has been present throughout both periods of significance and therefore contributes to the character of the historic landscape (see Figures 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6).

Southwest side concrete walkway

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The southwest side concrete walkway was installed by the National Park Service in 1969, after the dedication ceremony, for ease of access by staff and visitors to the site. The backyard had traditionally been accessed by a walkway on the northeast side of the house, installed prior to the Kennedys residence,



Figure 3.4. View southeast of 83 Beals during the dedication ceremony, May 29, 1969 with arborvitae, trimmed yews, and a low privet hedge in the front yard that frame the house and commemorative marker (Stoughton photograph, 69-333-3-33, National Park Service).



Figure 3.5. View southeast of 83 Beals in 1975 with trimmed yews in the front yard that frame the house and commemorative marker. Note the lack of a park sign on the porch (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 3.6. View southeast of 83 Beals with trimmed but overgrown yews in the front yard. The yews frame the house and commemorative marker. The vertical arborvitae are no longer present. A park sign covers the porch railing and the diameter of the plane tree continues to expand. A Colorado blue spruce screens views to the neighboring houses on Stedman Street (Olmsted Center, June 2012).



Figure 3.7. View north of the front yard of 83 Beals during the 1969 dedication ceremony. The back of the commemorative marker, adjacent yews, and privet hedge are visible in the foreground (Stoughton photograph, 69-333-5-2, National Park Service).



Figure 3.8. View east of 83 Beals with trimmed but overgrown yews in the front yard. The yews frame the house and commemorative marker. Note the difference in size of the yew to the west of the marker as compared to Figure 3.7. The vertical arborvitae are no longer present. A park sign covers the porch railing (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

when homes were not yet developed on the parcels to the northeast. The park removed this sidewalk in about in 1969 in favor of installing a wider walkway on the southwest side. The southwest side walkway is presently in fair condition with some settling and cracks. The four foot wide connective path from the sidewalk to the backyard leads to the site's basement entrance and rear landscape area. It serves as the only exterior walkway connecting the three main landscape areas of the site. The southwest side concrete walkway was installed after the 1969 dedication ceremony and therefore is not a contributing feature (see Figures 3.1, 3.7, and 3.8).

Backyard paved area

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Up until 1969, a narrow concrete walk led from the front sidewalk along the northeast side of the house to the backdoor and basement. The narrow walk was likely installed about 1909 and is visible in Kennedy family photographs from the 1910s (see Figures 1.37, 1.38, 1.39, 1.44 and 1.45). The park removed the northeastern half of the backyard concrete surface in about 1969. The park widened the paved surface by the backdoor and extended it to the southwest to meet the walkway along the southwest side of the house in 1969, after the dedication ceremony. The park installed these features to allow visitors to exit the house through the kitchen door and walk through the backyard to the front of the house. The backyard paved area as it is presently configured post-dates the 1969 dedication ceremony and therefore does not contribute to the character of the historic landscape (see Figures 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6).

Blue flagstone walk

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The park installed a short walk consisting of bricks, which were later replaced with blue flagstones off the front walkway in 2002 to ease staff access to the flag pole erected in the front yard and to allow visitors to access the memorial plaque. The walkway, only twenty inches wide and five feet long, is in good condition. It is not a connective path but is presently used by staff as a place to raise and lower the flag, as well as by visitors to access the memorial plaque on the lawn. However, as visitors follow the path and then continue across the lawn to the commemorative marker, the lawn becomes compacted, which then becomes a maintenance concern. The blue slate flagstones were installed after the periods of significance and therefore are not a contributing feature (see Figure 2.46).

Granite curb and tree lawn along Beals Street

Evaluation: Non-contributing, Outside of Park Property

The granite curb along 83 Beals Street was not present during the historic period (see Figure 3.1). The first photograph that shows the granite curb dates to April 1983 (see Figure 1.111). A tree lawn, the strip of grass between the sidewalk and road was present during the historic period, but was paved after the 1969 dedication. The pavement in the tree lawn does not contribute to the historic character. The granite curb and paved tree lawn were installed by the Town of Brookline and are not on park property.



Figure 3.9. View northwest of the basement door at the rear of the home in 1975. Note the privet shrub growing to the east of the steps. (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 3.10. View northwest of the basement door and visitor center entry at the rear of the home. The privet shrub is gone. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

Concrete steps leading to basement

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The original basement steps rose directly into the backyard from the basement door. To facilitate access to the basement visitor center, the park built a new set of concrete basement entry steps in the summer in 1986 and reconfigured and expanded the steps and landing. Five steps—four feet in length and ten inches in width, with six and a half inch risers plus one step with a five and one half inch riser—lead visitors to the site's main entry. Currently, the concrete steps are the main access point into the visitor center by the public and are in good condition. The concrete steps were installed after the periods of significance and therefore are not a contributing feature (see Figures 2.45, 3.9, and 3.10).

Northeast side concrete walkway

No Longer Exists

A narrow walkway extended from the street to the back door and basement door. The walkway is visible in Kennedy family photographs from the 1910s, when there was no neighboring house to the northeast (see Figures 1.36, 1.37, and 1.44). The walkway is visible in 1963 and 1964 photographs, but is removed in about 1969 (see Figures 1.77, 1.79, and 1.81).

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in the landscape, notably the single-family house at 83 Beals. Structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity in the landscape. There are no structures defined for the 83 Beals landscape—the chain link fence is described as a small-scale feature.

House

The house was built in 1909. When the Kennedys purchased the home in 1914, they submitted a permit to add a bay window to the northeast wall of the dining room (see Figures 1.77, 1.79, 1.100, 1.101, and 2.42). The house is the only remaining structure at the site, after the removal of a one-car garage between 1966 and 1969. When the Kennedys repurchased the property in 1967, they refurbished the interiors to reflect Rose Kennedy's remembrance of the home in 1917, which was the year John F. Kennedy was born. The only significant damage to the home was caused by a fire bomb on September 8, 1975 in protest to Edward 'Ted' Kennedy's support of school bussing (see Figure 1.102). The damaged rear vestibule, kitchen, and exterior wood shingles were restored. The house has been minimally altered and contributes to the character of the historic landscape.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

Views are the panoramic or expansive prospect of a broad range of vision, which may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. Vistas are controlled aspects of a discrete, linear range of vision, which are deliberately contrived. Key vistas that existed during the historic period include the view to the northeast and to the southwest of the tree-lined Beals Street. During the Kennedy's residence at 83 Beals, the house lots to the north and northeast along Beals and Stedman streets were undeveloped, allowing open views to the houses on Gibbs Street and on the southeast side of Stedman Street (see Figures 1.34, 1.35, 1.36, and Drawing 4). By the late 1920s, houses blocked this open view. While the open view from 83 Beals is gone, the vistas along the tree-lined street remain.

Northeast/Southwest vistas of Tree-Lined Beals Street

Evaluation: Contributing

The vistas of tree-lined Beals Street from the front yard has been a consistent aspect of the site's experience from the Kennedy's residence in 1914 to 1920 to the present. The mature tree-lined sides of Beals Street now create a framed vistas from the property when one looks either northeast or southwest on the street. The relatively short setback of the house from the street and proximity of neighboring homes limits a distinguishable view of the Kennedy National Historic Site from the street. The vistas of plane tree lined Beals Street have been a constant feature of the landscape. Although, the London planes have matured throughout the years, the tree framed vistas is are contributing feature to the character of the historic landscape (see Figure 2.18 and 2.23).

VEGETATION

Vegetation includes managed individual specimens and masses of deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous material, both indiginous and introduced. Vegetation at 83 Beals includes evegreen and deciduous shrubs that frame the house, evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs that provide screen in the backyard, and ornamental herbaceous plants that draw attention to the commemorative marker.

The tree species found in the Beals Street development and at 83 Beals are common and recommended species for their time. Monocultures of street trees were installed throughout Brookline in about 1900 as part of a conscious program of civic improvement by developers, the town government, and associated community groups.[25] The species of trees selected for street tree plantings varied. American elm, London plane, linden, Norway maple, sugar maple, red oak were the most prolific monoculture plantings along Brookline streets in the early twentieth century. Also used were Chinese elm, gingko, honeylocust, pin oak, scarlet oak, cherry, crabapple, Ohio buckeye, red maple, silver maple, mountain ash, ash, birch, tulip tree, Lombardy poplar, weeping willow, and catalpa. London plane were planted along Beals Street, silver maples along Stedman, linden along Gibb Street, and Ohio buckeye and sugar maple along Abbottsford Road.

The Beals Street trees are London planes. Both American sycamore and London planes were commercially available in 1900. Fifty years earlier, in his 1849 treatise, horticulturalist Andrew Jackson Downing notes that both American sycamore and London plane trees were readily available in the nursery trade: "Both species are common in the nurseries, and are worthy the attention of the planter; the Oriental *(Platanus orientalis)*, as well for the interesting associations connected with it, being the favorite shade tree of the east, etc., as for its intrinsic merits as a lofty and

majestic tree. Two of the varieties of *P. occidentalis* are sometimes cultivated, the chief of which is the Maple-leaved plane *(P. O. acerifolia)*."[26]

Brookline resident and lecturer, Mrs. Emma G. Cummings, described the trees in Brookline in her 1901 lecture delivered before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. She praised the town's commitment to planting street trees. "Since 1899 our town has appropriated $2000 a year for planting trees, and for the care of them along the highways. In 1895 a town nursery was established which for a time furnished all the trees needed. Over 6,000 trees have been set out. . ."[27] Cummings later authored the book, *Brookline's Trees,* in which she noted that "The London plane, a hybrid between the American plane (*P. occidentalis*), also called buttonwood and sometimes sycamore, and the oriental plane (*P. Orientalis*) has been planted in all sections of town." Specific streets mentioned include Rawson, Claflin, Lowell, Glenoe, Shaw, and Wallis roads, Taylor Crossway, and Beals Street.

Most of the London plane trees on Beals Street are extant. Trees that declined were replaced with young London plane, linden, or elm trees. The current Town of Brookline street tree inventory identifies the older London planes along Beals Street as American sycamore, and notes that they are highly susceptible to anthracnose. The double row of trees lining Beals Street is a defining feature in the neighborhood, and the massive London plane tree trunk in front of 83 Beals is a prominent feature (see Figures 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.11, and 3.12).



Figure 3.11. View southwest of tree-lined Beals Street shortly after President Kennedy's assasination in 1963. The plane tree in front of 83 Beals is in the left foreground (Jean Kramer, *Brookline, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History,* Boston: Historical Publishing Company, 1989).



Figure 3.12. View southwest of the tree-lined Beals Street (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

London Plane in front of 83 Beals Street

Evaluation: Contributes to Character; Outside of Property Boundary

The London plane on Beals Street is part of the tree rows lining both sides of Beals Street since about 1900, when they were planted in a strip along the roadway, known as the tree lawn. The evenly spaced trees define the character of the streetscape (see Figures 1.24, 1.63, 3.11, and 3.12). The tree in front of 83 Beals was young when the Kennedys lived there but has matured since prior to the site's dedication (see Figures 3.4 to 3.6).

With an over three foot diameter trunk, the London plane is now mature and casts significant shade onto the front yard. Like most of the other London planes along Beals Street, the curb blocks have been removed and the roots spill into the edge of the street. The roots have lifted the concrete sidewalk and the leaves often clog the gutters, causing other maintenance issues for the site. At the base of the tree, an asphalt patch has replaced a section of the concrete sidewalk. The granite curb that runs along the street is absent for the length of the tree's planting area and is due to the tree's extreme girth and bulging of the root system. While these trees offer a great amount of shade in the summer months and further dramatize the character of the property as well as the street and neighborhood as a whole, attempting to grow any substantial understory vegetation becomes a trying task.

The London plane has been present in front of 83 Beals since 1900 and therefore contributes to the character of the historic landscape though a portion of the tree lawn has been paved.

Privet hedge along sidewalk

Evaluation: Contributing

Shrub plantings around home foundations and along property lines were common by the early 1900s (see Figures 1.32 and 1.33). In his mid 1800s treatise on landscape gardening, Andrew Jackson Downing describes privet as a rapid growing shrub well suited for interior divisions.[28] Indeed, a 1916 photograph of the Kennedy's yard shows a young privet hedge that divides the yards between 77/79 Beals and the Kennedy's home at 83 Beals (see Figure 1.43). Portions of this hedge may have persisted up through the mid 1960s (see Figure 1.66). By the early 1960s, a lower privet hedge grew along the front sidewalk and walk (sees Figures 1.74 and 1.75) .

The Town of Brookline planted or improved the privet hedge along the front sidewalk in 1961 before the installation of the commemorative marker (see Figures 1.75). Records indicate that the original hedge was made up of California privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*). The hedge initially extended to the edge of the driveway along the southwest side of the property. When the driveway was removed in

about 1967, the privet hedge was extended to the west corner of the property. The hedge was subsequently shortened when the National Park Service installed a concrete walkway to the backdoor and yard in 1969.

Due to its presence at the time of the 1969 dedication, the privet hedge is part of the commemorative landscape and frames the house and commemorative marker. The National Park Service has performed periodic maintenance of the privet hedge by removal, replanting, and pruning since the site's dedication. In some sections, border privet (*Ligustrum obtusifolium*) has been added, and it appears more tolerant the low light and difficult growing conditions.

The privet hedge is healthy and well tended at approximately eighteen inches in height and twelve inches in width. Its short height allows views to the marker from many vantage points. Due to the excessive shading in the front yard by the overhanging plane tree, portions of the hedge are thin. The separate hedges on both sides of the front yard are not uniform in width and as maintenance has been performed throughout the years, single plants have been removed due to damage or death, leaving holes in the otherwise continuous hedge (see Figures 3.4 to 3.6)

The privet hedge was installed or improved by the Town of Brookline as one of the first elements of the commemorative landscape in the 1960s period of significance and contributes to the character of the historic landscape.

