

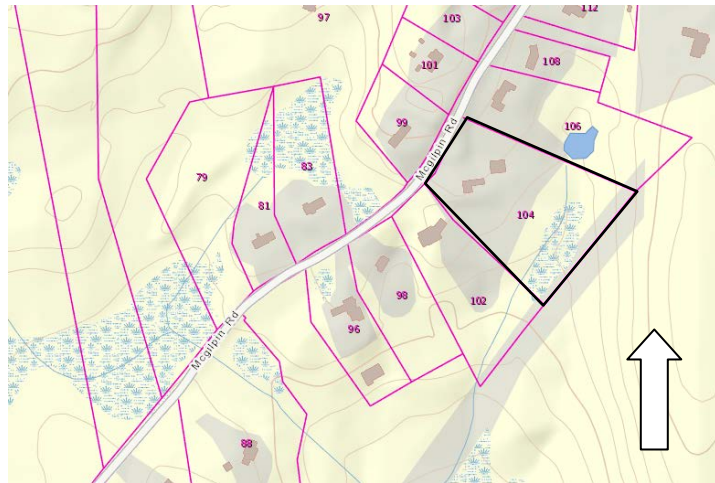
FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Shannon Walsh, PVPC
Organization: Sturbridge Historical Commission
Date (*month / year*): March 2017

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

432-02657-104

Southbridge

STU.F

STU.60
STU.287

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Fiske Hill

Address: 104 McGilpin Road (aka 92 McGilpin on deed)

Historic Name: Ezekiel Robbins House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling and Equestrian Facility

Original: Single Family Dwelling and Dairy Farm

Date of Construction: Probably 1826, by 1857

Source: Previous research, plaque on building and 1857 Map

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Brick/Masonry, Wood, Vinyl

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Unknown

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 4.62 acres

Setting: Large parcel, with residence facing west along McGilpin Road. McGilpin Road connects to Fiske Hill Road on either end.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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

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

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

The Ezekiel Robbins House, at 104 McGilpin Road, is an early to mid-nineteenth century, center hall plan, Federal style single family dwelling, which provides evidence of the beginning of the residential growth and development of the Fiske Hill area and additionally demonstrates the significance of agriculture to the early economy of Sturbridge. This two and a half story building is five bays wide by three bays deep with an asphalt shingle, hipped roof and a one and a half story rear ell. It has a brick foundation and brick exterior (laid in a Common Bond pattern with headers every eighth row), and masonry and wood trim. There are three, interior brick chimneys.

The main, western facing façade has a central entry with an elliptical fanlight and side lights, flanked by two 1/1 windows. The second story has five 1/1 windows. All windows have wood frames, brick sills, and masonry (possibly sandstone) lintels. There is a small plaque, reading 1826, affixed to the exterior towards the northwestern corner of this façade.

There are three first story and three second story 1/1 windows with brick sills and masonry lintels on the northern side elevation, with a section without fenestration on both levels due to the presence of the interior chimney. A one story ell is attached to the rear elevation and projects to the east. It appears to be vinyl sided and has a covered entry, a bay window, and a wood framed entry towards the northeastern corner.

A one and a half story garage outbuilding faces south and is three bays wide by two bays deep. It has a concrete foundation, vinyl siding, and a steeply pitched, front gabled asphalt shingle roof with overhanging eaves, boxed with dentils, and eave returns. There are three first story, arched garage bays, with keystones, and a Palladian style window in the upper half gable.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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

The area in proximity to McGilpin Road has connections to pre-Colonial Native American transportation routes dating back to the sixteenth century.^{1 2} This residence is also related to early agricultural development in Sturbridge, particularly during the Federal Period (1775-1830).³ McGilpin Road connects on either end to Fiske Hill Road, which was the "first permanent European agricultural settlement after circa 1725," established in the Eastern Upland area of Sturbridge.⁴ Fertile soil made the area ideal for agriculture and by the late eighteenth century, Fiske Hill had also developed as a stagecoach road with a Baptist Meeting House, School, and Inn. By the early to mid-twentieth century, development in this area shifted from agricultural towards higher-end residential growth and post-World War II, further residential development threatened to significantly alter the area's historic landscape.

