

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

K-07-11	Boston North		
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Town/City: Medford

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): West Medford

Photograph



Address: 314 Winthrop Street

Historic Name: Nettie Lewis Windsor House

Uses: Present: single-family residential

Original: single-family residential

Date of Construction: ca 1928

Source: Assessor

Style/Form: Tudor/ ranch

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: poured concrete

Wall/Trim: stucco/ wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: detached garage expanded into a dwelling post-1950.

Major Alterations (*with dates*): The façade appears unchanged but other records suggest a major rear addition.

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.24 acre

Setting: Dense mix of late-19th through early 20th century residential use.

Locus Map (*north is up*)



Recorded by: John D. Clemson

Organization: Medford Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2023

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Windsor House, built ca 1928, is a diminutive gable-front dwelling with a side porch on the right (north) side. A comparison of current images, the assessor's footprint and a 1930 subdivision plan reproduced below suggest the building was expanded to the right and rear during the late 20th century. The low stance of the house is expanded by an enclosed entrance porch that fills the right half of the gabled portion of the façade. The porch's asymmetrical gable dips to near grade level on the right side. This picturesque detail, combined with a full-arched front door, stucco siding, plain dark trim and banks of windows arranged in groups of two, three and four conveys an aesthetic associated with the "Tudor" style of the 1920s. This style movement was inspired by a revival of traditional English folk architecture popularly associated with the Cotswold Cottage and other late-medieval building practices. The building is currently 44 feet wide by 48 feet deep. Low gables run front-to-back in the left half and perpendicular on the right. Sanborn maps reproduced below suggest the building was originally about 24 feet wide by 32 feet deep with a 10-foot-square side porch on the right-front. A comparison to current images suggest a major expansion to both the right side and rear, where a large parallel front-to-back gable was added and a shed bridge was added to fill the narrow valley between. This can best be understood by observing the aerial views reproduced below.

The house is sited at a generous setback on its narrow, deep lot. Abundant vegetation lines the frontage and two mature pines flank the house, somewhat obscuring its visibility from the street. A narrow drive on the left leads to a detached, gable-front, two-bay garage in matching stucco and trim. The garage has likewise undergone a major addition with a large wing to the right that appears to house domestic space. Also an unusual shed-roofed addition has been placed on the right slope of the garage roof; neither of these additions appears to be lit by windows. This building is currently assessed as a second dwelling enclosing 1,748 feet with an unfinished upper story. The building is dated 1930, consistent with its use as a garage. Conversion to a dwelling took place, according to Sanborn maps, post-1950. City voting lists from the 1990s-2000s appear to list multiple generations residing at the property, but a separate address of 314R does not appear until 2000.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

A history of ownership suggests the Windsor House was built on speculation by Medford shoemaker Lorenzo Lepore in ca 1928. The previous year Lepore purchased a building lot matching the current description of the property from Luther W Puffer and Luther W Puffer, Jr., trustees of the estate of Alvin D Puffer (1819-1906). All three generations were involved in the manufacture of soda fountains and resided in this neighborhood in Medford (Luther, Jr later moved to Winchester). The estates of Alvin and Luther Puffer, Sr are depicted below on a detail of the 1898 Stadly Medford atlas.¹ Lorenzo Lepore (1891-1976) was a native of Lapio, Italy, immigrating in 1905 and becoming a naturalized citizen in 1919. During the 1920s he resided in Somerville at 282 Cedar Street but by 1930 had moved to Medford, residing at 94 Damon Road with his wife Concetta (Ciampa, born ca 1892), also a native of Italy. In 1930 Lepore worked as an insurance broker but before and after as a shoemaker, during the 1920s as a laborer with Thos G Plant Co, Jamaica Plain, and during the 1940s in his own repair and shoe making shop at 14 Forest Street, Medford. After purchasing the subject property in June of 1927 for unspecified consideration he gave layered mortgages totaling nearly \$20,000.²

The following year in September of 1928 Lepore sold the property "with buildings thereon" to Nettie L Windsor. She immediately gave him a mortgage of \$2,154 payable in \$75 monthly instalments at 6% and agreed to assume two additional mortgages totaling \$12,760. All of the mortgages were eventually discharged. Nettie L (Lewis) Windsor (1871-1935) was the widow of William F Windsor; she moved to Medford from Cambridge but nothing regarding her husband could be readily ascertained through available records. She was a daughter of William Lewis and Ellen (Francis) of Abington. Nettie Windsor led

¹ Regarding Alvin and Luther Puffer, Sr. see MDF.76, 203 High Street (demolished) and MDF.84, 321 Winthrop Street; for a concise biography of Alvin Davis Puffer see *Practical Druggist*, Vols. 21-24 (Lillard & Company, Jan-Dec, 1908) p. 40. With James Walker Tufts, also of Medford (see MDF.1116, 156 High Street), and Charles Lippincott & Co of Philadelphia, Puffer formed the American Soda Fountain Co trust.

