

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

23A-173	Easthampton		NTH.212
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town:** Northampton

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*) Florence

## Photograph



**Address:** 85 Beacon Street

**Historic Name:** Church of the Annunciation

**Uses:** Present: church

Original: church

**Date of Construction:** 1879-1880

**Source:** Hampshire Gazette & Northampton Courier, 16 September 1879.

**Style/Form:** Gothic Revival

**Architect/Builder:** Patrick W. Ford, architect, Boston

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: parged brick

Wall/Trim: vinyl and clapboards

Roof: slate

## Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Carriage barn

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): vinyl-sided, ca. 2000.

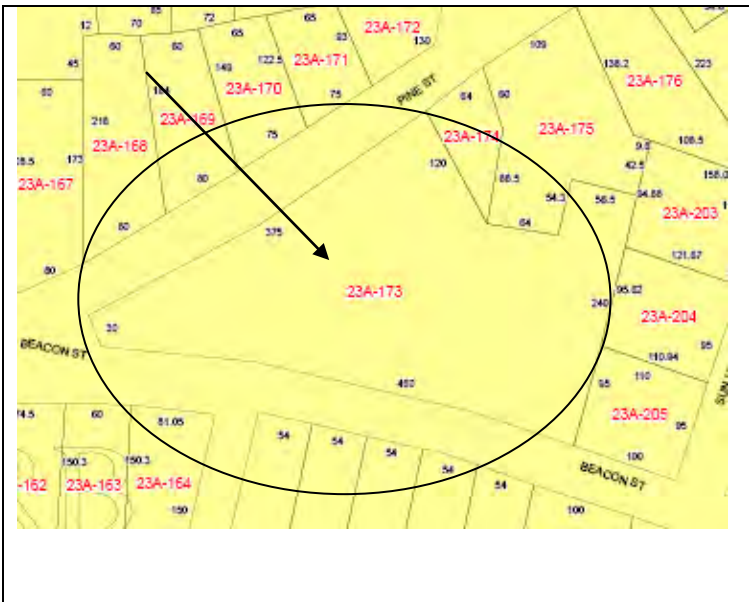
**Condition:** good

**Moved:** no | x | yes | | **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:** 1.98 Acres

**Setting:** Set on a large corner lot, the church faces south and has a large side-lot in which is a statue of the Virgin Mary beneath a wooden trellis.

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Recorded by:** Bonnie Parsons

**Organization:** PVPC

**Date** (*month/year*): April, 2010

**INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET**

[NORTHAMPTON]

[85 BEACON STREET]

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

NTH.212

 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.*

Our Lady of the Annunciation is a south-facing, late Gothic Revival style church that was built during a second wave of the style's popularity that came about in the 1870s due to the writing on the Gothic style by English architectural critic John Ruskin. It is composed of a front-gabled main nave, the equivalent of three stories in height, with attached, shed-roofed side aisles, the equivalent of one-and-a-half stories in height. The side aisles are screened by wings at each side of the church's street façade for a T-shaped plan. The south gable of the nave rises to become a steeple with a four-sided belfry that makes a transition to a six-sided spire. Engaged buttresses divide the façade into four bays. The buttresses are stepped in Early English manner and their piers are topped with small pediments resting on consoles. There are three entries to the church made up of double leaf doors in ogive or pointed arch surrounds. Above the doors is a stained glass transom and in the field of the arch is wood tracery made up of quatrefoils. Above the center door is a triple lancet window again with wooden tracery and a small rose window in the field of its arch. The belfry is framed at its corners by smaller scale engaged buttresses and each opening is an ogive arch with quatrefoil tracery above louvers ornamented with a row of triangular trim. The side aisles are six bays long on the west and eight bays long on the east and each bay contains an ogive window with paired sash. Roof eaves on all elevations are supported on a row of small consoles. Now mostly vinyl-sided the details of the church's exterior are compromised by being less than fully visible. There is a shed-roofed open porch on the north east corner of the building. A New England style carriage barn is located east of the church.

**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.*

From the Form B of 1978, "A well-preserved late Victorian church of considerable charm; an integral part of a coherent late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential and institutional neighborhood in the village of Florence. The first Catholic mass in Northampton was said in a private house in Leeds in 1834. In 1866 St. Mary's Northampton was established as an independent parish serving the Catholic population from Easthampton to Hoosac Mountain. Annunciation parish, composed of the villages of Florence and Leeds in Northampton was set off from St. Mary's in 1878 (Haydenville and Leeds were made a separate parish eleven years later). Construction of the Annunciation church building was begun in September of 1879 and completed the following year; the dedicatory services were held on October 2, 1880."

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

- Beers, F. W. County Atlas of Hampshire Massachusetts, New York, 1873.  
Flahive, Nora. History of the Church of the Annunciation, ms, Forbes Library, Northampton.  
Hales, John G. Plan of the Town or Northampton in the County of Hampshire, 1831.  
Hampshire Gazette and Northampton Courier, 16 September 1879; 5 October 1880.  
Miller, D. L. Atlas of the City of Northampton and Town of Easthampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, 1895.  
Shea, Michael J. (ed.), A Century of Catholicism in Western Massachusetts, Springfield, 1931.  
Walker, George H. and Company. Atlas of Northampton City, Massachusetts, Boston, 1884.  
Walling, Henry F. Map of Hampshire County, Massachusetts, New York, 1860.

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[85 BEACON STREET]

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**National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form**

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible     Eligible only in an 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 Bonnie Parsons

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

Our Lady of the Annunciation Catholic Church would contribute to a Beacon Street Historic District developed and resided in by some of Florence’s leading industrialists in the 1860s-1910s. Further research would connect the church with Florence’s Catholic population and its immediate neighborhood. The Beacon Street district represents the shift in Florence from neighborhoods that mixed mill workers’ housing with mill owners’ housing of the first half of the century to that of neighborhoods of economically-similar residents with, in this case, large lots, grand homes set back from a broad street. The Church, built after commencement of the district’s development was built in a manner to reflect the wealth.

Architecturally, the district is significant for its range of high style homes and a church in the Gothic Revival, Stick Style, Italianate, Queen Anne and Tudor Revival styles. Further research would indicate which among them were architect-designed, as many certainly were. The architect-designed church stands out among Catholic Churches for its developed style.