This parcel along McGilpin Road was originally the land of Benjamin Robbins, (also written as Robins) (1724-1793) which was passed on to his son, Ezekiel Robbins (1768-1846).⁵ The Robbins family is noted to have been in Sturbridge since 1745.⁶

¹ Agnes S. Wilkin, "104 McGilpin Road," (MHC Inventory Form #STU.60), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhclid=STU.60>, accessed November 2017.

² Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Sturbridge." 1984. *Secretary of the Commonwealth* (site). Accessed July 2017, <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcupdf/townreports/Cent-Mass/stu.pdf> . <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcupdf/townreports/Cent-Mass/stu.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ George Davis. *A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge*. West Brookfield: Power Press of O.S. Cooke and Co., 1856 (page 21).

⁶ Nellie Chase. *Southbridge Press*, April and May, 1938.

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Later residents were Samuel K. Farnum (1810-1883) and Elizabeth Farnum (ca. 1815-1891) who were married in 1843. (Figure 1) The 1850 Federal Census indicates that the property was used for agriculture and had a total of 16 residents.⁷

By 1867, the property was sold to John McGilpin (1812-1874), who is listed in the 1870 atlas directory to be a farmer and dairyman.⁸⁻⁹ After John's death, and by the late nineteenth century, his wife, Ann M. McGilpin (born circa 1822) is noted to be the owner and the building form appears to contain the rear ell. (Figure 3).

This residence was one of the last working dairy farms in the Fiske Hill area and one of the final two (both dairy farms) that remained in Sturbridge by the early 1970s.¹⁰ By the early twenty first century, the property had become known as Aranelle Farm and operated as an equestrian facility.¹¹

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com (see footnotes)

Chase, Nellie. *Southbridge Press*, April and May, 1938. (April 8, 1938 article provides date for house)

Davis, George. *A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge*. West Brookfield: Power Press of O.S. Cooke and Co., 1856 (page 21).

Genealogybank.com (see footnotes)

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Wilkin, Agnes S. "'104 McGilpin Road,'" (MHC Inventory Form #STU.60), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhcl=STU.60>, accessed November 2017.

Wilkins, Agnes S. "Fiske Hill, STU.F." Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1973. *MACRIS* (site). Accessed on-line October 2017, <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhcl=STU.F>

Worcester District Registry of Deeds (see footnotes)

Figure 1: Walling, Henry Francis. "Map of Worcester County." Boston and New York: Wm. E. Baker & Co., 1857. *Library of Congress.org* <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3763w.la000320/>

Figure 2: F. W. Beers, "Sturbridge." *Atlas of Worcester County, Massachusetts*. New York: F.W. Beers & Co. 1870. *Mass.gov* (site). Accessed on-line October 2017, <http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/oversight-agencies/lib/massachusetts-real-estate-atlases.html>

Figure 3: Richards, L.J. "Charlton, Sturbridge, Southbridge, Dudley Towns." *Worcester County, 1898*. *HistoricMapWorks.Com* <http://www.historicmapworks.com/Map/US/6730/Charlton+++Sturbridge+++Southbridge+++Dudley+Towns/Worcester+County+1898/Massachusetts/>

Figure 4: "Plan of Land Surveyed for Mark Forge." Plan Book 531, Page 113, 1985. *Worcester District Registry of Deeds*.

⁷ "Samuel K. Farnum." 1850 United States Federal Census. *Ancestry.com*

⁸ "Book 742 Page 346," March 6, 1867, *Worcester District Registry of Deeds*

⁹ F. W. Beers, "Sturbridge." *Atlas of Worcester County, Massachusetts*. New York: F.W. Beers & Co. 1870. *Mass.gov* (site). Accessed on-line October 2017, <http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/oversight-agencies/lib/massachusetts-real-estate-atlases.html>

¹⁰ Agnes S. Wilkin, "'104 McGilpin Road,'" (MHC Inventory Form #STU.60), 1973. <http://mhc-macris.net/Details.aspx?Mhcl=STU.60>, accessed November 2017.