Yews in front yard

Evaluation: Collectively contributing

Evergreen shrub species became increasingly common in residential subdivisions in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In his 1848 essay in the Horticulturalist, Andrew Jackson Downing described yews as "quite useful and attractive" and notes,

> few plants have been more praised in prose and poetry than the yew, and it deserves all that it has received. It is scarce in the gardens of this country, owing perhaps to its conservative character. . . . But it is to be hoped, in the good time coming when we think as well as act in all matters pertaining to homes and their surroundings, the yew, which is the personification of fixedness of purpose and steady habits, will become as popular in this country as it every was and is in Europe, and we shall be able to say of men and their gardens: "Well do I know they by thy trusty yew.[29]

In his widely read *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening,* reprinted numerous times between 1840s through 1859s, Downing is less enthusiastic about arborvitae. He notes that arborvitae is dingy in the winter but attractive in the other months and "is well suited to support and accompany scenery when objects of an avowedly artificial character predominate, as buildings."[30]

In his 1907 book, *How to Lay Out Suburban Home Grounds,* landscape architect Herbert J. Kellaway, explains that foundation plantings are needed to soften the transition between home and landscape. "There are but few buildings that do not look bold and bare without some plants to soften the sharp line where building and ground unite. Plant along the base of a building, not too heavily, but enough to obtain the softening effect and make the house appear a part of the composition."[31]

In her 1917 book, *The Livable House, Its Garden,* landscape architect Ruth B. Dean, provides suggestions on foundation plantings. She discourages the use of evergreens such as yew and arborvitae due to their overuse. "Foundation planting, or the planting about the base of the buildings, should have for its purpose not—as the nursery catalogue would lead one to believe—masking the foundations, but making the house look as if it belonged to its surroundings."[32] Furthermore, she noted, "Every suburb and real-estate development abounds in houses whose foundations are surrounded with a lot of little yellow and green and blue balls, cones, and pyramids, which present a bristling, unnatural look and contribute nothing of repose or dignity to the house."[33] Indeed, most books by landscape architects in the early 1900s educated owners about how to individualize their domestic yard designs. The landscape at 83 Beals typified the vernacular approach to landscaping, with yews planted in front of the house sometime between the home's construction and 1960. In his 1927 book entitled *Foundation Planting*, Leonard H. Johnson described the abundance of yews in foundations plantings. "The yews are becoming more and more popular with each year."[34]

Like other homes in the neighborhood, the 83 Beals front yard was part of the public streetscape—without a fence or wall which would conceal and seclude the front yard.[35] The front yard at 83 Beals and elsewhere in the development were intended to be small enough and close enough to the street to be public and visible. This public front yard landscape contrasted with more affluent properties in South Brookline, which were fenced along the surrounding roads. The public face of the yard at 83 Beals was further enhanced after Kennedy's election in 1960 by the addition of a low hedge, which framed but did not conceal the front yard, and the addition of the commemorative marker in front of the house.

When the Kennedys repurchased the property in the 1960s they chose to embellish the existing foundation planting rather than restore it to the 1917 landscape that would correspond with the house renovations.

At the same time as the installation of the commemorative marker in 1961, at least four clipped yews grew in the front yard, one below each front window, and one on each side of the front porch (see Figure 1.74 and 1.75). A receipt in the Joseph P. Kennedy papers indicates that the Kennedys paid a landscape company to install ten additional yews in 1967, in combination with arborvitaes. These smaller

yews are visible in the dedication photographs, on either side of the dedication marker, at the front corners of the property, and in the spaces between the original four yews (see Figures 1.86, 1.87, and 1.88). Shortly after the dedication, four arborvitaes were removed from the front yard landscape, and vertical yews installed in their place. When the visitor walk was installed along the southwest side of the property in 1969, a yew growing at the west corner of the property was likely moved to the south corner of the property. The National Park Service has performed periodic maintenance of the yews by removal, replanting, and pruning since the site's dedication (Figure 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3).

Yews tolerate the low light conditions in the front yard and are in good health. However, the shrubs—a mix of original plants and replacements—are overgrown and partially obscure the porch, park sign, and commemorative marker. In 2008, maintenance crews began a selective pruning program to care for the shrubs. The four yews on the northeast side of the house are four and a half to five feet tall. Additionally, at the north corner of the front yard, three yews were recently replaced in kind and are small, but in good condition. The five yews on the northwest side of the house are four and a half to six feet tall, plus a low spreading yew on the west side of the commemorative marker that is about two and a half feet tall and five feet wide.

The yews installed in the front yard form a significant part of the commemorative aspect of the site from the 1960s period of significance. As such, they contribute to the character of the historic landscape.

Front lawn

Evaluation: Contributing

When the Kennedys resided at the property, the front yard was mostly lawn. Sod was reinstalled in 1961, at the time of the Town of Brookline's planting of the front yard vegetation. The Town reinstalled sod again in 1967 and 1968. Following the site's dedication the National Parks Service reinstalled lawn in 1969 and has continued to perform periodic replacement and maintenance (see Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). Currently, the front lawn is in fair condition though somewhat affected by the shade of the overhanging plane tree. The front yard lawn is one of the few landscape features present in both periods of significance and contributes to the character of the historic landscape.

Lawn in southwest side yard

Evaluation: Contributing

When the Kennedys resided at the property, the vegetation consisted primarily of lawn. A photograph from 1916 shows the lawn with a privet hedge along the property line and a photograph taken in about 1919 shows the lawn on the



Figure 3.13. View north of the side and back of the home in 1975. One arborvitae grows at the south corner of the house and four arborvitae grow along the fence. A privet grows between the basement and kitchen doors (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 3.14. View north of the back of the home taken from the neighboring property in early 1975 with patches of snow on the rear lawn. Note the straight entry into the basement and the arborvitaes at the south corner of the house and along the chain link fence. A large shrub, most likely a privet, grows between the basement and kitchen doors. A Colorado blue spruce grows along the northeast side of the rear yard and screens the house at 85 Beals Street. (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 3.15. View north of the back of the home taken from the neighboring property showing the rear walk and lawn, and side entry into the basement. A Colorado blue spruce grows along the southwestern side of the rear yard. Note that all of the trees and shrubs shown in 1975 are gone (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

southwest side of the house, with an unidentified object at the northwest corner of the house (see Figure 1.42). Sometime in 1928 when the Myerson's constructed a garage in the south corner of the property, they also installed two concrete tracks leading to the garage for vehicular circulation (see Figure 1.62). Between 1966 and 1969, prior to the dedication ceremony, the garage and tracks were removed from the site and replaced with turf (see Figure 1.66 and 1.78). Shortly after the dedication ceremony, the National Park Service reinstalled sod in the southwest side yard and a concrete walkway (see Figure 3.1 and 3.2).

The southwest side yard is now comprised of a one-foot drain strip, three-foot sod strip, four-foot walk, and an eight-inch planting bed along the fence. An additional planting bed of about two and one-half feet lies on the other side of the fence (see Figure 3.3). The side yard is used to access the backyard and visitor entrance to the basement. While the southwestern side yard experiences some shade, the effects are not nearly as severe as in the backyard. On the side yard, the lawn is in fair condition. The lawn in the southwest side yard was present at the time of the dedication ceremony and contributes to the character of the historic landscape.

Figure 3.16. View east of Mrs. Kennedy during the 1969 dedication ceremony standing by the commemorative marker. Note the geraniums in front of the marker (JOFI Resource Management Files, Stoughton photograph, Box 1, Folder 12, 69-333-5-16016, National Park Service).



Annuals by commemorative marker

Evaluation: Contributing

In 1967, as indicated on a work invoice from the Joseph P. Kennedy Papers, Mrs. Kennedy requested red geraniums be planted by the commemorative marker for Memorial Day, which were replaced with bronze queen chrysanthemums in the fall (see Figure 1.88). The practice of planting annuals at the front of the marker has continued to the present day. Currently, the seasonal annuals grow in a two by three-foot bed in front of the marker and are in fair condition. They are less affected by the shade in the front yard than other front yard understory vegetation.

The annuals at the commemorative marker were present during the site's dedication ceremony. They directly reflect the association of Mrs.Kennedy with the memorial aspect of the site and contribute to the character of the historic landscape (Figure 3.16).

Plantings along southwest side yard

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Three planting areas are described along the southwest side of the house: along the foundation, between the

walkway and fence, and on the National Park Service strip on the neighbor's side of the chain link fence.

Foundation: A photograph taken shortly after the dedication ceremony shows shrubs growing along the southwest foundation wall of the house. The shrubs appear to be roses. The shrubs may have been transplanted Jackson and Perkins John F. Kennedy roses, but are difficult to identify and are no longer extant.

Between walkway and fence: In the 1980s, the National Park Service began planting annuals in an eight-inch wide bed between the walkway and chain link fence in the southwest side yard, which provides visitor access to the basement entrance.[36] The annuals grow along the northeast side of the fence, while rose, raspberry, and perennial plantings are planted on the neighbor's side. The impatiens were well cared for with profuse blooms, however, the annuals planted in the southwest side yard were not present at the site in either of the periods of significance and were not a contributing feature.

Most recently, the park planted the strip with pachysandra groundcover as this species was included in the list of plants paid for by the Kennedys in 1967. While pachysandra was installed on the property in the 1960s, the exact location is not documented.

Southwest Side of Fence: Along the southwest edge of the property, four rambling roses, raspberries, and an assortment of perennials and annuals grow on the National Park Service strip of land on the neighbor's side of chain link fence on the (see Figure 2.41). The fence that separates the two properties is actually about two and a half feet east of the designated property lines, so the vegetation is on property that is part of 83 Beals. The vegetation was added at an unknown date after the periods of significance and is not a contributing feature.

Plant screen in backyard

Evaluation: Contributing

A photograph taken in 1916 shows a privet hedge along the southwest property line, but no photographs have been located that record the vegetation along the rear, southeast property line. Photographs taken in 1967 or 1968 show a dense screen of vegetation along the rear of the property, which appears to consist of privet and lilac (see Figures 1.84 and 1.85). A diagram in the Historic Resources Management Plan shows some vegetation along the southeast property line (see Figure 1.96). A photograph from 1983 also show dense vegetation (see Figure 1.110).

The park removed the overgrown vegetation and installed a staggered row of privets, three feet apart and consisting of fifteen plants in total, in a six foot wide bed at an undetermined date after the late 1980s. Until recently, a large silver





Figure 3.17 (left). View of the east back corner of the Kennedy National Historic Site and the adjacent houses on Stedman Street. Note the wood fence on the neighbor's property, chain link fence on the park property, and the mulched planting bed with privets. (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

Figure 3.18 (right). View of the south back corner of the Kennedy National Historic Site and the adjacent houses on Stedman Street. Note the wood fence on the neighbor's property, chain link fence on the park property, and the mulched planting bed with privets. A recently replanted yew grows in the south corner of the site. The original yew was likely transplanted from the west corner of the property shortly after the 1969 dedication (Olmsted Center, June 2012).

maple and a leggy pin oak hung over the property line from the rear adjacent parcel. The trees captured much of the light and soil moisture in the backyard. The privet, known for their hardiness and vigor, appeared ragged due to the difficult growing conditions. A large silver maple was recently removed from the neighboring lot at the south corner of the 83 Beals property. Thus, the condition of the privets may improve. A vegetation screen grew along the back property line and contributes to the character of the property at the time of the dedication (Figures 3.17 and 3.18).

Rear lawn

Evaluation: Contributing

When the Kennedys resided at the property, the vegetation consisted primarily of turf. The backyard also contained turf at the time of the site's dedication. The National Park Service has periodically reinstalled turf and it continues to perform such maintenance activities today (see Figures 3.17 and 3.18).

The park currently uses the small but level lawn as a place for outdoor congregation. As it is the largest open area at the site, the back yard lawn serves as a multi-purpose space for most of the year. Similar to the southwestern side yard, the backyard maintains a sense of separation and privacy from the nearby neighboring homes with vegetative screens and fencing. A teak table with matching chairs is located at the southern corner of the lawn, and primarily used by staff. Due to the shade provided by the overhanging trees from the adjacent property, the rear lawn lacks vigor and appears bare. The rear lawn is one of the few landscape features present in both periods of significance and contributes to the character of the historic landscape.

Yew in southern corner

Evaluation: Non-contributing

A yew was planted in the west corner of the front yard in about 1967 and is visible in the dedication photographs taken on May 29, 1969 (see Figures 1.87 and

3.21). A yew is not visible in the rear south corner in a 1968 photograph. Shortly after the dedication, the yew was likely transplanted from the west corner of the property to the south corner in the back yard, when the west corner area was overlaid by the visitor concrete walkway. The yew is barely visible in the south corner in a 1975 photograph of the site that shows the back yard (see Figure 3.2). The National Parks Service removed the yew just prior to 2008 and planted a replacement yew shortly thereafter (see Figures 2.29 and 3.18). Because the yew was both moved and replaced, it does not contribute to the historic character of the property.

Colorado blue spruce in southwest side of backyard

Evaluation: Non-contributing

In the mid 1980s, a Colorado blue spruce was installed along the property line shared by 77/79 Beals on the neighbor's side of the fence but within the NPS parcel (see Figure1.109). The tree is the only plant seemingly unaffected by the backyard shade, at twenty-five to thirty feet tall. It was planted after the periods of significance and is not a contributing feature (see Figures 2.48, 3.3 and 3.15).