² MCSRD 5117:494-495 (1927); Ancestry.com: vital records, marriage; 1916 Somerville city directory; 1920-1940 Federal Census, inclusive; US WWI and WWII Draft Registration Cards.

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a distinguished career in her widowhood as a stenographer with the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts between ca 1915 and her death. An extensive newspaper profile published in 1925 provides a glimpse into her political and ethical perspectives on women's suffrage and divorce, and is worth extensively quoting for what it reveals about prevailing attitudes at this time. Stating that through her occupation, she "has had an opportunity of studying human nature in cross section and at close range, declares that character and not man-made law, civic righteousness and conscience, and not constitutional amendments, must drive out the divorce evil in America." She went on to say

The entry of women into business in modern times, resulting in the disappearance of the home as we once knew it and in the establishment of new contacts between the sexes; the apartment house, the radio, the telephone – 'so handy to make appointments' – the movie, and especially the automobile, have brought about an entirely new condition of things...The young girl – the "flapper," as you term her – is up against a situation that the older generation knew nothing about...Propinquity, association, is the factor to be reckoned with in estimating the causes for the increase in the number of divorces...the spectacle of a needed reform accomplished on the statute books, not only unenforced, but indiscriminately broken – by the poor, ignorant proletarian, to be sure – but also openly and boastfully by those belonging to the so-called aristocratic element of society [has promoted divorce]...Not many years ago fathers and mothers...felt that the maximum of disgrace had befallen them when one of their daughters suggested a business career...they were regarded as having 'fallen from grace'...no law can be enacted which will control sex...the divorce evil will be cured when society refuses to tolerate in her midst flagrant violators of marital sanctity; when the spiritual forces of this world unite in upholding only such conduct as tends to righteous living.³

During the late 1930s the property was occupied by Alfred Isreal Sharenow (1907-2001) and his wife, Betty. Sharenow, a native of Philadelphia and the son of Yiddish-speaking Russian immigrants, was the owner of the Cigarette Service Company, Inc, 266 Salem Street, Medford, the operator of cigarette vending machines. The family later moved to Newton. Subsequent owners included Emma G Kassel, the wife of Henry J Kassel (ca 1940-1948); Frank A and Frances P Palmisano (1948-1969); and Parmac Realty Trust, who sold to the most recent owners of record prior to 1989. The house is currently owned by Flip My House LLC.⁴ City of Medford Building Department Records documenting the conversion of the garage to a dwelling could not be located but a comparison of current footprints with the 1950 Sanborn map indicates the conversion took place after that date.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and atlases:

- 1855 H.F. Walling. "Map of Medford...."
- 1875 F. W. Beers, *County Atlas of Middlesex, Massachusetts*.
- 1880 O. H. Bailey [Bird's Eye View of] Medford.
- 1889 Geo. H. Walker & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts*.
- 1898 Geo. W. Stadly & Co., *Atlas of the City of Medford...*
- 1900 Geo. W. Stadly & Co., *Atlas of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Volume 1*.
- 1892, 1897, 1903, 1910, 1936, 1936-1950 Sanborn Insurance Atlases.

Ancestry.com: see footnotes

Charles Brooks and James M. Usher, *History of the Town of Medford, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, From its First Settlement in 1630 to 1855; Revised, Enlarged and Brought Down to 1885* (Rand, Avery & Co., 1886)

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, in notes as MCSRD book:page (date).

³ *Boston Herald*, May 3, 1925, p. 56; Nettie Windsor died after suffering a stroke while driving a car on Cambridge Street in Boston's West End, see *Boston Daily Globe*, Mar. 19, 1935, p. 13, "Mrs. Nettie Windsor Stricken in her Car;" *ibid*, Mar. 14, 1935, p. A13, obituary; *Boston Herald*, Mar. 23, 1935, p. 13, obituary.

⁴ Regarding Sharenow: Ancestry.com: 1938 Medford city directory; US WWII Registration Draft Card; 1920, 1940 Federal Census; MCSRD 7337:217 (1948); 9080:393 (1959); 10222:178 (1963); 11759:289 (1969, foreclosure deed); 11881:502 (1970, declaration of trust); 19758:311 (1989); 29975:413 (1999); 53813:144 (2009, mortgage deed); 75002:151 (2020, foreclosure deed); 82191:506 (11/08/2023).