¹¹ "About Aranelle Farm." <http://www.aranellefarm.com/> Accessed November 2017.

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Photo 1: Western facing main façade of residence



Photo 2: Western façade and northern side elevation of residence and ell.

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Photo 3: Closer perspective or northern elevation of ell



Photo 4: Southern main façade and western side elevation of outbuilding

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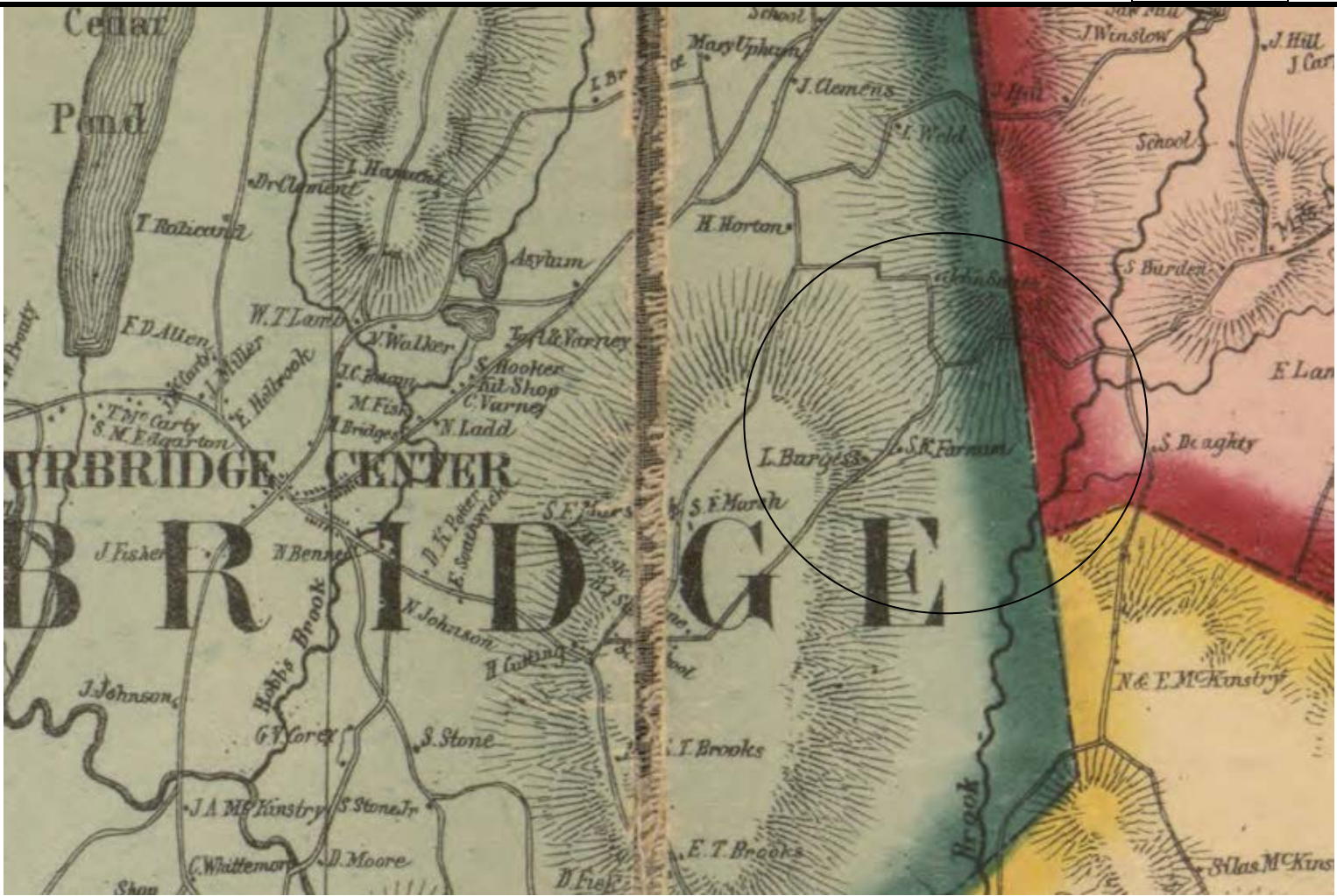