Colorado blue spruce in northeast side of backyard

No Longer Exists

A Colorado blue spruce grew along the northeast property line between 83 and 85 Beals and was likely planted in the 1940s or 50s, was present in the 1960s, but removed in the 1980s (see Figures 1.107 and 1.108).

Arborvitaes in front and backyard

No Longer Exist

A receipt in the Joseph P. Kennedy papers indicates that nine arborvitaes, seven to eight feet in height, were installed in 1967. Four of the arborvitaes were installed at the front of the house: one at each corner of the porch and one each front corner of the house (see Figures 1.84 and 1.85). One arborvitae was planted at the back south corner of the house. Four arborvitaes were installed along the southwest property line in the backyard. The arborvitaes surrounding the house are visible in the 1969 dedication day photographs and are about nine feet tall and two feet wide. In about 1970, the park moved the four arborvitaes at the front of the house to the backyard, as is recorded in park resource management records (see Figure 3.2). Photographs from the 1970s indicate that upright yews were planted at the four front corners of the house, in place of the four moved arborvitaes. The park did not move the arborvitae at the back south corner of the house, but removed it in the 1980s when the basement steps were reconfigured (see Figure 3.13 and 3.14).

The arborvitaes installed along the southwest property line in 1967 never flourished due to the overhanging trees capturing most of the light and soil moisture in the backyard. All of the arborvitaes were removed by 2009. Collectively the arborvitaes were a key feature in the landscape at the time of the 1969 dedication.

Privet by backdoor

No Longer Exists

A privet shrub grew in the small bed between the backdoor and basement door and is shown in a 1975 photograph (see Figure 3.14). Based on the size of the shrub—four to five feet tall and three to four feet wide—it was most likely planted before the 1969 dedication. The shrub was later removed and is no longer extant.

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

Small-scale features include minor built elements that provide aesthetic detail and function, including signs, the commemorative marker, flagpole, gas light, and fencing. During the Kennedy's residence at 83 Beals, features visible in family photographs include fencing, a gate into the backyard, and children's toys. Mrs. Kennedy also recalled a clothesline. In 1961, the Town of Brookline installed a commemorative marked to recognize the site as the birthplace of President John F. Kennedy. Six years later, the Town of Brookline installed a gas light in front of the house. Prior to the 1969 dedication and under the direction of the Kennedy family, a chain link fence was added along the sides and rear of the property. After the dedication, the park service added a flagpole, signs, lawn furniture, and most recently, a bike rack.

National Park Service sign

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Following the dedication of the site, the National Park Service installed a sign to clearly identify the site to visitors. At least as early as the mid 1980s, park staff hung a small green sign on the porch railing each day and brought the sign in each night.[37] In about 2009 the park obtained a new, larger sign with a design and lettering that conformed to the National Park Service messaging standards. The new sign is permanently affixed to the porch railing and spans the width of one side of the porch. The sign was installed after the 1969 dedication ceremony and therefore is not a contributing feature (see Figures 3.5 and 3.6).

Birthplace of John Fitzgerald Kennedy marker

Evaluation: Contributing

The Town of Brookline installed the bronze tablet on granite block commemorative marker, listed in the National Register documentation as the "Birthplace of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Marker," in 1961 after John F. Kennedy's presidential election to mark his birthplace in Brookline. It is one of the most important features at the site, in clear view from the public right of way. In 1963, after President Kennedy's assassination, mourners left wreaths at the marker, which was covered in black bunting.

Comprised of a vertically set granite block, fronted with a bronze plaque, the marker measures twenty-four and one-quarter inches wide, by thirty-six inches tall, by nine inches deep. The plaque contains a bas-relief profile of John F. Kennedy, and a brief description recognizing the site as his birthplace. It is located in the front yard, nestled into a mass of common yews. The raised text reads:

Birthplace of

John F. Kennedy

35th President of the United States

Born May 29, 1917 on this site

83 Beals St., Brookline, Mass

This commemorative plaque

Erected by

Town of Brookline, Mass

On September 12, 1961

The commemorative marker was installed by the Town of Brookline as one of the first elements of the commemorative landscape in the 1960s period of significance. This feature therefore contributes to the character of the historic landscape (see Figures 3.5, 3.6, 3.10, and 3.14).

Chain link fence

Evaluation: Contributing

Installed before the 1969 dedication ceremony, the fence ran along the sides and back of the site, but not the true property lines. During the Kennedys residence, chicken-wire was used to fence in the yard (see Figures 1.37 and 1.44).

Chain link fencing still runs along the southwestern, northeastern, and southeastern accepted property lines (see Figures 3.2, 3.3, 3.19, 3.20, and 3.21). At the west corner of the property, the fence is three feet northeast of a National Park



Figure 3.19. View south of Mrs. Kennedy on the day of the dedication ceremony greeting spectators who are standing on the edge of the neighboring property to the southwest of the Kennedy National Historic Site. The chain link fence and a yew are visible on the 83 Beals property (Stoughton photograph, 69-333-5-10, National Park Service).



Figure 3.20. View south of 83 Beals Street and the neighboring duplex at 77/79 Beals in 1975 showing the chain link fence, privet hedge, front walk, yews, flagpole, and commemorative marker (Michael Johnson, National Park Service).



Figure 3.21. View south of 83 Beals Street and the neighboring duplex at 77/79 Beals showing the chain link fence, privet hedge, front walk, yews, flagpole, and commemorative marker (Olmsted Center, April 2011).

Service survey monument. This indicates that many of the neighbor's plantings along the fence line actually lie on park property. On the narrower northeastern side of the property, the chain link fence is four feet away from the house. The chain link fence is beginning to rust. The fence was installed prior to the 1969 dedication ceremony and therefore is a contributing feature.

Flagpole

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The flagpole was installed by the National Park Service in 1969, after the dedication ceremony. At the ceremony a flag and flag pole were present but not installed on the property. The flagpole is eleven and one half-feet tall, set in concrete surrounded by an exposed, corrugated metal sleeve. It is located at the end of the blue flagstones that leads off of the main entry walk. The flagpole was installed after the 1969 dedication ceremony and therefore is not a contributing feature (see Figures 3.5 and 3.6).

Gas light

Evaluation: Contributes to Character, Outside of Property Boundary

Set within the tree lawn strip in front of 83 Beals, the Town of Brookline installed the gas light in August 1967 to commemorate the birthplace of the former president. It forms part of the memorial aspect of the landscape even though it is not located within the site boundary. Though historically no gas lamps existed on the southeastern portion of Beals Street, the intent is to call attention to the time of the Kennedys' residence.

The reproduction gas light is now surrounded with concrete pavement, which was installed in place of the grass strip after the 1969 dedication. The light post is fluted, tapers from top to bottom, and has a black finish. The luminaire is cylindrical and the mantles are lit throughout the day. Although itthe gas light is not within the site boundary it forms part of the memorial aspect of the site and is a contributing feature (see Figures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6).

Stone drip strip

Evaluation: Non-contributing

The stone drip strip was installed immediately surrounding the house by the National Park Service as a maintenance feature to avoid overflow water from the gutters splashing at the foundation of the house. The surrounding trees drop seasonal leaf litter, sometimes clogging the gutter system. As the gutters fill with run-off during rainstorms, they overflow and spill water to the ground, two and a half stories below. In an effort to avoid splashing at the foundation of the

house, a stone drip strip was installed that provides a uniform finish immediately surrounding the structure. The stone drip strip was installed as a site maintenance feature after the periods of significance and therefore is not a contributing feature (see Figure 2.38).

Teak table and four chairs in backyard

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Installed by the National Park Service in the 1990s, the teak table and chairs replaced a rustic picnic table that was on the site in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[38] The table and chairs provide outdoor seating for the property's staff and are in good condition. The site furnishings were installed for staff use after the site's dedication and are not a contributing feature (see Figure 2.48).

Bicycle rack in backyard

Evaluation: Non-contributing

Installed recently by the National Park Service, a small bicycle rack stands in the north corner of the back yard and is not a contributing feature (see Figure 2.46).

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES, JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Feature	Extant 1920	Extant May 1969	Extant 2012	Contri-buting	Notes
Spatial Organization					
Residential spatial organization	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The lot coverage, setback, and physical relationship of the house to the yard and to Beals Street are largely unchanged since the 1910s, but lots to the northeast and northwest were undeveloped parcels. The development retains its 1969 organization. The London planes have provided a consistent vertical and overhead plane that has grown more prominent over a century.
Topography					
Flat topography	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The site is relatively flat. Its topography has not been significantly altered since the home was constructed in 1909.
Circulation					
Front concrete walkway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The front yard concrete walk was installed in c. 1909 and has remained in the same location since the Kennedy's residence.
Southwest side concrete walkway	No	No	Yes	No	Installed by NPS in 1969, after the dedication.
Backyard paved area	No	No	Yes	No	The backyard paved area leading to the site's basement entrance and backdoor was installed by NPS in 1969, after the dedication.
Blue flagstone walk	No	No	Yes	No	NPS installed this short walk off the front walkway in the mid 1980s.
Granite curb along Beals Street	No	No	Yes	No	Granite curb installed in sometime between 1969 and 1983. Tree lawn paved with concrete at the same time.
Concrete steps leading to basement	No	No	Yes	No	NPS built the new set of stairs in the mid-1980s.
Northeast side concrete walkway	Yes	Yes	No	Gone	The park removed the original narrow walkway along the northeast side of the house in about 1969.
Buildings and Structures					
House	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Built in 1909, the house is the only remaining structure on site after the garage was razed sometime between 1966 and 1969.
Views and Vistas					
Northeast/Soutwest vista of tree-lined Beals Street	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The vistas of tree-lined Beals Street from the front yard to the northeast and southwest remained little changed since the early 1900s.

Feature	Extant 1920	Extant May 1969	Extant 2012	Contri-buting	Notes
Vegetation					
London Plane in front of 83 Beals (*not on NPS property)	Yes	Yes	Yes	(*Yes)	The London plane in front of 83 Beals Street is part of the tree rows of lining both sides of the street since c. 1900.
Privet hedge along sidewalk	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Town of Brookline planted or improved the privet hedge along the front sidewalk in 1961. NPS has performed periodic hedge maintenance by removal, replanting, and pruning since the site's dedication.
Yews in front yard	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some shrubs present in front yard when site reacquired by the Kennedy family in 1966, and more added in advance of the 1969 dedication. NPS has performed periodic yew maintenance by removal, replanting, and pruning since the site's dedication.
Front lawn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	When the Kennedys resided at the property, the front yard was mostly lawn. Sod was reinstalled in 1961, at the time of the Town of Brookline's planting of the front yard vegetation. The Town reinstalled sod again in 1967 and 1968. Following the site's dedication, NPS reinstalled lawn in 1969 and has continued to perform periodic replacement and maintenance.
Lawn in southwest side yard	Yes	Un-deter-mined	Yes	No	When the Kennedys resided at the property, the vegetation consisted primarily of lawn. At an undetermined point after the dedication ceremony, the National Park Service reinstalled sod in the southwest side yard.
Annuals by commemorative marker	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	In 1968, as indicated on a work invoice, Mrs. Kennedy requested red geraniums followed by bronze chrysanthemums be planted by the marker. The practice continues.
Roses along southwest side yard	No	No	Yes	No	Roses were planted by the neighbor, at an unknown date after 1969, along the opposite side of the chain link fence on NPS property.
Plantings along southwest side yard	No	No	Yes	No	An unidentified low plant grew along the southwest house foundation wall in 1968. NPS began planting annuals along the fence, typically impatiens, beginning in 1980s. In 2012, NPS switched to pachysandra, a groundcover, which is listed on a 1967 invoice. An assortment of plants grows along the NPS strip on the neighbor's side of the fence.

Feature	Extant 1920	Extant May 1969	Extant 2012	Contri-buting	Notes
Plant screen in back yard	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Vegetation (mostly privet and some lilac) grew along the rear property line at the time of the dedication ceremony. NPS replaced privet.
Rear lawn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NPS has periodically reinstalled the lawn.
Yew in southern corner	No	No	Yes	No	A yew was planted at the west corner of the property in about 1967 and was likely transplanted to the south corner of the property shortly after the 1969 dedication, when the visitor concrete walkway was installed. NPS planted a replacement yew in 2008 in the south corner.
Colorado blue spruce southwest side of backyard	No	No	Yes	No	Current spruce along southwest property line installed in 1980s.
Colorado blue spruce northeast side of backyard	No	Yes	No	Gone	Colorado blue spruce northeast side of backyard.
Arborvitae in front and backyard	No	Yes	No	Gone	Nine arborvitaes were installed in 1967: four in the front, one at the south house corner, and four on the southwest property line. Four in the front were moved in about 1970s to the backyard, then re-moved. One on the house south corner was removed in the 1980s.The four along the southwest property line were removed in 2009.
Privet by backdoor	No	Yes	No	Gone	Likely planted before 1969, visible in 1975 photograph, subsequently removed.
Small-scale Features					
National Park Service Sign	No	No	Yes	No	Updated periodically to correspond with NPS sign standards.
Birthplace of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Marker	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Installed by the Town of Brookline on September 12, 1961.
Chain link fence	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Installed before 1969 dedication ceremony.
Flagpole	No	No	Yes	No	Installed in 1969, after the dedication.
Gas light (*not on NPS property)	No	Yes	Yes	(*Yes)	The Town of Brookline installed the gas light in 1967.
Stone drip strip	No	No	Yes	No	Installed immediately surrounding the house by NPS.
Teak table and four teak chairs in backyard	No	No	Yes	No	Installed by NPS in 1990s.
Bicycle rack in backyard	No	No	Yes	No	Installed by NPS in 2011.

