

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	NWT.AP
Historic Name:	Myrtle Baptist Church Neighborhood
Common Name:	Village, The - Curve Street
Address:	
City/Town:	Newton
Village/Neighborhood:	West Newton
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	
Use(s):	Residential District
Significance:	Architecture; Community Planning; Ethnic Heritage; Social History
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (12/11/2008)
Building Materials(s):	



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 8:17: PM

Original (pink) form: CLG file _____

Copies:

- Eligibility file _____
- Inventory form _____
- Town file (w/corresp.) _____
- MACRIS Coord. _____
- NR Director _____

NWT. AP

Community: Newton

CLG OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received: June 1, 2000

Date Due: July 18, 2000 Date Reviewed:

Type: Individual District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Myrtle Baptist Church Neighborhood

Inventory Form:

Address: West Newton, Massachusetts

AP

Action: Honor ITC Grant CLGC initiated Other:

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

- Eligible
- Eligible, also in district
- Eligible only in district
- Ineligible
- More information needed

DISTRICTS

- Eligible
- Ineligible
- More information needed

CRITERIA: A B C D

LEVEL: Local State National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by Tim Orwig/Wayne Beitler/Lara Kritzer
(Refer to criteria cited above in statement of significance. If more information is needed, use space to describe what is needed to finish eligibility opinion.)

The Myrtle Baptist Church Neighborhood is eligible for listing as a district on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Also known as "The Village," it is historically the largest, and today the only, surviving African-American neighborhood in the City of Newton. Originally a marshy lowland along the channel of Cheese Cake Brook, the neighborhood is defined as the triangular area immediately south and west of the intersection of Washington Street, which was established prior to 1700, and the Boston and Albany Railroad. African-American families began to move to the area following the Civil War and prior to 1875 (Beers). The Myrtle Baptist Church has been a key component to the community since its congregation was founded in 1874, and its current church building was opened in 1898. A welcome White community in West Newton, the presence of the church, and abundant jobs-particularly in t railroad yards and coal and lumber companies north of the track-sustained The Village, while a pattern of discrimination prevented African-Americans from buying elsewhere in the city. Despit the fact that a significant portion of the neighborhood was demolished in 1963 to make way for the Turnpike, The Village still retains its African-American character.

Use reverse if necessary.

MHC STAFF OPINION

Date Received:

Date Reviewed:

Opinion: Concur Disagree More information needed

See Reverse for Comments

KIM U.S

12/5/2000

The MHC concurs that the Myrtle Baptist Church neighborhood contains properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The neighborhood around the Myrtle Baptist Church, a remnant of a once-larger neighborhood decimated by the construction of the MassPike, retains its village enclave character. Because of the gap along Prospect St. and Prospect Place, we recommend that two districts be nominated. The districts would include: 1) the properties along Allen and Simms Streets, as well as the commercial property on Washington St. (though there are questions here about the associations of this particular property with the African American community and its earlier associations as a ca. 1845 building; and 2) the properties along Curve and Prospect Streets. Despite considerable siding and some porch, trim, and window changes, the buildings as a collective whole retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association associated with the city's African-American population from the second half of the 19th century through the 20th century, and fulfill Criteria A and C on the local level.

It was suggested that with the impact of urban renewal efforts in cities throughout the state, this may be one of the most intact neighborhoods built by and for black residents. This assertion would require further investigation, but it may be that the Myrtle Baptist Church neighborhood is eligible on the state level as well as the local level.

LEVEL:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Local	<input type="radio"/> State	<input type="radio"/> National
CATEGORY:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input checked="" type="radio"/> C

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DISTRICTS

STATUS:	<input type="radio"/> Local	<input type="radio"/> LLC	<input type="radio"/> Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Other
DATE:	12/5/2000			

CONCLUSION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Local
 State
 National

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