

**FORM B - BUILDING**

**MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116**

AREA	FORM NO.
	3073

Town Newton, Mass. MRA  
NEWTON (West Newton)

Address 32 Eden Avenue

Historic Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Seth Davis House

Use: Present Residence

Original Residence

**DESCRIPTION**

Date 1820s

Source Jackson Homestead Pub.

Style Greek Revival

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric brick

Outbuildings none

Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

Porch balustrades added, early 20th c

Condition Good

Moved no Date ---

Acreage 12,191 sq. ft. (less than 1 acre)

Setting 20th century residential  
neighborhood

Recorded by Kathlyn Hatch

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date December 1977

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s). Indicate north

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

UTM REFERENCE 19.3 16740.46 90920

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA

SCALE 1:25,000

## **NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)**

This well-proportioned Greek Revival-style building represents one of the finest remaining examples of the style in Newton. For its association with one of the leading figures in 19th-century West Newton, and for its architectural significance, the Seth Davis House meets criteria B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.**

Once surrounded by large landscaped grounds that extended to Cheesecake Brook near Watertown Street, the Seth Davis House, constructed in brick in the 1820s, is a remarkably well-preserved example of the Greek Revival style. The primary elevation overlooks Watertown Street and contains a handsome doorway with sidelights. Doric porticoes appear at both the front and Eden Avenue facades.

Brick was used for much of the detailing of this handsome residence, including the three-part cornice entablature at the eaves, wide pilaster strips at the corners, and a front panel at the gable end articulated with dentils. Brownstone trims the window heads. The use here of brick for detailing is unusual, as wood-frame construction was preferred for most residences in Newton during the early 19th century.

### **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.**

Seth Davis (1787-1888), one of West Newton's most prominent residents, came to the village at the age of fifteen. With only 20 months of schooling, Davis became an eminent teacher, lecturer on astronomy, a trial justice, and county commissioner. In 1887, fifteen thousand people celebrated his hundredth birthday in West Newton.

Davis also became a wealthy property owner during the course of his lifetime in West Newton. The Railroad Hotel (#3069) at the junction of Watertown and Washington streets was one of his early investments. Davis Avenue, Davis Street, and Davis Court, all part of his extensive land holdings, were named after him, as was the Davis School on Waltham Street.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Friends of the Jackson Homestead, Newton's Older Houses: West Newton (1978), pp. 29-31.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received 7/23/86  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Newton MRA  
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Buckingham, John, House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

32. Building at 1--6 Walnut  
Terrace

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

33. Central Congregational  
Church

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

34. Chestnut Hill, The

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

35. Claflin, Adams, Estate

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

36. Clark House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

37. Collins, Frederick,  
House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

38. Curtis, Allan Crocker,  
House--Pillar House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

39. Curtis, William, House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

40. Davis, Seth, House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melrose Byers 9/4/86

Attest

0600 1960

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Davis, Seth, House (Newton MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Fed. Reg. Date: JUL 23 1986 2/3/86  
Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86  
Action:  ACCEPT 9/4/86  
 RETURN \_\_\_\_\_  
 REJECT \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

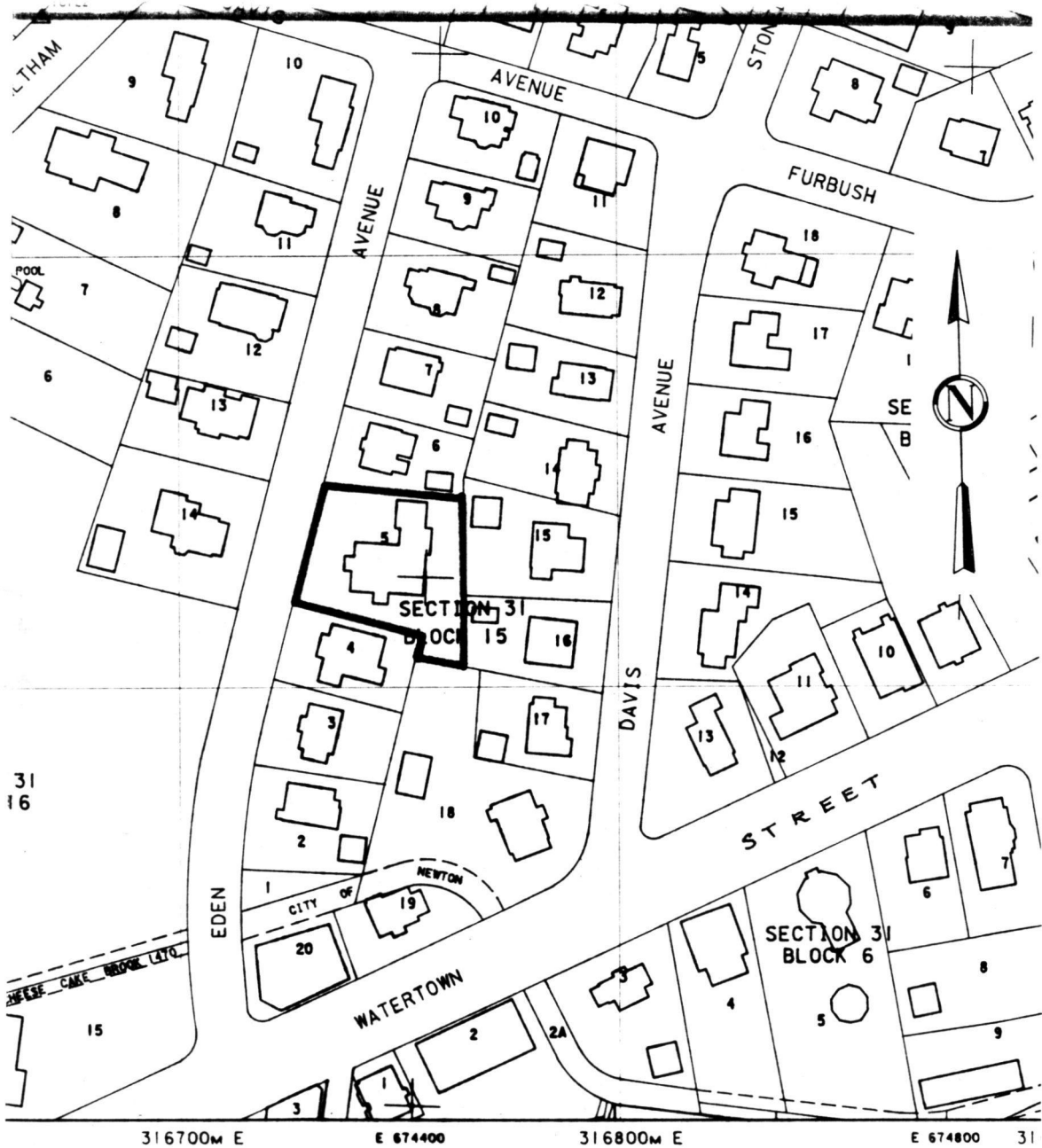
- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection





Newton, Mass. MRA  
30-32 Eden Ave., West Newton  
(Seth Davis House)  
Inv. #3073

Newton, Mass. MRA



City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheet 29  
 Metric Series. 1979  
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA  
 30-32 Eden Ave., West Newton  
 (Seth Davis House)  
 31-15-5