ENDNOTES

1 National Park Service History Program, National Register Amendment for John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site (Draft 2011); Ned Kaufman and Gregory R. Mathis, "Draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form – John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site," (2010).

2 The Personal Papers of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, Finding Aid, Biographical Note, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives and Records Administration.

3 Carla Benka and Greere Hardwicke, "Massachusetts Historical Commission–Beacon Street," (Boston, 1983).

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Carla Benka, "Massachusetts Historical Commission – Peter Graffam Development," (Boston, 1980).

7 Two context studies document the significance of streetcar suburbs. David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*. National Register of Historic Places U.S. Department of the Interior, 2002; David L. Ames. "A Context and Guidelines for Evaluating America's Historic Suburbs for the National Register of Historic Places," draft, 1998.

8 Ames and McClelland, 2002, 12/56; Ames, 1998, 1.

9 Ames and McClelland, 2002, 22/56.

10 Ronald Dale Karr. "The evolution of the Elite Suburb: Community Structure and Control in Brookline, Massachusetts, 1770-1900. (Boston University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1981) 144; in Kenneth T. Jackson. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) 91.

11 Ames and McClelland, 2002, 38/56.

12 Ibid, 15/56.

13 Ibid, 42/56.

14 Ibid, 25/56.

15 Carole L. Perrault, "John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site: Historic Structures Report, Chapter 8," (National Park Service, Draft March, 2009), 9.

16 Ibid, 14.

17 Ames, 1998, 2.

18 Ibid, 14-15, 38-39.

19 Ames and McClelland, 2002, 5/60.

20 Ibid, 25/56.

21 Ibid, 5/60.

22 Ibid, 20/56.

23 Carole L. Perrault, 10-13.

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27 Emma G. Cummings. "The Trees of our Neighborhood." A lecture delivered before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, January 19, 1901. Copy at Brookline Public Library, Historical Files, Trees.

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29 Downing, Andrew Jackson. *The Horticulturalist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste*. (Henry T. Williams, New York, 1874, Volume 29) 332.

30 Downing, Andrew Jackson. *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening.* (Fourth edition, 1849) 268.

31 Herbert J. Kellaway. *How to Lay Out Suburban Home Grounds,* (John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1907). 70.

32 Ruth B. Dean. *The Livable House, Its Garden* (Volume 2 of the Livable House Series, Moffat Yard and Company, New York, 1917), 51.

33 Ibid, 52.

34 Leonard H. Johnson. *Foundation Planting,* (A. T. De la Mare Company, Inc. 1927) xviii.

35 Fred E. H. Schroeder. *Front Yard America: The Evolution and Meanings of a Vernacular Domestic Landscape* (Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993) 123.

36 Charles Pepper, Interview, May 18, 2011.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

Chapter 4. Treatment

Purchased by Joseph and Rose Kennedy in 1914, the 83 Beals Street property represented their "starter" home and the first step in their social, economic, and political aspirations to achieve the "American Dream." Kennedy scholars describe the Kennedy family's 1910s daily life in Brookline as typical and atypical, representative and remarkable.[1] The same observation can be made today about the Kennedy National Historic Site in its physical setting. The home at 83 Beals fits in with the surrounding residences, yet possesses characteristics that distinguish it as a presidential home. These distinguishing characteristics are most evident in the landscape.

The landscape of the Kennedy National Historic Site retains its overall historic character from the commemorative period, but many of its features are in need of replacement, repair, or rejuvenation. The mature trees surrounding the house create difficult growing conditions for other vegetation on the property. The chain-link fences have been in place for over forty years and are rusty. Several features in the landscape do not contribute to the historic character of the site. Wayfinding to the site and access into the house are ongoing issues.

The National Park Service defines treatment as a preservation plan with the goal of enhancing the historic character of a cultural landscape within the context of its contemporary function.[2] Treatment essentially describes how the landscape should look in the future at a planning level with preliminary design recommendations. Guidance on the long-term management of the cultural landscape is intended to be both broad, encompassing the overall character of the landscape, and specific, relating to individual features. While focused on historic preservation, treatment also addresses other park management goals, such as accessibility, wayfinding, and interpretive objectives. Treatment does not address routine and cyclic maintenance, such as mowing and annual pruning, necessary to maintain the existing character of the landscape, as these tasks should be addressed comprehensively in a preservation maintenance plan for the property.

This chapter addresses these issues and provides guidance for the long-term management of the landscape. The chapter begins with a treatment framework based on the park's enabling legislation and purpose, park planning efforts, and National Park Service cultural resource guidelines, which collectively establish an overall treatment philosophy for the site. Based on this framework and summary of general treatment issues, the body of the chapter describes tasks necessary to preserve, enhance, and reestablish the historic character of the landscape. The narrative is supported by graphics and a treatment plan (Drawing 15).

FRAMEWORK FOR TREATMENT

MISSION AND POLICIES

The framework for treatment of the Kennedy National Historic Site is guided by the mission of the National Park Service stated in the Organic Act of 1916, "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future generations." The application of this mission is defined in *National Park Service Management Policies* (2006), which calls for the National Park Service to "provide for the long-term preservation of, public access to, and appreciation of, the features, materials, and qualities contributing to the significance of cultural resources." These policies are applied in the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995) and the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (1996), which in turn are interpreted within *NPS-28, National Park Service Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (1998).[3]

ENABLING LEGISLATION

The framework for treatment of the landscape is also guided by the enabling legislation for the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site (Public Law 90-20), dated May 26, 1967, which states that the site will be established "to preserve in public ownership and for the purpose of establishing the birthplace of John Fitzgerald Kennedy as a national historic site."[4] The legislation lacks further elaboration of the site's management approach. However, at the time that President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the bill, he stated the following:

> Some buildings become landmarks because their architecture is imposing; others, because they are meant by a nation or a people to be monuments and symbols. Still others are set apart through no quality of their own. They become famous because they evoke the name and the memory of great men—or one great man. So it is with the two-story frame house at 83 Beals Street, Brookline, Massachusetts. On May 29, 1917, John F. Kennedy was born in that house. Today we establish it as a national historic site. President Kennedy's family bought that house not long ago and presented it to the people of the United States. Through the generosity of his family, it will be restored in a style reflecting his boyhood years there, 1917–1920. I am happy to sign this bill today. For years to come, for great numbers of visitors it will make more rich, more vivid, and more meaningful the memory of a great American.[5]

The National Historic Preservation Act, enacted in 1966, provided ample justification for the establishment of the historic site and a framework for listing the property on the National Register of Historic Places. Revised National Register documentation, currently in draft, recognizes the significance of the Mrs. Kennedy as the mother of several accomplished politicians, a leading advocate

for individuals with mental disabilities, and a key figure in the acquisition and restoration of the birthplace.

PARK PLANNING

The framework for treatment of the Kennedy National Historic Site landscape is also derived from park planning. When acquired in 1967, the initial plan for the 83 Beals landscape was to restore it to its 1917 appearance, in keeping with the restoration effort within the home. However, a series of landscape enhancements in the 1960s, in advance of the site's dedication in 1969, resulted in a commemorative landscape in front of the home. Throughout the ensuing decades, the park maintained the landscape plantings, but removed vegetation that was overgrown or in poor condition. Over time, the removals resulted in a reduction of the number of plantings and variety of plant species on the 83 Beals property.

In 2008, the park initiated the planning process for a General Management Plan to address a range of questions and issues and to plan for long-term preservation of the home, furnishings, and landscape while supporting visitor use, expanding partnerships, and articulating its relationship to the Brookline community.[6] Due to their concurrent preparation, the General Management Plan both guided and responded to the information gathered for this report and the resulting recommendations. Information gathered through the planning process will inform a Foundation Document, which will guide future management of the site.

To clarify the park's purpose and significance, the park updated its National Register documentation in 2011. The analysis contains new scholarship on the periods and areas of significance of the site, particularly related to Mrs. Kennedy's role in establishing the commemorative site. Furthermore, the Foundation Workshop, held in February 2007, resulted in revised statements of park purpose, significance, interpretive themes, and fundamental resources and values. Workshop participants, including site staff, regional specialists, and outside stakeholders, developed draft statements, which were subsequently refined by park staff. The park's current draft purpose statement is:

> As a gift from Mrs. Kennedy to the people of the United States, John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site preserves and interprets the birthplace and first home of the 35th president of the United States . . . . In their first home, Joseph and Rose Kennedy began a lifetime dedication to cultivating and instilling in their children the family's ideals, skills, and ambitions. In the aftermath of the president's assignation, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy thoughtfully crafted a re-creation of the home as a gift to the American people as part of the worldwide efforts to memorialize President Kennedy. The historic house, collections, and neighboring Brookline community preserve the context within which one of the nation's most powerful political families was formed and permit exploration of early influences which helped shape the character and ambitions of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

The statement expands the park's purpose to encompass both the early years of the Kennedy family in Brookline and the commemorative efforts of Mrs. Kennedy. This broader perspective is mirrored in the draft interpretive themes.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES AND THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE

Interpretive themes express the central meaning of the park's resources and serve as tools to help people understand the importance of the park. The four themes, currently in draft, are integral to the treatment of the physical landscape at 83 Beals as well as the preservation of the surrounding neighborhood as detailed below.

Theme 1: Family Beginnings

The Kennedy family home at 83 Beals Street represents the beginning of Joseph and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy's married life together, and offers opportunities to explore the attendant characteristics of anticipation, hope, uncertainty, opportunity, resolve, and accomplishment that defined the Kennedy's Brookline years, leveraged their upward mobility, and enabled them to negotiate new roles and expanding spheres of influence in a rapidly changing world.

Theme 2: Formative Influences

Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy's ambitious life choices, high expectations, belief in human agency, religious faith, and principled commitment to family and country shaped the home environment in which young Jack Kennedy defined himself and his role in the family, and developed a foundation in character that inspired a life of public service (dedicated to fostering democratic ideals and human rights, at home and around the world).

Theme 3: Legacy and Commemoration

Mrs. Kennedy's treatment of the house, her selection and arrangement of objects, and her recorded memories of life in Brookline suggest how she wanted future generations to view the beginnings of the president's life, and invite the public to imagine how the waning years of the 1960s—characterized by personal grief, national mourning, social turmoil, and a nation at war—informed her commemorative treatment of the house and stories of the family's Brookline years.

Theme 4: Shifting Intersections of History and Memory

The Kennedy birthplace, boyhood home, historic neighborhood, and associated landmarks offer visitors opportunities to explore how successive generations construct and reinterpret history and memory to help people recall the past in

a manner that enhances meaning of the modern world and fosters a sense of collective belonging.

Collectively, these interpretive themes are expressed in the house, the landscape surrounding the house, the broader Coolidge Corner neighborhood, and by contrasting the family's successive homes. Specific landscape characteristics and features include:

- The neighborhood walking tour provides insights into the geographical layout and density of the Coolidge Corner neighborhood, as well as the proximity to schools, houses of worship, and stores and public transportation at Coolidge Corner. Preservation of the 83 Beals home, Abbottsford Road home, tree-lined streets and sidewalks, and extant places in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood that were used by the Kennedys will enrich interpretation of the family's environment.
- A wayside in the landscape, brochure, or digital download can provide visitors with images of the Kennedys at their new home in the 1910s, which at the time was adjacent to undeveloped land. Several historic photographs show the Kennedy children playing in the yard and with their first car.
- Preservation of the landscape as it appeared in the late 1960s reflects the commemorative efforts by the Town of Brookline and by the Kennedy family, particularly the appearance of the site at the time of the dedication on May 29, 1969.

TREATMENT PHILOSOPHY

In accordance with applicable legislation, park planning, and resource management guidelines, the treatment philosophy for the Kennedy National Historic Site landscape is to enhance its historic character so that it reflects the site's appearance at the time of its dedication and opening to the public on May 29, 1969—keeping in mind that the site is both representative of and remarkable in the neighborhood. Extant features that remain from the time of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's birth in 1917 should also be preserved, and interpretation should convey the setting and feeling of the landscape at this time.

When dedicated on May 29, 1969, the landscape was in excellent condition, and included vernacular landscape features preserved from the period of Kennedy occupancy in the late 1910s, as well as unique commemorative landscape features added in the 1960s to distinguish the property. The site retains integrity to both the 1910s and 1960s periods, but a higher level of integrity to the 1960s due to the continued development of the neighborhood after the Kennedy's moved in 1920. The 83 Beals landscape portrays the rising middle class neighborhood that attracted the newly-wed Kennedys to Brookline in 1914, and displays the

commemorative features added to the site in the 1960s by the Town of Brookline, Kennedy family, and National Park Service. The house remains as an intact example of a Colonial Revival home in a streetcar suburb development.

The 83 Beals landscape will be rehabilitated and managed to preserve its landscape character at the time of the 1969 dedication. The property will also be part of a neighborhood walking tour of places and buildings that were integral to the Kennedy family life in Brookline in the 1910s and 20s. The landscape will continue to be accessible to visitors by way of a concrete walkway to the backyard, which was added to the property after the 1969 dedication to improve access, safety, and security.

To evoke both periods of historical significance for the property, the 83 Beals landscape should incorporate the plant species, planting configuration, and scale of vegetation evident in photographs at the time of the 1969 dedication. The park should continue to collaborate with the Town of Brookline to preserve the character of the neighborhood, the community places frequented by the Kennedys, the gas light in front of the site, and the majestic London planes along Beals Street. Rehabilitation and interpretation of the historic character of the 83 Beals landscape will allow visitors and school groups to understand the site, suburban streetcar development context, and landscape history. A rehabilitation approach will allow for minor alterations in the landscape to accommodate visitor use, including retaining the concrete walkway along the southwest side of the house, the extant alteration of the basement entrance, the Colorado blue spruce along the southwest edge of the property, and the lawn furniture in the backyard for staff and visitor use.

