

ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Peter Berry, Chair
Board of Selectman
Acton, Ma

8/8/16

Re: The New England Village
31, 39 & 45 Martin St.

The name "New England Village" actually applied to #41-77 Maple St. on the other side of the railroad. It was one of Acton's earliest subdivisions. Laid out in 1860 it provided housing for people who worked in the South Acton center area.

#31 Martin St. is one of the few local properties retaining the farm like setting with a well articulated barn and surrounding farmland. It was built by Walter Hayward in 1889-90. Later it was home to school teacher, Mary A. Reed who was responsible for planting the "Peace Tree" at 24 Liberty St. in 1915. Her husband Reuben L. Reed was President of the Bunker Hill Association and later established the Acton Historical Society in the 1890's.

#39 Martin St. was built in the early 1880's and belonged to F.B. Temple by 1889. It was built with twin stove chimney's at the roof ridge.

#45 Martin St.'s beautiful barn with it's diamond gable window, long transom over the door and glassed-in cupola attested to the property's function as a farm. The house was built in 1872 by Loring Jackson, a local mechanic.

This area including Martin St. has been thought to be worthy of becoming another Historic District.

The view from Jones Field approaching these homes creates a **scenic vista** along with open fields and mature trees. Fort Pond Brook surrounds and delineates these 3 homes as a group, all, at one time, part of a 1,000 acre farm granted to Concord's Major Simon Willard.

The Historical Commission has not had a walk-through of any of the structures and no idea of the present condition. Two of the houses have barns also listed on the Cultural Resource List thereby putting 5 historic structures at risk. Even moving these Victorian houses within the site will change them completely as the density of the new plan will obscure them.

Direct quotes taken from " "Mill Corner" (South Acton Village): An Architectural History "
Revised and expanded by Barbara Nylander and Anne McCarthy Forbes 1989