Figure 1: 1857 Map showing property of S.K. Farnum

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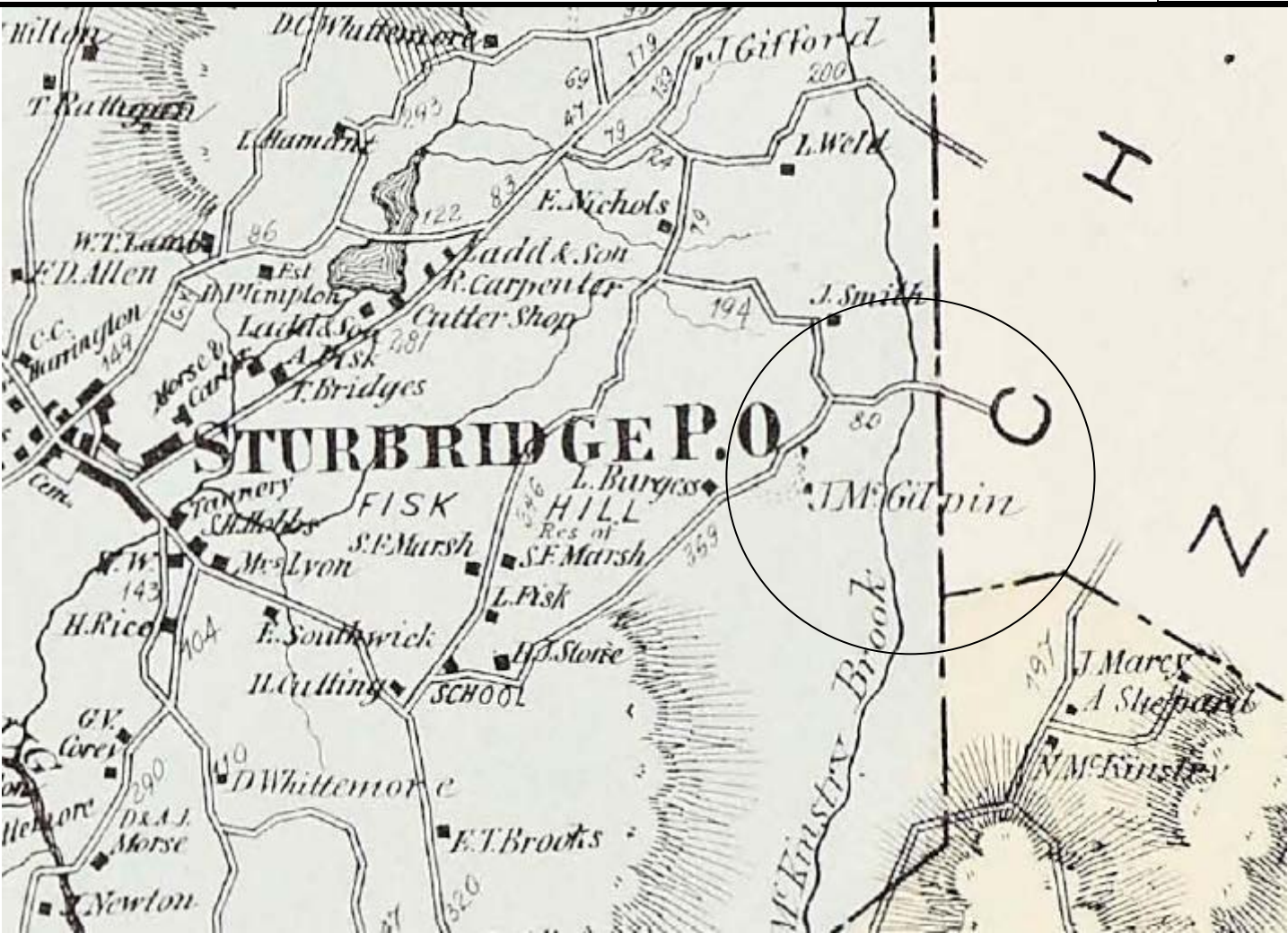