PRIMARY TREATMENT: REHABILITATION

To implement this treatment philosophy, the treatment approach for the Kennedy National Historic Site is derived from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The Standards outline four approaches to treatment: *Preservation,* maintenance of the landscape as it currently exists; *Restoration*, returning the landscape to a prior historic condition; *Reconstruction*, rebuilding of a lost landscape; and *Rehabilitation*, enhancing the historic character of the landscape while making compatible modifications to address contemporary uses and needs. These four treatments share a common philosophical approach that emphasizes retention of historic character and repair rather than replacement of historic materials.[7]

Based on the treatment direction provided by the park's draft General Management Plan, the findings of the National Register documentation, and the current condition of the property, the treatment approach for the Kennedy National Historic Site landscape is rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is defined as a treatment making compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and

additions, while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical significance. Rehabilitation actions already carried out include the addition of a visitor walkway to the rear property, addition of a Colorado blue spruce along the southwest property line for screening, park signs, lawn furniture, a flagpole, and additional shrubs for screening in the backyard. Missing historic features that were essential to the historic landscape character, such as the yew and arborvitae foundation planting, may be replaced within a Rehabilitation treatment. However, the replacement must be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence, and it must be consistent with regard to the identified treatment date for the landscape, in this case May 29, 1969. Rehabilitation allows for the introduction of features to facilitate public use including a walkway along the southwest side of the property, steps to the basement, signs, a flagpole, outdoor seating, and plant material that is tolerant of the current light conditions. For example, the arborvitae installed at the corners of the house were present at the time of the dedication, but persisted for less than five years. If the arborvitae are replanted in kind and in location, but their health and vigor cannot be preserved due to the shade of the overhanging London plane and the house, a rehabilitation treatment allows for replacement with a substitute viable species, such as columnar yews.

Rehabilitation will require minimal intervention, and perpetuates the current management practices.[8] Rehabilitation is defined as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use of a property through repair, alterations, and additions, while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." The following standards for rehabilitation are intended to promote responsible preservation practices to protect cultural resources.

1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity

of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in composition, design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Rehabilitation is the most appropriate treatment for the Kennedy National Historic Site because of the need to provide for contemporary park functions, visitor services, and environmental sustainability. While alterations are expected to occur within the Kennedy property, the ninth Rehabilitation standard (above) emphasizes differentiating between the old and the new, as well as the importance of selecting updated compatible materials. This treatment focuses on managing the landscape for its historic character by preserving significant landscape characteristics and features, replacing features in-kind when viable, and allowing for changes in circulation to accommodate park visitors. Contemporary changes will be in keeping with the historic character of the landscape and represent a minor component of the overall treatment.

TREATMENT DATE

A treatment date provides a reference to guide treatment efforts by identifying a time during the period of significance when the landscape reached its height of development and when it best reflected the characteristics for which it is significant. The determination of a treatment date is informed by the site's history, level of documentation, existing conditions, and interpretive goals. Recommended treatment actions presented in this chapter seek to preserve the integrity of the both historic periods, 1917–20 and 1963–69. The rationale for the recommended treatment date of May 29, 1969, the end of the period of significance and the time of the dedication by Mrs. Kennedy, is as follows.

- The key site features present at the time of John F. Kennedy's birth on May 29, 1917 were still evident and intact in 1969 including the home, front walk, backyard, lawn, and London plane.
- By May 29, 1969 Mrs. Kennedy and the Town of Brookline had completed several physical changes to the property that are still evident today. These physical changes created a memorial site, while not overshadowing the birthplace and childhood home of John F. Kennedy.
- The photographic landscape documentation for the late 1960s and early 1970s is very good, allowing the property managers to understand the appearance of the property at this time.
- The site retains a high level of integrity to the 1969 appearance as well as its landscape setting. The plantings in the front yard were recently installed at that time, and not yet mature. The house was in good condition at that time and still retained its historical integrity to the earlier period of significance in the 1910s.

An alternative treatment date considered is restoration of the landscape to its early 1970s appearance, because the columnar arborvitaes stood at the front corners of the house for such a short time (from about 1967 to about 1970). The evergreens became thin and unhealthy, and were transplanted to the backyard. By this time the park had installed the visitor walk along the southwest side of the property and the flagpole. The most notable change was the repainting of the house. Based on paint analysis, the park changed the house color from gray to green in 1971 as described in the next section.

GENERAL TREATMENT ISSUES

The following are general treatment issues that inform the treatment guidelines and tasks in the second part of the chapter. Overall, these issues concern the changes of historic character in the landscape, changes to the landscape setting, and addition of small-scale features that are associated with the National Park Service presence on the property.

1. Neighborhood context

The broader neighborhood context greatly contributes to the visitor experience and interpretation of the site. It is central to the site's significance, setting, and character. Other than the Town of Brookline's Interim Planning Overlay District, no preservation restrictions are currently in place to ensure the continuity of the residential area's specific qualities. Redevelopment of properties, the addition of privacy fences and screens along front yards, and loss of street trees diminish the character of the neighborhood.

2. House paint color

At the time of the dedication in 1969, the house was a soft gray with ivory trim and dark green shutters. Based on paint analysis by the National Park Service, the park painted the house green with yellow trim in 1971 to match the paint color at the time of Kennedy's birth in 1917. To match the appearance of the house and landscape at the time of the 1969 dedication, the house should be returned to the gray paint color.

3. Vegetation

London planes are known for their ability to withstand urban pollution, root compaction, and varying light conditions. On Beals Street, the London planes are over one hundred years old and large limbs overhang homes and driveways. Limbs may drop during intense storms, potentially causing damage to property. The roots have lifted the sidewalk, creating an uneven walking surface. The roots have also disrupted underground utility lines. London planes are notorious for dropping small branches, while its large leaves accumulate in the gutters, and its fruit drops on sidewalks and parked cars. The trees offer shade in the summer months and graceful forms in the winter months, yet attempting to grow any substantial understory vegetation is difficult. Despite these issues, the trees are admired by residents and visitors as they contribute to the distinctive character of the neighborhood.

Photographs of the dedication show four columnar arborvitae at the front corners of the house and porch, and fifth arborvitae at the rear south corner of the house. While the arborvitae will require additional care, they were a key element in the commemorative landscape planting, and part of the list of plants ordered in 1967 and recorded in the Joseph P. Kennedy papers, which also included yews, lilacs, pachysandra groundcover, sod, geraniums, and chrysanthemums. Treatment tasks describe vegetation management strategies in greater detail.

4. Access

Physical access to the property is a key issue that includes parking, restrooms, and building access. Parking that complies with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) is not defined. The site is within a residential area without any designated parking. The site itself is flat, but no curb cuts or ramps exist to facilitate access from the street to the site and from the site into the house. Both front and rear visitor entrances to the house are accessed by steps. The house interior, including the public restroom in the basement, is also not universally accessible. Making the house universally accessible would significantly alter the historic building and its setting.

5. Wayfinding

Visitors have commented that the site is difficult to find due to the small size of the property and its location on a residential side street. Treatment tasks provide recommendations for improving pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding.

6. Property boundary versus fence line

The chain link fence on the southwest side property boundary is installed two and one-half feet northeast of the site's actual property line, which is indicated by a survey marker. This indicates that many of the neighbor's plantings along the fence actually lie on park property. Further discussion is contained in the treatment tasks for vegetation and small-scale features.

TREATMENT TASKS

The following treatment tasks are intended to guide the preservation of the Kennedy National Historic Site landscape in response to the issues outlined earlier in this chapter. Tasks are organized by landscape characteristics including spatial organization, topography, circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features. A summary list of tasks is at the end of the chapter in Table 3 and shown in Drawing 15. Each task is cross-referenced with a landscape characteristic code and sequential number (e.g., SP-1).

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

SP-1. Preserve spatial organization of neighborhood

The landscape of Kennedy National Historic Site is characterized by assimilation and contrasts—it both fits in with and is distinctive from its neighborhood setting. The character of the site is largely influenced by its setting near a commercial center and along a tree-lined, quiet residential street. The site is located near Coolidge Corner at the crossroads of Beacon and Harvard streets—a vibrant commercial hub with a mix of retail stores, eateries, religious centers, as well as upper story offices and apartments. Public and commercial community resources include an elementary school, nearby playgrounds, public transportation, a movie theatre, and a seasonal weekly farmers market, all of which add to the popularity of the neighborhood.

The transition from Harvard Street to Beals Street is dramatic. Harvard Street is wide, heavily traveled, and largely commercial. In contrast, Beals Street is narrow, one-way, and strictly residential. Mature London planes arch over Beals, unifying the streetscape, creating dappled light in the summer, and adding texture year-round with a double row of massive speckled gray trunks. Modest single and multi-family homes and apartment buildings with small front, side, and back

yards range in height from 2 1/2 to 3 stories, but are relatively uniform in setback, spacing, and lot size.

The Kennedy home is very much reflective of its surroundings. The house is similar in form, the street and sidewalk are consistent in width, the front yard contains one of the street's mature London planes, and the setback, spacing and lot size are relatively consistent with the adjacent homes and duplexes. The site's commemorative and memorial features, however, make it unique among its neighbors. The plantings in the front yard added by the Town of Brookline and Kennedy family—consisting of foundation plantings of well-maintained and trimmed deciduous and evergreen shrubs and a small area of annuals by the commemorative marker—differ from neighboring properties and continue to reflect their 1960s era origin. Small-scale features added in the 1960s convey to visitors and community members the national significance of the property. Collectively, the well-tended house and landscape, symmetrical plantings, and symbols of patriotism including the commemorative marker, gas lamp, flag, and National Park Service signs convey a feeling of a respect, honor, and dignity.

Although outside the park boundary, the National Park Service should work in partnership with the Town of Brookline to preserve the character of the Beals Street development by creating guidelines that preserve the scale and layout of the residential properties. Most of the properties were developed within a thirty-year time frame, beginning in the late 1890s when the land was subdivided. Changes since the 1960s have been minimal, thus the neighborhood is a well preserved example of an early twentieth century streetcar suburb. The clear spatial organization, with consistent lot size, setback, and lot coverage, contribute to the neighborhood's specific qualities and should be preserved. Further documentation of the neighborhood is contained in the draft Historic Structure Report for the John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site prepared by Carole Perrault, March 2009.

TOPOGRAPHY

T-1. Manage drainage

The site is characterized by its relatively flat topography and proximity to a former wetland area at the junction of Beals and Babcock streets. In the past, inadequate drainage led to on-site flooding. The water table in the neighborhood is high and the area to the east tends to collect water. The park installed a large drywell in the back yard to receive storm water runoff from the house gutters and downspouts. To reduce the likelihood of flooding, monitor the condition of the house gutters and outflow drains. Roots from the London plane can damage the drains. Also collaborate with the Town of Brookline to monitor the street drains.

The park uses the water faucet and hose on the northeast side of the house for watering the lawn, washing the house, and washing the sidewalks. The existing faucet leaks creating puddling and boggy soil on the northeast side of the house. An upgraded outdoor faucet and hose system is needed to minimize leakage.

CIRCULATION

CR-1. Improve pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding

A sign at the corner of Harvard and Beals streets presently directs passersby to the site. However, for visitors arriving by public transit to the Coolidge Corner or Harvard Avenue MBTA Trolley stops, there is currently no wayfinding signage to direct them. Because the site is located on a residential side street, it can be easily missed by people arriving via public transit. National Park Service signage should be installed at both T stops with a map clearly showing the location of the property to better direct visitors to the site. For visitors arriving by vehicular transportation, additional signage should be placed at the intersection of Beacon and Harvard streets, as well as at the designated municipal parking lots.

The Volpe National Transportation Systems Center conducted a transportation study in 2010 as part of the General Management Plan process. The study explores wayfinding improvements and indicates that existing signage should not only offer directional assistance but also include distance to the site so that the drivers/pedestrians can anticipate arrival to their destination. In addition to providing signage, the park website should also provide more detailed information for accessing the site by public transportation and private vehicle, as well as including information on MBTA subway/trolley and commuter rail stops that include public parking for people arriving to the site from outlying areas. The Volpe study provides five additional locations for signage to address routes frequently taken by visitors including:

- Northbound on Harvard Street, south of Coolidge Corner;
- Eastbound on Boylston Street, west of the intersection with Washington Street in Brookline Village;
- Eastbound on Route 90, west of the Cambridge Street exit;
- Westbound on Beacon Street, east of Kenmore Square; and
- Westbound in Longwood Avenue, east of the Brookline Avenue intersection.[19]

CR-2. Promote visitor parking in town lots

Due to the small size of the site and its location in a dense residential area, providing parking at the site is challenging. Additionally, Beals Street is one-way and quite narrow with parking only allowed on the southeast side of the street, thus residential street parking is limited. For general visitors, the park should encourage use of Brookline's two municipal parking lots and publicize their availability on the park website.

The Volpe Transportation Study has explored options for improved parking access for visitors. In addition to publicizing municipal parking areas on the Kennedy National Historic Site website, signage should be erected to direct drivers to the available parking areas. The study further recommends coordinating with the Edward Devotion School, located at Harvard and Stedman Streets approximately a quarter mile from the site, to allow visitor parking in the summer season thus expanding visitor parking options without the two-hour time limit imposed by municipal street parking.[20]

CR-3. Explore alternatives for universal access

The site is presently not accessible to people with physical disabilities, as there is no on-site parking and the house is accessed by steps with limited space to provide an entrance ramp or elevator. The interior of the house includes another stairway that is traversed in the course of the tour. Designating accessible parking at the front of the site would not guarantee an accessible space for visitors, as the spot may be occupied by any car displaying a placard.