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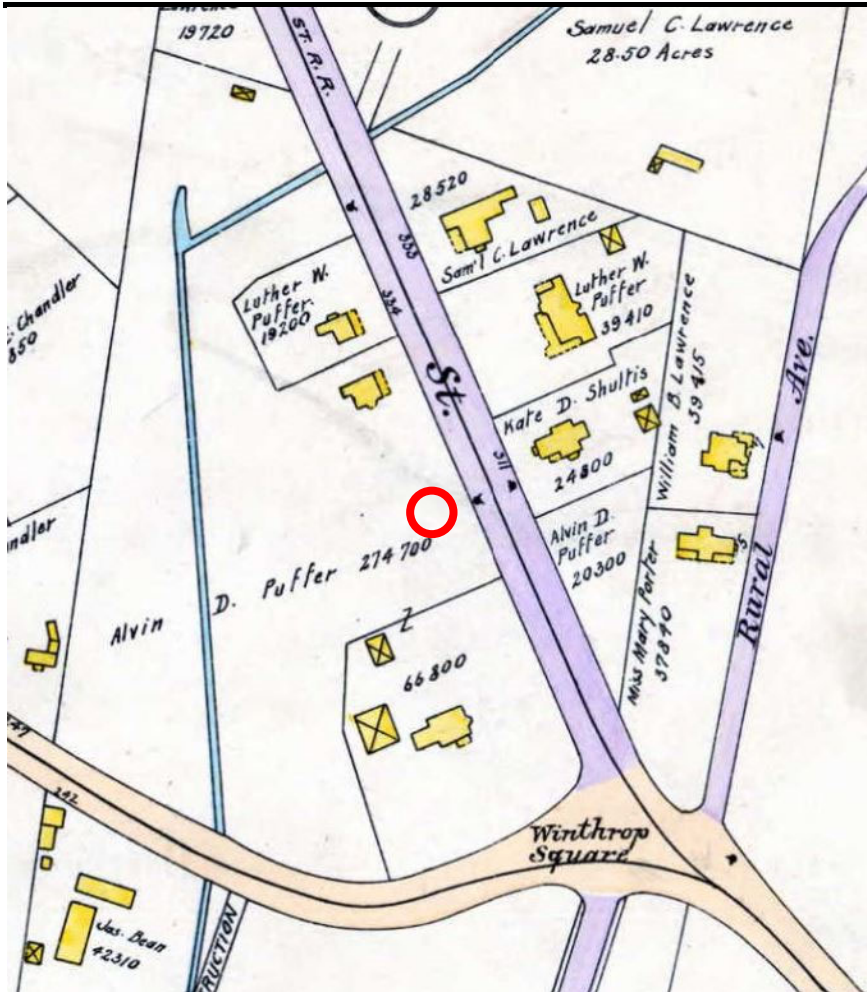
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1898 Stadly atlas of Medford, pl 9, depicting the Puffer Estate. The future approximate location of the subject property is indicated by a red circle. North is up.



Portraits of Nettie L Windsor published in 1925 (left, *Boston Herald*, May 3, 1925, p56) and 1935 (right, *Boston Herald*, Mar. 23, 1935, p13, obituary).

