

FORM B – BUILDING

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

20/89	Reading		440
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town: Reading

Place: (*neighborhood or village*)

Photograph



Address: 57 Summer Avenue

Historic Name: Alexander Osowick House

Uses: Present: residential

Original: residential

Date of Construction: 1949

Source: water department records

Style/Form: Contemporary

Architect/Builder: H.P. Nicholson, builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: concrete block

Roof: tar and gravel

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Condition: good

Moved: no | x | yes | | **Date** _____

Acreage: 0.35 acre

Setting: mixed residential along well-traveled road.

Topographic or Assessor's Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Reading Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2009

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INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

57 Summer Avenue

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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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:

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

Dating to the post World War II era, 57 Summer Avenue is a good example of a modest Contemporary dwelling. The single-story, flat-roofed dwelling is constructed of concrete blocks with a stucco finish. The flat roof displays projecting eaves and there is a large brick chimney. The house is set above the road and there is a single car garage in the lower level under the west end of the structure. The offcenter entrance has an original door with three stepped-down, vertical lights. The windows include metal, multi-light units and tripartite windows with a large central fixed pane of glass.

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.

According to water department records, this house was constructed in 1949 by builder H.P. Nicholson, who also built the house next door at 61 Summer Street. The first owners were Alexander and Gerarda Osowick who were living here by the time of the 1951 directory. Earl and Frances Ray were living here in 1960 and were still here in 1970. In 1978 Lois and Paul Tolstrup sold the property to Gilbert and Reiko Radlo.

Harry Parker Nicholson and his brother, Marvin Nicholson, built a number of houses in Reading after 1945 when their parents relocated the family here from Brighton. Among the houses they constructed were buildings on Evergreen Road, Timberneck Road and Bay State Road as well as houses on Summer Avenue. Unfortunately, H.P. Nicholson died suddenly while working in Washington, D.C. at the Washington Cathedral (Information from Betty Carter, sister).

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Adams, Virginia. Interview with Mrs. Russell Carter [sister of H.P. Nicholson], July 2010.

Middlesex County South Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, Mass.

Reading Directories, various years.

Reading 350th Book Committee. *At Wood End – Reading, Massachusetts 1644-1994, A Pictorial History*, 1994.

Town of Reading. List of Persons Twenty Years of Age and Over. Compiled by the Board of Registrars, Reading, Massachusetts, 1907-1979. (No women listed until 1924).

Town of Reading. Valuation of Real and Personal Estates, various dates.

Town of Reading Water Records, 1891-present.

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

Community Property Address
READING 57 SUMMER AVENUE

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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
 Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance by Lisa Mausolf

The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

Constructed in 1949, the house at 57 Summer Avenue is a good example of a modest Contemporary dwelling erected by a local builder shortly after World War II. The simple, concrete block, flat-roofed dwelling is just one of the many types of houses that was erected to meet the post World War II housing demand. The property is potentially eligible for the National Register for its associations with the post World War II development of Reading and as a modest but unique example of Contemporary domestic architecture.