Due to the site's context and spatial limitations, the constraints create a challenge to providing universal access and alternatives for accommodating accessibility should be explored. Modification to either the front or back porch entrance would require substantial alterations to the historic house. Although access from the front porch would be ideal based on the current public tour, the back porch would be preferable from a landscape perspective, having the least impact on landscape character, views, and historic building fabric. However, if access were developed from the back porch, which was reconstructed in the 1970s, the doorway from the kitchen to the hallway is not wide enough for a standard wheelchair.

An alternative is to consider an accessible site in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood that could provide additional interpretation on how the Kennedys lived in the neighborhood, off-site exhibit space, accessible parking, and restroom facilities.

CR-4. Repair sidewalk without damaging tree

Rose Kennedy's walks with her children throughout the neighborhood were an integral part of the family's daily routines. The sidewalk has been greatly impacted by the wide trunk and bulging roots of the London plane located in the tree lawn, which creates an uneven and cracked concrete walking surface (see Figure 2.26). At the base of the tree, an asphalt patch has replaced a section of the concrete sidewalk to partially remedy the situation. The granite curb that runs along the street is absent for the length of the tree's planting area due to the tree's extreme girth and bulging of the root system.

Ideally, the sidewalk would be maintained to a degree that a stroller could safely roll along the sidewalk. Yet, sidewalk repairs should not involve damage or removal of London plane roots. Asphalt patches may be employed to provide temporary repairs. When the tree expires and is replaced in-kind, the even concrete sidewalk should be restored. National Park Service should also coordinate with the Town of Brookline for maintenance and repair of the sidewalk, so that removal and installation methods are not damaging to the London plane.

CR-5. Preserve front walk

The front yard concrete walk used to access the main door of the house from the sidewalk was installed around 1909 and has remained in the same location since the Kennedy's residence at the site. Currently the front walk extends from the public sidewalk, where it is 5 feet wide, and bisects the front yard. At the foot of the steps that lead up to the porch and front door, the concrete walkway widens to 6 feet. All tours begin at the front porch accessed by the front walk (see Figure 2.34). The walk is in good condition with no major cracks or hazards apparent. The front walk should be preserved in concrete as it is a historic element of the landscape. The size or width of the walkway should not be altered as this would detract from the historic character of the front yard setting and change house access.

CR-6. Retain compatible character of visitor walk

As the most often used walkway at the site, the four-foot-wide concrete connecting path from the public sidewalk to the rear yard leads to the site's basement entrance and rear landscape area and serves as the only exterior walkway connecting the three main landscape areas of the site. The National Park Service installed the walk in 1969 on the southwest side of the house, after the dedication ceremony, for ease of access by staff and visitors (see Figure 2.41).

In the 1910s the Kennedy's accessed the rear yard by a walkway on the northeast side of the house, installed prior to the Kennedy's residence when homes were

not yet developed on the adjacent parcels to the east (see Figures 1.37 and 1.44). This walkway was removed in 1969 in favor of installing a wider walkway on the southwest side.

The walk along the southwest side of the house is in fair condition with some settling and minor cracks. The walk should be retained for visitor, staff, safety, and security access. Future renovation of the walk should retain its material composition, color, and dimensions in keeping with the residential character of the site. However, should a universal access route incorporate the walkway, its current width is not sufficient to meet standards.

CR-7. Remove short flagstone walk

The National Park Service installed a short flagstone walk off the front walkway most likely in the 1980s to ease staff access to the flag pole erected in the front yard and to allow visitors to access the commemorative marker. The walk, only 20 inches wide and 5 feet long, is in good condition. However, visitors follow the path and then continue across the lawn to the commemorative marker, causing lawn compaction (see Figure 2.47).

The flagstone walk does not date from the historic period and its presence encourages visitors to walk across the lawn. One treatment option is to remove the flagstone pavers and close off the area by extending the privet hedge to deter access. A related recommendation listed under small-scale features below is to relocate the flagpole to the southwest side of the commemorative marker. A second treatment option is to plant the area around the commemorative marker and flagpole with reinforced turf grass or open cell grass paver blocks to reduce lawn compaction while still allowing visitor access to the commemorative marker and staff access to the flagpole (see task VG-4).

CR-8. Provide access to hose tap on northeast side of property

During the 1910s, the Kennedys accessed their backyard by a walk on the northeast side of their property. When the park added a walk on the southwest side of the house, the northeast walkway was eliminated. A flagstone walkway would improve park staff access to this area and eliminate the muddy route to and from the hose tap (see Figures 2.42 and 2.43).

VEGETATION

VG-1. Manage street trees

The enormous tree in front of the Kennedy birthplace is part of a monoculture of London planes that line both sides of Beals Street. The evenly spaced trees define the character of the streetscape, contribute to the scenic quality of the

neighborhood, and distinguish Beals from the surrounding streets. The trees were young when the Kennedys lived there in the 1910s but are now mature (see Figures 1.24 and 2.23).

The mature tree-lined sides of Beals Street create a unique vista from the property when one looks either northeast or southwest down the street. On the northeastern end of the Beals Street development, near the Kennedy property, two street trees interrupt the intended monoculture of London planes. On the southeast side of the street, an elm was planted in the place of an original Beals Street London plane. Directly opposite 83 Beals, on the northwest side of the street, a linden replaced one of the original London planes (see Figures 2.24 and 2.25). Though two of the original trees have been replaced, the integrity of the street tree collection is superior to any of the other streets in the Coolidge Corner neighborhood.

The Town of Brookline instituted a street tree program in the late nineteenth century. The London plane monoculture is the result of the historic planning effort to improve access to natural elements in developed environments and thus improve urban quality of life. Since the trees were planted around the time that the neighborhood was being developed, in the early 1900s, their presence provides both residents and visitors with a tangible sense of the passage of time. Their decline in the decades ahead will require a management approach that recognizes the challenges of managing and eventually replacing a monoculture planting.

Plans should be made, in partnership with the Town of Brookline, to create a common vision for the character of street trees on Beals Street. The National Park Service and Brookline should work in partnership for the conservation and management of the London planes to perpetuate the historic street tree establishment in the area and for their eventual removal and replacement. Efforts should be made, in collaboration with the Town of Brookline, to perpetuate the monoculture aspect of the street tree plantings and replace removed trees with appropriate varieties and cultivars of London planes. This approach ensures genetic variety and less susceptibility to pest outbreaks, yet continues the intended consistency and regularity of the plantings thus retaining the historic qualities of the street tree plantings.[9] Other communities and government entities that are managing monocultures of London planes and sycamores should also be consulted, such as the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and MassHighways.

The National Park Service should collaborate with the town to develop a tree replacement strategy for street sections and for the entire street. The plan should include an incremental replacement strategy, a section by section replacement strategy, and an overall replacement strategy to preserve the consistency in the size and planting of the historic monoculture. The Park Service should also explore the possibility of establishing a cooperative agreement with the town to

share authority for the care of the London planes with the National Park Service, especially if a historic district is established for Beals Street.[10]

Care should be taken to retain the historic street trees for as long as possible, as the street trees are one of the distinguishing aspects of the site and its context. Due to the age of the trees, inspections and conditions assessments by a certified arborist need to be conducted on a regular basis to assess the structural stability and metabolic health of the trees, check and trim dead and weak wood, and address other health and safety concerns as they arise. However, live material should not be trimmed or removed from the tree. When trimming off dead/weak material, the certified arborist should use target pruning techniques to recognize the branch connection best suited to grow healing wood to close the wound. Removal either above or below the target point slows closure of the wound and could potentially weaken the health of the tree as it exerts more energy to grow wood over the wound.[11]

Tree inspections should be conducted to assess the health of the entire monoculture so that any pest or disease concerns are identified early on and prevented from spreading. Anthracnose is presently the only known disease affecting London planes on Beals Street, causing leaf drop in affected trees but not resulting in tree mortality. There are no known invasive pests targeting London planes presently, however that does not preclude future pest issues. London planes are considered a host species for the Asiatic Longhorned Beetle. The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and park staff initiated a monitoring program for the site in 2010.

As the trees age, their roots will continue to lift concrete sidewalks and push out curbs, necessitating continued replacement with asphalt.[12] Patches and repairs to the sidewalk should not damage the root structure of the tree.

Overall, the best approach to aged tree care is to keep the site environment as stable as possible. So long as the trees remain healthy no changes should be made in their soil or nutrient treatments. In addition, in areas where the National Park Service and the Town of Brookline can exert control, fertilization regimes for the tree lawn areas and the Kennedy National Historic Site front lawn should remain consistent and light. Herbicides should not be used and pesticides should be limited. Removal of show and ice by shoveling immediately after storms will diminish the need for de-icing. De-icing materials with the least impact to vegetation should be used, such as sand instead of salt-based chemicals. Compacted soil should be gently aerated around the roots of the trees. Disturbance to trees should be minimized with efforts to avoid bark or root damage as could occur during construction or town infrastructure improvements.[13]

VG-2. Replant arborvitae at corners and reduce height of foundation plantings

When the Town of Brookline installed the commemorative marker in 1961, yews grew in front of the house and porch. In 1967, additional yews were added to the sides of the marker and arborvitaes were planted at the corners of the house and porch by a landscape company contracted by the Kennedys (Figure 4.1). The National Park Service moved the arborvitaes to the backyard after the dedication ceremony, but the trees did not survive. Yews were installed at the house corners to replace the arborvitaes.

Yews tolerate the low light conditions in the front yard, however the yew to the southwest or right of the marker receives more light and is less crowded than the yew on the northeast or left of the marker. The original intent of yew planting was to screen the siding on the porch and the basement level windows, and to frame the commemorative marker. As of the site's existing conditions assessment in 2012, the yews partially screen the porch, the park sign, and the commemorative marker as well (Figure 4.2). The National Park Service has performed periodic maintenance of the yews by rejuvenative pruning, and in some cases removal and replanting yews, and routine pruning since the site's dedication. At the northern corner of the front yard, three yews were recently replaced in kind and are in good condition.

The yews in front of the house should be maintained at three levels. The change in height of the yews creates a hierarchy that frames the house and marker. The yews underneath the first floor front windows should be maintained at a slightly higher height, approximately one foot below the window trim, but above the porch deck (Figure 4.3). The yews behind the marker and in front of the porch should be returned to their 1969 form, and sheared with their maximum height corresponding to just below the deck boards of the porch (see Figure 4.1). The yews planted on either side of the marker should be replanted to regain uniformity and maintained at two feet in height (compare Figures 4.2 and 4.3). For all of the yews, a rejuvenative pruning program will gradually reduce the size of the shrubs.[14] During the pruning process, the yews should be cut back 6 to12 inches below the ultimate desired height. Over the course of four years, each plant should become reduced in size and once that point is reached, shearing techniques should be used to preserve the desired height.[15] If after pruning down to the desired size, the yews become sparse and do not grow back to a fuller form, they should be replaced in kind. The desired form of the yews is rounded rather than angular as seen in photographs from 1968 and 1969 (see Figures 1.84 through 1.88).

Low, spreading yews for sides of commemorative marker and north corner of property: Possible replacement species/cultivars for the low yews on either side of the commemorative marker and the north corner of the property include *Taxus baccata* 'Adpressa Fowle,' which has a more compact habit and tends to



Figure 4.1. View southeast of the home in about 1968. Note the height of the shrubs below the porch and windows (JOFI Management Records).



Figure 4.2. View southeast of the home in June 2012. Note the height of the shrubs above the porch and windows, partially obscuring the park sign and touching the marker (Olmsted Center).



Figure 4.3. Photosimulation of the shrubs reduced in height below the sign and window to match the late 1960s appearance and cut away from the marker (Olmsted Center).

grow less tall but spreads nicely; *Taxus cuspidata* 'Dark Green Spreader' or 'Nana;' or the hybrid *Taxus x media* 'Moon.' All these varieties tend to be slow growing.[16] If replacements are made, they should be done in pairs or groups to ensure uniformity. Specific recommendations include:

Low, spreading yews for foundation planting in front of porch and windows: Possible replacement species/cultivars for the low yews in front of the porch and below the house windows include *Taxus cuspidata* 'Dark Green Spreader' or 'Nana' or the hybrid *Taxus x media* 'Moon.' These varieties tend to be slow growing.[17] While the yews in front of the porch and windows can be of the same variety, they should be pruned to different heights as described above.

Arborvitae or Upright yews for porch and house corners: To reestablish the appearance of the front yard landscape at the time of the dedication, four arborvitae should be planted at the porch and house corners. However, arborvitaes prefer sun, rich well-drained and evenly moist soil, and neutral pH, thus will become leggy within a few years. Pyramidal arborvitae, *Thuja occidentalis* 'Pyramidalis,' tolerate light shade. To preserve the appearance of the landscape visible in 1968 and 1969 photographs, the arborvitaes will need to be replaced every three to five years with 7 to 8 foot tall nursery plants. If replacing the columnar arborvitaes visible in the 1969 dedication photographs is unsuccessful, upright yews provide a viable alternative. Possible substitute species/cultivars include *Taxus x media* 'Hicksii,' 'Hatfieldii,' or 'Citation.' Yews will not require frequent replacement as they can tolerate less sunlight and more difficult growing conditions.

VG-3. Rejuvenate sidewalk privet hedge

A California privet hedge has grown along the front sidewalk since before the 1961 installation of the commemorative marker. The hedge is visible in the 1969 dedication photographs and continues to define the front lawn space by providing a low barrier to discourage foot traffic on the lawn. Due to excessive shading in the front yard by the overhanging London plane, some sections are thin. The separate hedges on either side of the front yard are not uniform in width. As maintenance has been performed throughout the years, single plants have been removed due to damage or death, leaving holes in the otherwise continuous hedge. Since the site's 1969 dedication, the National Park Service has performed periodic maintenance of the privet hedge by removal, replanting, and pruning.

