

Discretionary Preservation Easement Application

35 Mountain Road

Concord, NH 03301

Property Owners: Keith and Jillian Curley

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ASSESSING DEPT

Katherine Temchack
Director of Real Estate Assessments
City of Concord, New Hampshire
41 Green Street
Concord, NH 03301

15 April 2022

Ms. Temchack,

We are pleased to submit our application for a Discretionary Preservation Easement for the historic agricultural structures – a barn and carriage house - on our property located at 35 Mountain Road in Concord.

We believe our barn and carriage house are strong candidates for this program, as well-preserved, historically significant 19th century agricultural buildings that provide scenic enjoyment to the general public on Mountain Road. In particular, our location at the base of Mountain Road near Shawmut Street is surrounded by other homes from the era, and contributes to the character of the lower stretch of Mountain Road that is part of East Concord Village.

35 Mountain Road, formerly 323 East Penacook Street and 323 Eastman Street, was built circa 1869, though we believe that it may have been built earlier. The home was likely constructed by George and Emeline Lake, and was purchased in 1877 by Josiah Fernald, a descendant of Captain Ebenezer Eastman, the first settler of Concord, New Hampshire.¹ Josiah farmed the land behind 35 Mountain Road until his death in 1906 at the age of 89.² Upon his death, his daughter, Miss Sophia J. Fernald, inherited the home and lived there until her death in 1933.³ In 1940, the City of Concord renamed the side street across from the house “Fernald Street” in honor of the Fernald Family and their tenure in the home.

Henry Styles Bridges, then a member of the New Hampshire Public Service Commission, purchased the home from Sophia Fernald’s estate in 1933. It was from this home that Styles Bridges ran for Governor of New Hampshire. The house, barn, and carriage house figured prominently in Bridges’ campaign paraphernalia, including a campaign flyer listing his endorsements (see images 20 and 21).⁴ Bridges ran

¹ Online deed research indicates a transfer of property from George and Emeline Lake to Josiah Fernald in 1877. We intend to complete further deed research to clarify these items.

² Information gathered from City Directories and his obituary, which appeared in the *Concord Evening Monitor* on March 29, 1906.

³ Information gathered from City Directories and her obituary, which appeared in the *Concord Evening Monitor* in January, 1933.

⁴ Information gathered in the Concord Room vertical files, Concord Public Library.

as a man of humble beginnings, and the modesty of his home in Concord, including the agricultural buildings, bolstered that narrative. In 1934, Bridges was elected Governor of New Hampshire, and was at the time the nation's youngest governor. After serving one term as governor, Bridges then ran for and was elected to the United States Senate in 1936, while maintaining his residence at 35 Mountain Road.

In 1946, Bridges relocated to an adjacent property, now the Bridges House and official Governor's Residence, located at 21 Mountain Road. In the National Register Nomination for the Bridges House, it is noted that, "Previously, Bridges had lived in a modest house on an abutting property."⁵ While the most influential years of Bridges' career on the national political scene were during his tenure at 21 Mountain Road, it is in the "modest house" at 35 Mountain Road that Bridges was first elected as both Governor and United States Senator.

With the photographic evidence provided in the pamphlet from Bridges' campaign in 1933, it is clear that the barn and carriage house remain largely unaltered from the perspective of the general public. A second door was added to the barn, likely by Mr. Bridges himself, as part of the renovations that he undertook while in residence at the home.

In addition to the intact exterior, the barn in particular is largely intact on the interior as well. Wide floor boards indicate that much of the original flooring is in fact original. Two horse stalls, their demising walls, and door remain completely intact, including an area for hay as well as the chute from the hay loft down to the stables below. A "Your Vote Counts" sign, very likely from the time when Styles Bridges owned the home, is displayed, and an "Elect Styles Bridges – US Senate" sign remains in one of the second story storage areas.

The land area described by the Plot Plan includes the area of the barn and carriage house, a 10' maintenance perimeter around the sides of the structures, and the sloped grade transition from the front of the barn to the field beyond. The inclusion of the sloped grade transition is warranted, as it is clear that farm equipment and horses would have been led from the front of the house to the lower fields, and there is an entrance to the lower level of the barn partway down the hill. As such, the sloped transition from the front of the barn to the lower field is integral to the barn's agricultural function, akin to an earthen berm leading from a level field to a barn entrance.

Please note – the book and page provided in the application refers to the previous owners, Robert and Anne Diefendorf. We closed on the property on April 14, 2022 and do not yet have a book and page number. Given the April 15 deadline, we sought to submit the application and are happy to provide additional information/clarifications.

Sincerely,

Keith and Jillian Curley

⁵ <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/d5b6fc96-0ee2-4b51-b5c6-5557e47c1b82>