Figure 2: 1870 Map of Sturbridge showing land owned by J. McGilpin

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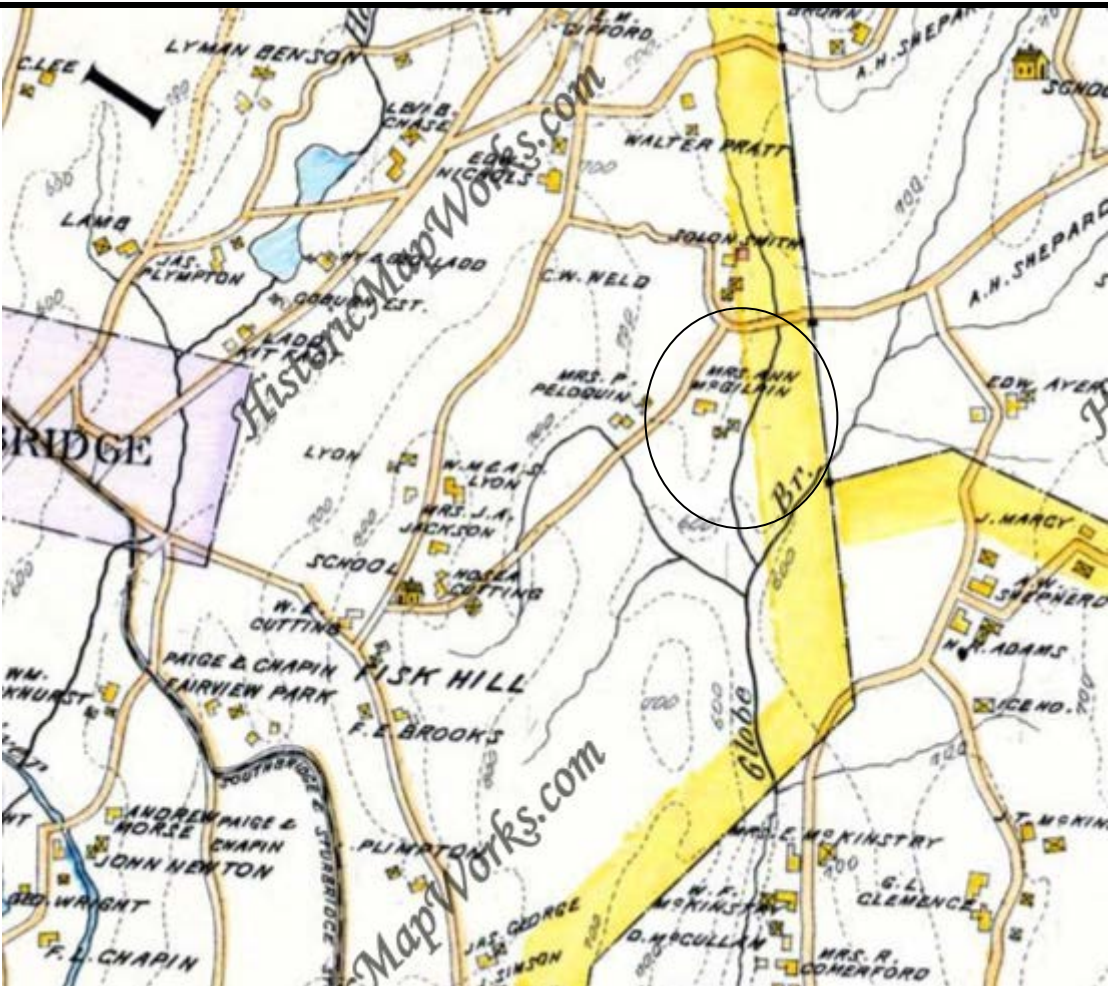