The hedge should be rehabilitated to perpetuate its historic design intent and growth as it appeared at the 1969 dedication. The hedge is mostly consistent with its historic scale and should be rejuvenated in a clipped rectangular form with a maximum height of 18 inches and width of 12 inches to allow clear views of the commemorative marker. The hedges on both sides of the front walkway should be clipped to maintain uniformity with a consistent alignment, profile, width, and

height.

The hedge currently consists of two species of privet, California privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium)* and Border privet (*Ligustrum obtusifolium)*. To ensure uniformity of the hedge, only one of the species should be retained and used on-site (see Figures 4.2 and 2.37). Due to the Border privet's slightly darker shade of green and greater shade tolerance, future fill or replacement material for the hedge should consist solely of Border privet.[18] Replant weak sections and gaps to promote a more continuous and consistent appearance. If weak areas persist, interplant regularly to continue the hedge's healthy appearance. An alternative treatment is to entirely replace the hedge with Border privet when a consistently healthy appearance of the hedge cannot be maintained with the existing plants.

VG-4. Preserve lawn

When the Kennedys resided at the property in the 1910s, the front yard was a lawn and the London plane in the front yard was too young to cast shade (see Figure 1.34). The increasing shade cast by the growing tree gradually weakened the lawn. The Town of Brookline replaced the lawn with new sod in 1961, in conjunction with planting shrubs in the front yard. The Town reinstalled sod again in 1967 and 1968. Following the site's dedication, the National Park Service reinstalled sod in 1969 and has continued to perform periodic replacement and maintenance. The rear yard also contained a seeded lawn at the time of the site's dedication.

Currently, the front lawn is in fair condition and still affected by the shade of the overhanging London plane (see Figure 2.47). It also suffers from compaction by visitors traversing it to gain access to the commemorative marker. The rear yard lawn is also thin due to the shade cast overhanging trees on the adjacent properties and the moisture depletion by the tree roots. The rear yard lawn area contains a teak table and chair set at the eastern corner of the lawn, primarily for use by staff, and use of the table weakens an area of the lawn. As the rear lawn is the largest open area at the site, it serves as a multi-purpose gathering space for most of the year (see Figure 2.48).



Figures 4.4. Photograph showing installation of open cell grass paver blocks that can be used to minimize compaction in front of the commemorative marker (Grasspave, Invisible Structures, Inc.).

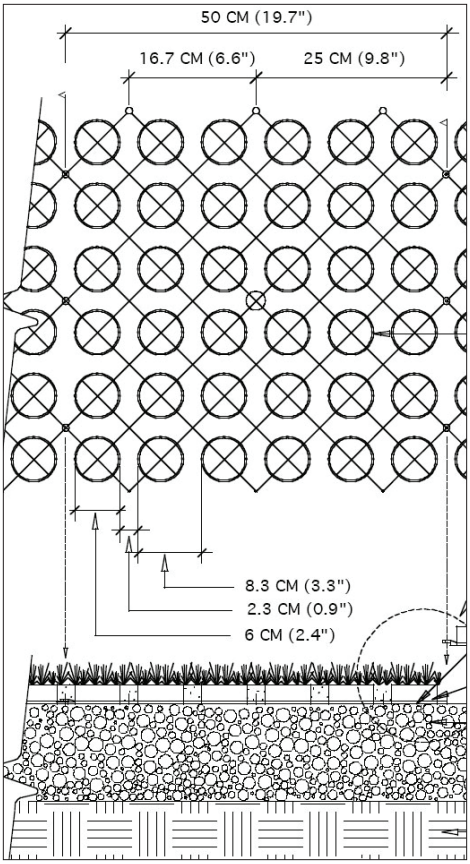
Due to the shading of the front and rear yards, as well as foot traffic, a consistently healthy appearance of the lawn

has been difficult to achieve. Reestablishing and preserving a healthy lawn is recommended as the lawn areas contribute to the character of the historic site. To address the foot traffic in the front lawn area, if the park chooses to support access to the commemorative marker by the public, reinforced turf or open cell grass paver blocks should be installed to minimize compaction (see Figures 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6). An alternative would be to close off access to the lawn by extending the privet hedge southeast to the porch, reducing the likelihood of compaction as visitors would not have direct access the lawn.

To preserve the overall health of the lawn, frequent light watering is necessary as the surrounding trees take up the moisture in the soil. More frequent, shallow watering is recommended so that excessive water is not delivered to the tree roots. Care should be taken not to overwater on the site because of the mucky soils and the potential for water to flow into neighboring lots.

To repair or replace the lawn, three alternative treatments are described. For all approaches, soil testing should be performed to assess nutrient levels and recommendations should be followed to amend any nutrient deficiencies. The first approach, if problems establishing a healthy lawn persist, is to select more shade and traffic-tolerant turf species. A second option is to turn over the current lawn entirely in the early spring, amend the soil, and re-sod or reseed the area—ideally one month prior to the site's reopening for the season. With this option, it is important that the grade level be preserved as an increase in the depth of soil would be detrimental to the surrounding vegetation. A third strategy is to employ either slit or drill seeding, where the seed is imbedded in the existing turf to improve its density. Based on the condition of the turf in the front and rear yards, different approaches may be applied. As described under task SS-8, the lawn furniture should be replaced with a style that allows greater light penetration, such as iron lattice or mesh.

Figures 4.5 and 4.6. Diagram and hotograph of open cell grass paver blocks that can be used to minimize compaction in front of the commemorative marker (Grasspave, Invisible Structures, Inc.).





VG-5. Preserve annuals by commemorative marker, install groundcover along walk, and maintain thorny plants away from walkway

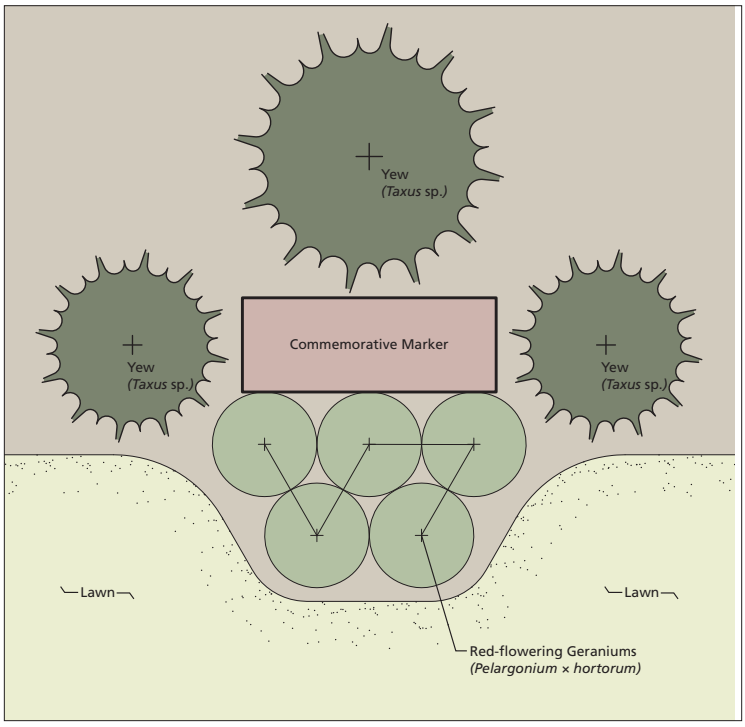
In 1967 and 1968, work invoices indicate that Rose Kennedy requested red geraniums be planted by the commemorative marker in the summer followed by "bronze queen" chrysanthemums in the fall. The practice of planting annuals at the front of the marker has continued to the present (see Figures 2.39 and 4.2). The seasonal annuals in front of the marker are in fair condition as they are less affected by the shade in the front yard than other understory vegetation. The practice of planting annuals at the front of the marker should be continued (Figure 4.7). During periods of more intense shade, periodic replacement throughout the summer months should occur to continue a healthy appearance.

Recommended planting rotation:

- Early spring to mid May, violets or pansies (non-historic, but adds spring color)
- Late May (before May 29th) through August, red geraniums (historic)
- August through fall, bronze chrysanthemums (historic)

While the annuals were historically planted at the commemorative marker, the park began planting annuals along the southwest walkway to the rear visitor entrance in the 1980s. As the pedestrian walkway along the southwest side of the property did not exist during the historic period, its embellishment with flowers is out of character with the historic period. The edge of the property was a privet hedge in the 1910s, a driveway in the early 1960s, and lawn and chain link fence in 1969. The National Park Service added the walkway and created the flower bed to facilitate maintenance along the narrow strip. To facilitate maintenance but also retain the historic character of the site, the eight-inch wide strip should be planted with pachysandra. The Kennedy family purchased pachysandra as part of the 1967 landscape plantings, though the location of its installation on the site is undetermined. The pachysandra will require annual trimming to ensure that it does not grow over the walkway. The 1967 purchase included eighteen geraniums. While five were placed in front of the commemorative marker, the planting location of the other thirteen is unknown.

Figure 4.7. Planting diagram for the commemorative marker (Olmsted Center).



An assortment of plants grow in the narrow strip of National Park Service land on the southwest side of the chain link fence, along the property line shared by 77/79 Beals. This vegetation does not date to the period of significance. Plants with thorns—rambling roses and raspberries—often grow through the fence and into the walkway. Vegetation that poses a safety concern for people using the walkway should be moved further away from the walkway or pruned regularly. The park should continue to collaborate with the neighbors at 77/79 Beals to maintain this narrow strip of land with a mix of low shrubs (three feet or lower), perennials, and groundcover. The introduction of trees or large shrubs along the strip of land along the southwest side walkway would detract from the open character of the front half of the adjacent properties.

VG-6. Retain and replant Colorado blue spruce

The extant Colorado blue spruce on the southwest side of the NPS property, on the neighbors side of the fence, was installed in the early 1980s. The spruce is the only plant seemingly unaffected by the rear yard shade, at 25 to 30 feet tall. Loosely limbed up to about 3 feet, the spruce is a healthy specimen with dense vegetation and great color (see Figure 2.48). Although it is not a historic feature of the landscape, it is indicative of vegetative screens and plantings that were in common use during the property's latter period of significance. The spruce should be retained until its size or other aspect impacts the site, at which point it should be removed. The tree may be replanted in-kind for screening if needed.

Another Colorado blue spruce grew on the northeast side of the property in the 1960s and should be replanted to provide backyard screening (see Figure 1.80). The Kennedy family chose to retain this spruce in 1967 and paid a landscape company for trimming. The National Park Service removed the tree in the 1980s, when it outgrew the space.

VG-7. Improve vegetative screens of privet, spruce, lilac, and arborvitae (or yew)

Perimeter screening has been an important element of the 83 Beals landscape since the 1910s. A photograph taken in 1916 shows a privet hedge along the southwest property line (see Figure 1.43). In 1967 a landscape company contracted by the Kennedy family trimmed the shrubs along the rear fence (privet) and added trees and shrubs to the 83 Beals landscape—some for ornamentation and some for screening. Specific screening plants included six lilacs, an extant spruce, and four 7-8' arborvitae planted along the edge of the backyard of 77/79 Beals. After the 1969 dedication, the National Park Service likely moved a yew from the west corner of the front yard to the rear south corner of the yard when the visitor walk was installed. Up through the 1980s, park staff members recall lilacs along the northeast side of the back yard, most memorably at the east corner of the property. Around 2000, the park replaced the overgrown privet screen

along the rear side of the property. The privet, known for their hardiness and vigor, struggled for several years due to several overhanging trees. The privet have grown denser since the removal of a large tree on the neighboring property at the south corner. The existing privet should be removed and replanted as a single row, which will be more historically appropriate and create a larger lawn area (see Figure 1.101 and Drawing 15).

Photographs indicate that one or two of the lilacs were planted near the dining room window, but did not thrive and were subsequently removed (see Figures 1.96 and 1.100). To reintroduce lilacs to the property, one or two lilacs should be replanted along the northeast edge of the property to serve as screening. Placement of the lilacs should be based on maximum lighting available along the northeast property edge. A mildew resistant, shade tolerant lilac hybrid is recommended.

Since the neighbors to the southwest removed several trees, the four arborvitae should be replanted along the southwest property line, outside of the fence, but within the park property. Alternatively, upright yews would be more tolerant of the partial light and limited moisture conditions in this area. The yews would also be easier to maintain at a seven to eight foot height. The spruce are discussed separately under VG-6.

VG-8. Reintroduce ornamental plantings by foundation

During the Kennedy's residence from 1914 to 1920, several photographs of young Joseph show roses growing in a foundation bed at the east corner of the house near the kitchen door (see Figures 1.37, 1.44, and 1.45). A later photograph from the 1960s also shows ornamental plants (difficult to identify) in the same planting bed (see Figure 1.81). The bed is presently devoid of vegetation.

A newspaper article from 1965 reports that Jackson and Perkins donated roses named in honor of President John F. Kennedy. The roses were planted by the commemorative marker, but are gone by the 1969 dedication. A photograph likely taken in 1968 shows shrubs along the southwest foundation wall of the house—possibly the roses relocated, but no documentation exists (see Figure 1.85). In subsequent photographs, the plants are gone.



Figure 4.8. Photosimulation of three roses at the east corner of 83 Beals near the kitchen porch. Roses were present during the 1910s and other ornamental vegetation (unidentified) grew in the same location in the 1960s. Due to the limited sun, the roses would possibly need to be replaced annually. (Olmsted Center).

Reintroduce ornamental vegetation to the east corner bed since it was present during both periods. Recommended plants include three hardy, shade tolerant, drought tolerant roses or three summer flowering annuals or perennials such as hibiscus or geraniums (Figure 4.8). Due

to the difficult growing conditions in this location, roses may require annual replacement. The plants should not be watered excessively due to their proximity to the house foundation. Subsurface metal edging would aid in directing water away from the foundation. The soil would need to be amended in this area to a depth of 18 inches to support the healthy growth of roses.

A small bed between the kitchen porch and basement door also contained a shrub in the 1960s, most likely a heavily pruned privet. This plant should also be replanted (see Figures 1.81, 1.105, and 3.17). The use of planters or mixed species in this bed would detract from the simple character of the backyard.

Because of the difficulty in determining the contents of the bed along the southwest side of the house, and the short duration of this planting, it is not recommended that roses or other shrubs be planted along the southwest foundation wall (see Figure 4.1).

SMALL-SCALE FEATURES

SS-1. Relocate flagpole

The National Park Service installed an 11 ½-foot flagpole in the front yard shortly after the site dedication in 1969. Set in concrete surrounded by an exposed, corrugated metal sleeve, the flagpole stands to the southwest of the main walk and accessed by a short flagstone walk. The flagpole distinguishes the site as a place of national significance and commemoration, yet at the same time is out of character in its residential setting. When the house is photographed, the flagpole is at the center of the image. Ideally the flagpole should stand at one edge of the photograph. Department of the Interior flag protocol requires that the mast be tall enough to allow the flag to be flown at full and half mast.

One option considered is to mount the flag on a mast projecting from the front porch of the house, which would be more typical in a residential setting. A flag hung from the house in the 1960s (see Figure 1.76). However, the flag could not be raised, lowered, or set at half mast. Other homes in the neighborhood also display American flags, but none can be set at half mast (see Figures 2.33 and 4.9). The Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site hangs a flag from the building, which is accessed from the window over the front door (Figure 4.10). However, the scale of this type of mast would detract from the smaller home at 83 Beals.

A second option is relocate the flagpole to the southwest side of the commemorative marker, so that it would frame rather than obscure the house (Figure 4.11 and 4.12).[21] This would have the added benefit of allowing the park to close the hedge section to the southwest of the walk—thereby blocking foot traffic across the lawn in front of the commemorative marker.





Figure 4.9 (left). View of a flag attached to porch column on Manchester Road (Olmsted Center, July 2009).

Figure 4.10 (right). View of the flagpole extending above the front porch at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, MA (Olmsted Center).

SS-2. Preserve gas light

The Town of Brookline installed the gas light in 1967 in remembrance of the site as the birthplace of the former president (see Figure 1.86). It forms part of the memorial aspect of the landscape though it is outside the site boundary in the former tree lawn managed by the Town of Brookline. Though, historically, no gas lamps have been documented in front of 83 Beals Street, the intent is to call attention to the time of the Kennedys' residence. The gas light is one of the site's distinguishing features that identifies it as a place of remembrance. The light post is fluted, tapers from top to bottom, and has a black finish. The luminaire is cylindrical and the mantles are lit throughout the day.

The park should coordinate with the Town of Brookline on acquisition and replacement of components should they become damaged or deteriorated. Any future refurbishment of the feature, such as paint and finish, should match its historical appearance. Since the gas light is located in a very accessible area, a replacement strategy, in conjunction with the Town of Brookline, should be identified in case of significant damage or loss.

As of 2012, the Kennedy gas light is one of two in operation in Brookline. While there are spare parts in the town's storage warehouse, the repair techniques are not documented. Therefore, establishing a maintenance plan in collaboration with the Town of Brookline is recommended in the near future.





Figure 4.11 and 4.12. Photosimulations of the 83 Beals flagpole moved to the southwest side of the commemorative marker. Note that the shrub masses would be reduced in scale as detailed in VG-2 (Olmsted Center).

SS-3. Preserve commemorative marker

The Town of Brookline installed the commemorative marker in 1961 after John Fitzgerald Kennedy's presidential election to mark his birthplace in Brookline. The marker is one of the most distinguishing features of the site as it is located in the front yard, nestled into a mass of common yews in clear view from the public right of way. In 1963, after President Kennedy's assassination, mourners placed a wreath at the marker, which was draped with a black bunting (see Figure 1.76). Comprised of a vertically set granite block, fronted with a bronze plaque, the marker measures 24 ¼ inches wide, by 36 inches tall, by 9 inches deep (see Figure 2.49). The plaque contains a bas-relief profile of Kennedy, and a brief description recognizing the site as his birthplace. The commemorative marker should be retained and preserved. It should be periodically reviewed by a conservation

specialist for a condition assessment and the resulting recommendations for its care followed. Care should be taken with the nearby plantings so that the plants are not touching the marker and the marker is consistently in clear view from the public right of way.

Some visitors leave flowers or stones beside or on the marker. The project team found no historic documentation encouraging or discouraging this ritual. The park should continue the current practice of removing these objects.

SS-4. Repair chain-link fence

During the memorial period in the late 1960s and prior to the 1969 dedication, a chain-link fence was installed along the northeast, southeast, and southwest property lines. The fence is now rusty, but still functional (see Figure 2.40 and 2.43). The fence runs along the site's accepted property lines, but not the true property lines along the southwest side of the site. On the narrower northeastern side of the property, the chain link fence is four feet away from the house. Since the fence is showing signs of deterioration with visible rusting, the preferred recommendation is to repair the fence, as it would be difficult to find or manufacture an identical replacement. If replacement is necessary in the future, the new chain-link mesh should match the original wire gauge and mesh openings and be installed in the same location.

SS-5. Provide signage at an appropriate residential scale

Located on the front porch, the National Park Service sign and accompanying brochure rack offer additional and in-depth information about the site (see Figure 4.2). The on-site signage should correspond with National Park Service



Figure 4.13. Photosimulation of a smaller park sign affixed to the porch balustrade (Olmsted Center).

sign standards and be kept in a location that is clearly visible from the public right of way. The present sign is approximately 3 feet tall by 6 feet wide and spans the length of the porch balustrade (see Figure 2.50). The signage is out of scale with the residential context and is not advantageously placed for public view. Future signage should be reduced in size to be consistent in scale and style with the residential character of the neighborhood. As the sign is the only non-historic feature on the house, alternative placement of the park sign should be explored, with possible options including location of the sign in the landscape, directly below the porch or on a post hanging closer to the sidewalk. Should future signage be placed on the porch balustrade, the dimensions of the sign should be reduced to ensure that the balustrade is not fully obstructed (Figures 4.13, 4.14, and 4.15).

SS-6. Limit landscape lighting

As the park is primarily open only during daylight hours and is of a small size in a densely settled residential location, lighting should be in historic locations or where it is critical for security and visitor safety. A porch light existed historically and should be preserved. The illumination cone of the security lights at the rear of the property near the stairwell should be reduced by adding a shield or baffle and using energy efficient bulbs. The baffle would be positioned so that the light does not shine directly on the neighbor's homes. The stairwell light could be activated with a motion sensor. Additional path lighting would detract from the historic character of the yard space (Figures 4.16 and 4.17).

SS-7. Provide wayside for historical landscape context

To allow visitors to understand the appearance of the Kennedy home and surrounding landscape during their residence (1914 to 1920), a wayside should be installed in the back yard facing the northeast direction (Drawing 15). The wayside should include photographs and a description of the landscape during

Figure 4.14. Alternative considered but rejected: Photosimulation of the park sign set in the lawn above the height of the privet hedge, below the porch balustrade, and in front of the yew shrubs and flagpole (Olmsted Center).



Figure 4.15. Alternative considered but rejected: Photosimulation of the park sign hung from a post near the visitor walkway at the west corner of the property (Olmsted Center).







Figures 4.16. The light fixture above the basement door and current visitor center entrance casts light into the sky and would benefit from a shield and energy efficient bulb (Olmsted Center, April 2011).

Figure 4.17. A smaller light fixture with a shield can direct an even and focused pool of light where needed. (Shasta series at bklighting.com).

this time period, particularly the vacant land that the Kennedys viewed in 1920 to the northeast and northwest of the property. Additional photographs include those showing young Joseph and John in the yard (see Figures 1.34 through 1.45).

SS-8. Rehabilitate and secure lawn furniture

The current modern teak furniture is not in character with the historic period. Its dense construction blocks light to the lawn, necessitating frequent reseeding. When the extant teak furniture is no longer functional, metal lattice or mesh lawn furniture that allows light penetration should be acquired that would be in character with the 1960s period. The lawn furniture should be secured with a cable or other security device as theft of objects from the property has occurred in the past.

To improve the vigor of the lawn, the outdoor furniture should not be placed on the lawn in the spring—April and most of May. This will allow the turf to become well established. Furthermore, the furniture should be placed at the edge of the lawn area, where its impact is less visible. Adding a paved area to the backyard for the lawn furniture is not recommended as the lawn area is historic and the lawn furniture is non-historic.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY OF TREATMENT TASKS FOR JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

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ENDNOTES

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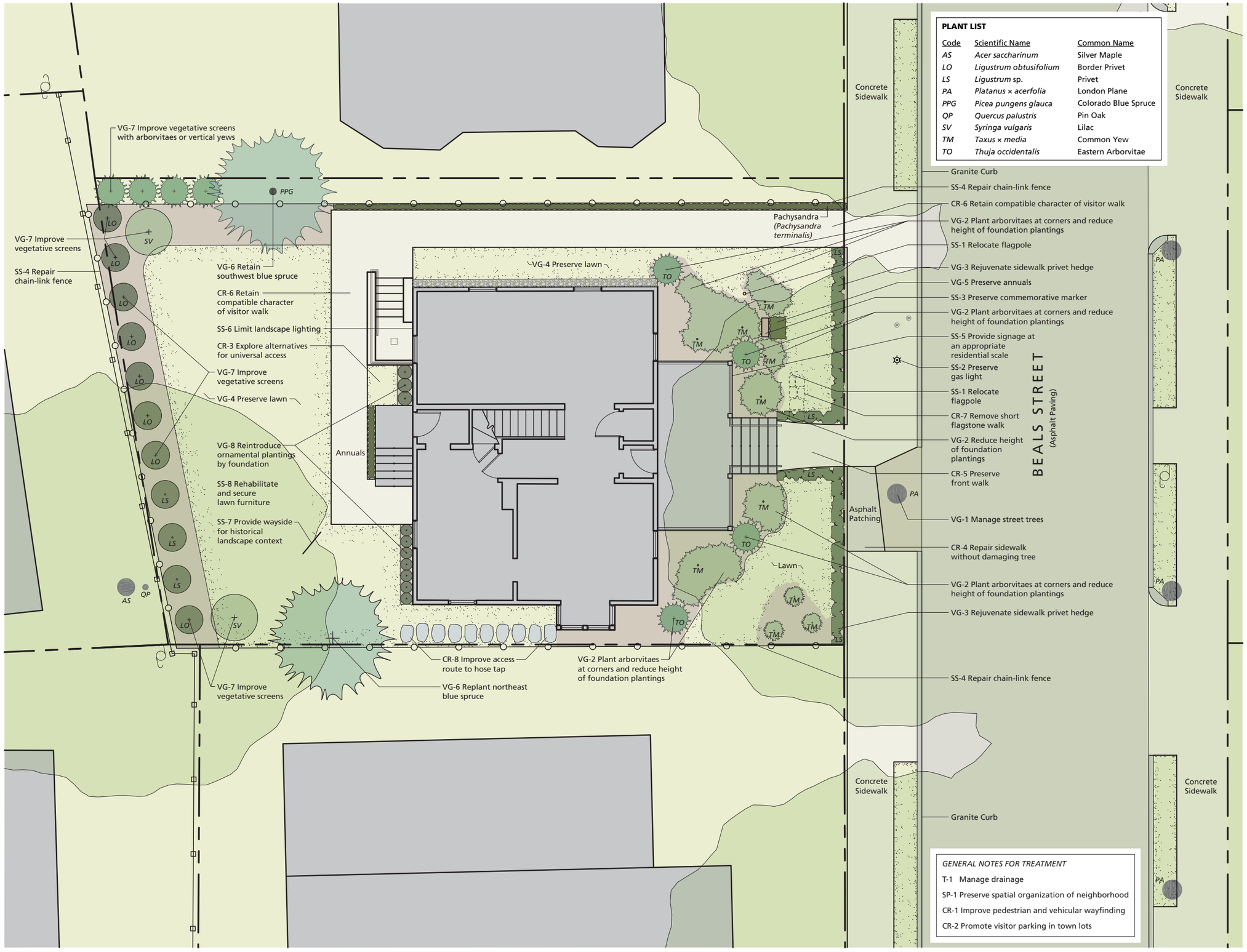
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Cultural Landscape Report

John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site

Brookline, Massachusetts

Treatment Plan
John Fitzgerald Kennedy Birthplace

National Park Service

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/oclp

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DRAWN BY

Tim Layton & Cassandra Bosco
AutoCAD 2002, Illustrator CS3, 2008

LEGEND

- Property Line
- Deciduous Tree
- Planting Bed
- Existing Stump
- Reproduction Gas Light
- JFK Commemorative Marker
- Flagstones
- Chain Link Fence
- Water Valves
- Utility Pole
- Stone Drip Strip

NOTES

1. The Town of Brookline makes no claims, no representations and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability or the accuracy of the GIS data and GIS data products furnished by the Town, including the implied validity of any uses of such data.

2. All features shown in approximate scale and location.

3. Map represents landscape conditions inventoried in April 2011.

0' 2.5' 5' 10'

Drawing 15

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