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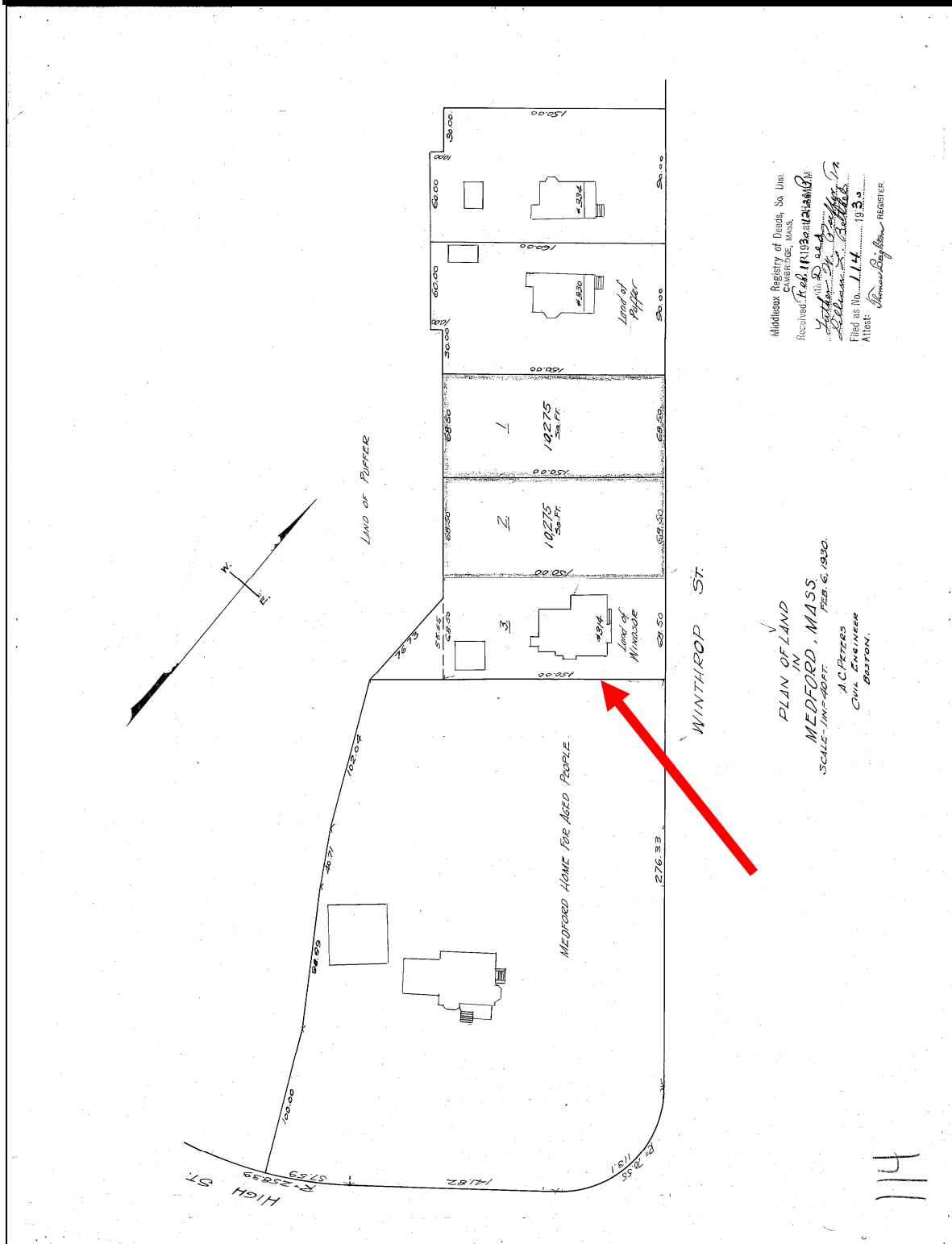
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MCSR Plan 114 of 1930 depicting a subdivision of the Puffer Estate and the subject property indicated by a red arrow. The plan has been rotated so north is up.

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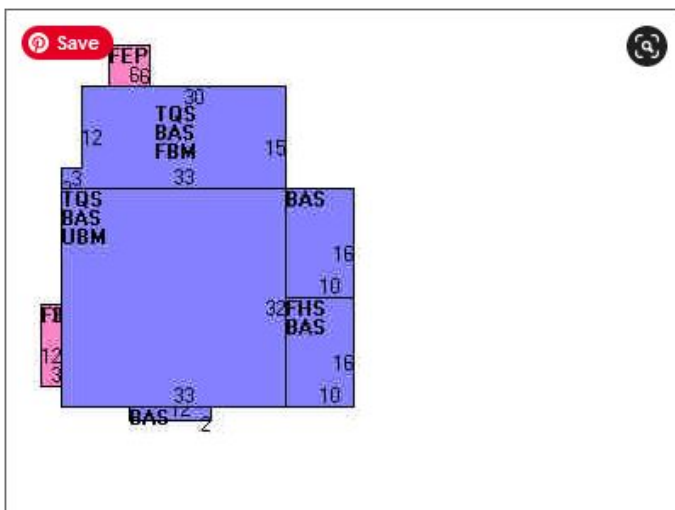
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1936 Sanborn depicting the house and garage indicated by a red arrow and surrounding surviving buildings associated with the Puffer family. North is up.



Assessor's footprint, left and Bing aerial capture facing SE, right, depicting the current configuration of the building.