Figure 3: 1898, Mrs. Ann McGilpin's property

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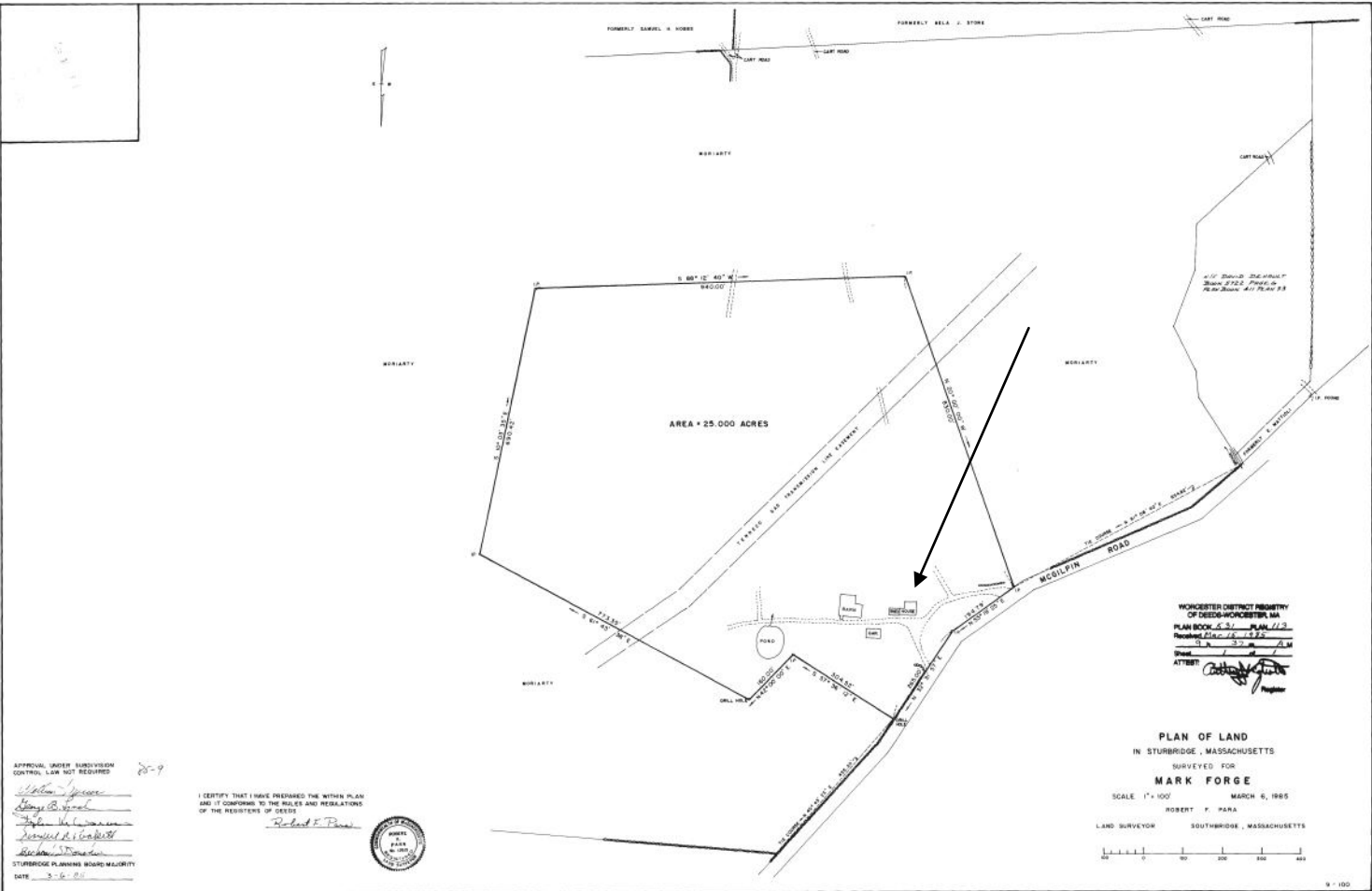


Figure 4: 1985 Land Plan of 104 McGilpin Road, residence noted