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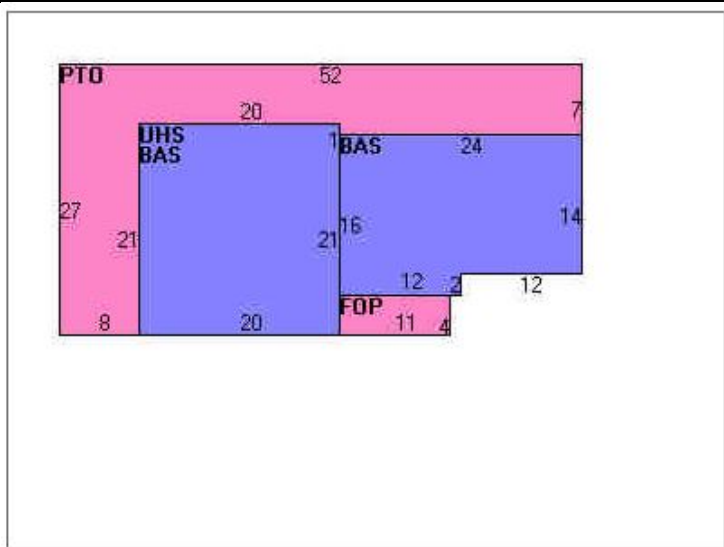
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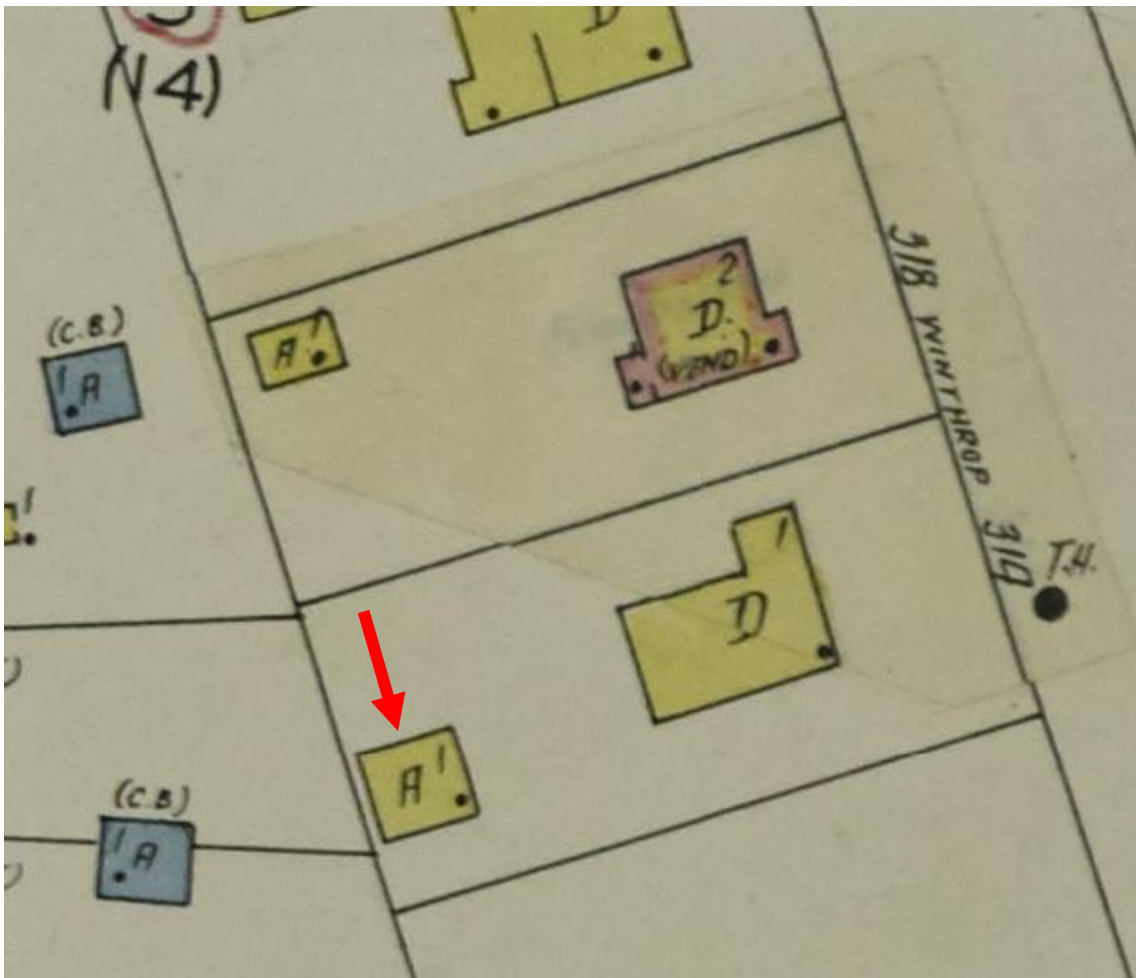
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Detached garage/ accessory apartment: assessor's footprint, left; Zillow capture 12/7/2023, right.



1936/ 1950 Sanborn showing original garage ("A," auto).

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ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS

