

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Type of Area Form

Town-wide:

Historic District:

Project Area:

9. Inventory numbers in this area:

none

2. Name of area: River Road Agricultural Neighborhood

10. Setting: Riverfront farmland in semi-rural setting with intact fields and woodlands including a concentration of 18th and 19th century farmsteads

3. Location: River Road, Penacook

11. Acreage: 200+ acres

4. City or town: Concord

12. Preparer(s): Elizabeth Durfee Hengen & Roger C. Hawk

5. County: Merrimack

13. Organization: for the Concord Heritage Commission

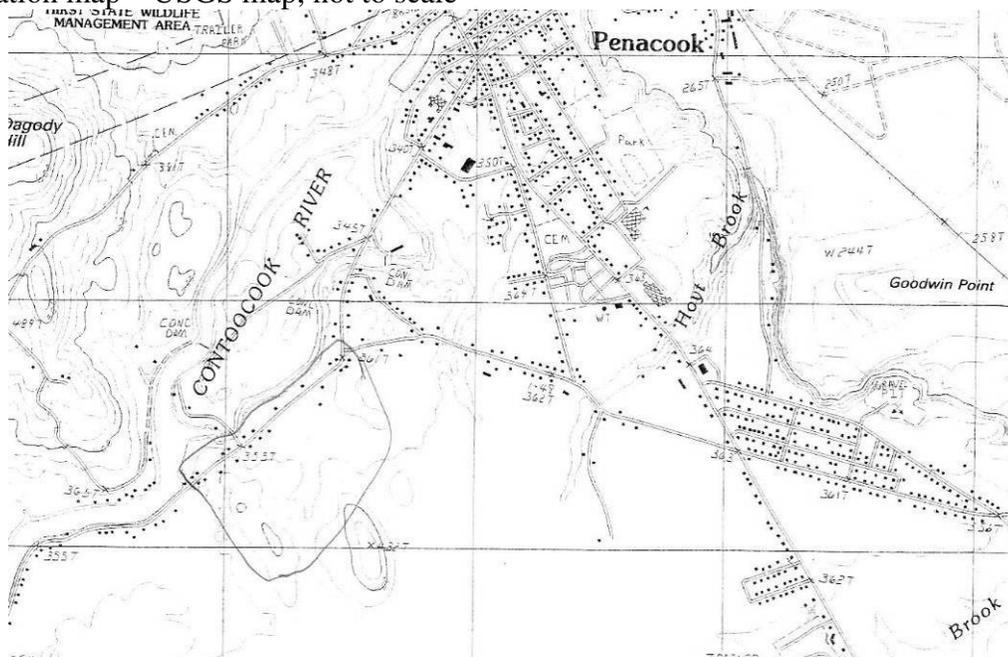
6. USGS quadrangle name(s): Penacook

7. USGS scale: 1:24000

14. Date(s) of field survey: Fall, 2008

8. UTM reference: _____

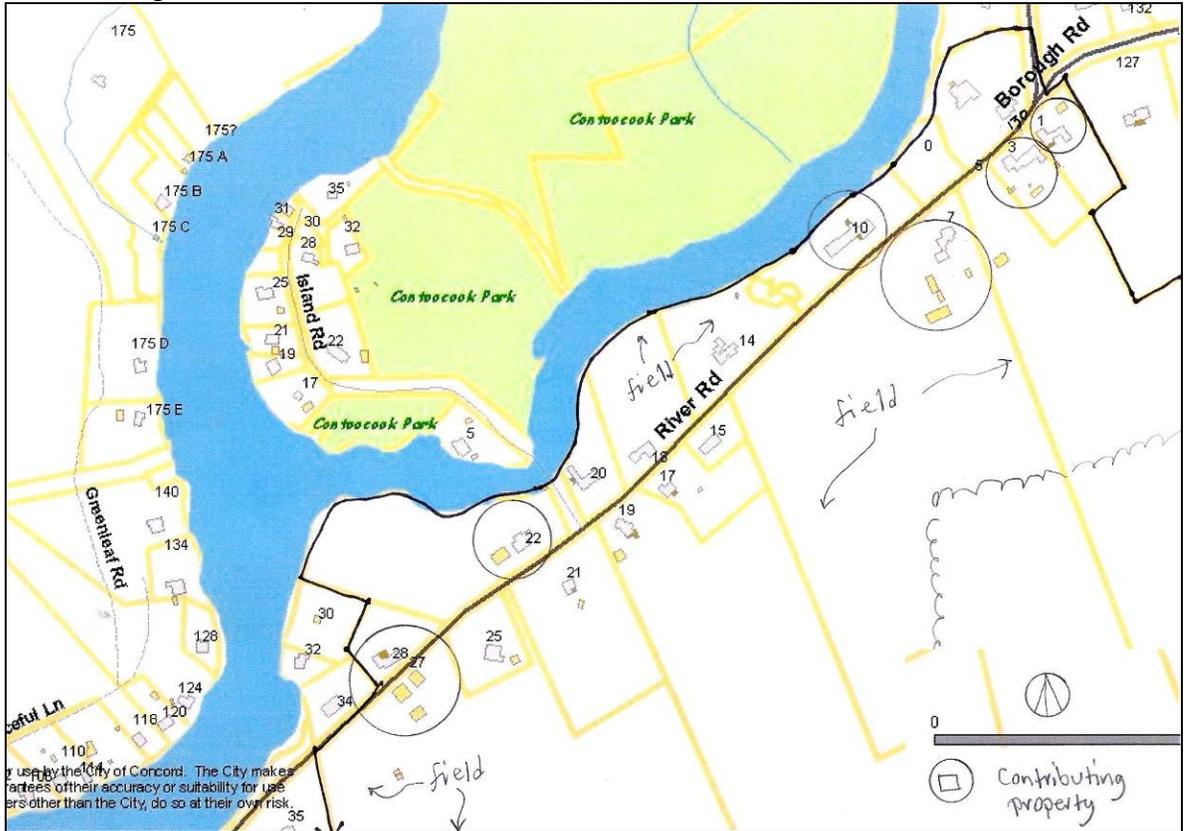
15. Location map – USGS map, not to scale



AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

16. Sketch map



Aerial view of River Road Agricultural Neighborhood, showing land use patterns, 2006.



AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD**17. Methods and Purpose**

This form was completed as part of a survey of rural agricultural properties within the City of Concord, a project sponsored by the Heritage Commission. The overall purpose of the project was to raise public awareness of the city's rich agricultural legacy through a combination of identification, education, public policy and preservation planning tools.

Due to limited resources, the survey focused on barns and outbuildings that met all of the following criteria: (1) were sited on at least 10 acres of land; (2) they were located in a fairly rural area and not within the city center or an outlying village; (3) the surrounding land retained historic landscape features, such as open fields, pasture, and stone walls; (4) the outbuildings retained a high level of integrity from their agricultural era. None of the barns on the St. Paul's School campus were included. In addition, a few landmark barns, even if on a small lot, were included. Approximately 45 properties were included in the survey. Whenever possible, an interior inspection of the buildings was undertaken.

The survey was conducted at the reconnaissance-level. Historic background information was acquired from questionnaires sent to each property owner, personal interviews, a review of historic maps, and limited research in local histories. Certainly, additional research data on farms is available from population and, in particular, agricultural census records, and owners are encouraged to pursue those to add to this data base.

When properties were part of a larger, agricultural district, the form locates them as such, and a separate form documenting that historic agricultural neighborhood was prepared.

19. Historical Background

The Borough, which is the area at the confluence of Washington, River and Borough Roads, and from which River Road continues to the west, ranks among the earlier settlements in Concord, attracting farms, grist and saw mills by the 1760-80s. The Elliot family dominated the area, and many of the existing farmhouses in this River Road Agricultural Neighborhood (a more narrowly defined area than the larger Borough) were constructed and/or occupied by them. The 1858 map shows approximately twenty-two residences in the Borough, of which eleven were owned by Elliots. A late 19th c. schoolhouse, which is still standing on Borough Road, just east of this area, served the neighborhood.

Agricultural pursuits during the 19th c. were a mix of subsistence farming and dairying; several of the residents operated saw mills. During the 1930-60s, poultry was a major business in this section of Concord/Penacook; among the larger poultry farms was at 7 River Road. Others were just beyond the neighborhood covered by this form: Murray Farm (now Murray Greenhouses), farther west on River Road, and the Renfors' farm just east on Borough Road.

20. Applicable NHDHR Historic Context(s)

- 51. Mixed agriculture and the family farm, 1630-present.
- 56. Local-scale dairy farming, 1800-present.
- 64. Poultry farming, 1870-present.

21. Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation

The River Road Agricultural Neighborhood includes seven former farms established between the late 18th and mid-19th c., and all but one of which retains agricultural outbuildings. Its east terminus is at the

AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

intersection of Washington Street and Borough Road, and the area continues west along River Road to a point where the Contoocook River abuts River Road. Its northern edge follows the bank of the river. Expansive open fields on the south side of the road reflect the area's former agricultural economy.

Contributing properties in area:

130 Washington Street (ca. late 18th c.): This is a 1 ½ story, 5x3, center-entrance, twin-chimney building on a granite foundation. Windows have 2/2 sash. Likely built in the late 18th or early 19th c., it was modified ca. 1880s with a large dormer that projects over the front entrance, supported on Queen Anne style brackets.

This is known as the David Elliot House, in whose family it was for many years. David's son, Eben, was a millwright, who erected a new mill in the immediate vicinity in 1833.¹ Another son Luther built the house across the road at 3 River Road. The 1892 map shows this property in the hands of E.F. Elliot. From 1950s-80s, the property was owned by Melvin and Harriet Tebbetts, who kept sheep in the pasture behind 3 River Road and later beef cattle. The barn was removed sometime in the latter part of the 20th c. and rebuilt elsewhere.

In more recent years, this has been the headquarters of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.



130 Washington Street, photographed mid-20th century. *From Amsden, A Capital for New Hampshire, Chapter 14, opposite page 14.*

1 River Road (ca. 1900): This 1 ½ story, front-gable, Queen Anne house sits on a brick foundation. Walls are covered with clapboard and trimmed with scalloped shingles in the gable front, above the 2nd level window casing. Scrolled brackets ornament eave corners. The main entrance has a decorative portico with stick ornament. To its left is a large, single-light window original to the house. On the east wall there is a facade dormer. The wing and barn carry some of the same decorative features and are likely contemporaneous with the house. The barn is sited gable-front to the road. It has interior sliding doors and a hinged hay loft door above.

A single-story, shallow-pitched shed-roofed shop building is located to the east of the connected farm buildings. This structure appears to date from the 1920s-1930s and was reportedly a paint store. The building has clapboards on the lower 2/3 of the wall surfaces and horizontal boards above. The windows are large, divided by a vertical muntin and have a row of six vertical lights across the top. A simple gable peaked hood shelters the front door.

¹ Amsden, Chapter 14, p. 14.

AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

In 1916, Elmer and Rose Welch purchased the house and land from Luther G. Elliot. They remained here until their respective deaths in 1971 and 1991.

The property consists of just over one acre.

3 River Road (1849): This 1 ½ story, gable-front, Greek Revival house rests on a granite block foundation that is covered on the north side by stamped tin. The house is sheathed with clapboards and asphalt shingle roof. Windows have 6/6 sash. The recessed front entrance has a Greek Revival architrave. The kitchen wing, which projects to the east, was likely built about the same time as the house. A porch with highly decorative open-work posts linked by arches was added to the kitchen wing ca. 1900.

The wing connects to a 25' x 40' English barn, added ca. 1865, and absorbing a carriage shed that was part of the original connected farm building complex. (It is likely the lumber for the barn was also sawn at the nearby Elliot saw mill.) As of 1953, the barn held seven cow stanchions. The barn doors were originally hinged but later changed to an interior slider track arrangement. A gable-roofed shed was added to the rear (south) end of the barn and had been used as a hog pen.

Other outbuildings on the property include a 800 square foot chicken house in the rear yard (south of the main house), erected in 1903. One end, now a woodworking shop, was a brooding house, with the stove still in place in 1953. A 5' x 8' playhouse now sits north of the chicken house; it was originally a hog house built in the 1950s. Also of interest is the flagpole, a former haying pole used by the Tebbetts at 130 Washington St.

Historically, this was known as the Luther Elliot Farm, the original owner. The house, ell and carriage house were constructed in 1849, probably from lumber sawn at the Elliot saw mill just east on Washington Street. It was erected on property owned by Luther's father, David, who owned the property across the street (130 Washington St.). Luther B. Elliot (b. 1820) was a farmer, carpenter and, at one time, a teamster. He likely joined other members of his family at their water-powered sawmill a short distance east on Washington Street. His wife was Lucinda. As late as 1892, it was still owned by the Elliots. Subsequent owners include William L. Powell (1912-18) and his son, William L. Powell, Jr., who owned it until his death in 1945. Originally, 60 acres accompanied the farmhouse, but the present 1.03 acre configuration has been in place since about 1906. It is currently owned by Bradford Elijah and Winifred Louise Monk, who purchased it in 1953 from Arthur Leighton. Mr. Monk is a forester, with a 70-acre tree farm on Broad Cove Road; Mrs. Monk is a former teacher.

7 River Road (ca. 1860-70): This connected farmhouse is comprised of a 1 ½ story, cross-gable Italianate house with a lengthy wing and perpendicular connector to a 2 ½ story gable-front barn that is sited parallel to the wing. The entire building is sheathed in clapboards. Modest decorative trim appears on the original, hip-roof porch on the northeast corner of the house; a later, shed-roof screen porch that continues along the wing dates from ca. 1930s. According to the owner, there was a substantial fire in 1890 that damaged both the house and barn. The house underwent a major rebuilding effort in 1896, and the barn was reconstructed in the early 1890s.

Other outbuildings on the thirty-four acre property include a single-stall garage, carriage shed and poultry house, all to the rear (south) of the farmhouse.

AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

The earliest known owner of the farm is B. F. Varney, who occupied it in 1892. The property was owned by Clara Hansen Withington from ca. 1918-1984 when the current owners, Anthony & Kathleen Bourque, purchased it. The farm was a dairy farm until the mid-1930s, when it became a sizeable poultry farm, a business that continued until ca. 1970. One two-story poultry house remains, but seven have been torn down in the past ten years. The carriage shed is of mid-20th century construction.

10 River Road (ca. late 18th c.): This is a 5x3 bay Georgian cape with clapboard siding, brick twin chimneys and a roof clad with metal. It rests on a granite block foundation. Windows have 9/6 sash. A five-light transom is over the center entrance. A lengthy 2 ½ story wing consisting of a kitchen ell, carriage shed and shed extends to the west. Two clipped-corner vehicular bays, as well as a nearly square opening punctuate the 1st story, while 6/6-sash windows are found in the second level.

The wing connects to an English barn clad with clapboard siding and an asphalt shingle roof. The wagon opening has an exterior rolling door below an eighteen-light transom. A band of multi-pane windows are located to the left (west) of the barn door on the ground floor level. *[The interior of the barn was not available for inspection, but given its English form and early date of the house, likely dates from the late 18th or early 19th c.]*

Historically, this was known as the Marshall Baker farm, in whose ownership it was in 1858. By 1892, J. Sawyer owned it. The property currently has 1.5 acres.



10 River Road, photographed mid-20th century. *From Amsden, A Capital for New Hampshire, Chapter 14, opposite page 14.*

22 River Road (ca. late 18th c.): This is a 1½ story, 5x3 bay, twin-chimney Georgian house on a granite block foundation. Walls are clad with clapboard. Windows have 9/6 sash. Twentieth century alterations include a full-width shed-roof dormer on the rear roof slope and a one-story addition on the east side.

West of the house stands a detached, four-bay, English barn. The walls are sheathed with vertical-board siding and the roof with asphalt shingles. It rests on a fieldstone foundation. The wagon entrance has an exterior rolling door and multi-light transom above. *[The interior of the barn was not available for inspection, but given its English form and early date of the house, likely dates from the late 18th or early 19th c.]*

AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Historically, this was known as the Charles Elliott House, one of many occupied by members of that family in the neighborhood. At some point in the 19th c., it passed to Joseph Scales; by 1858 it belonged to S.E. Scales.² The property currently has 2.59 acres.



22 River Road, photographed mid-20th century. *From Amsden, A Capital for New Hampshire, Chapter 14, opposite page 15.*

27-28 River Road (ca. 1830): This is a 1 ½ story, 5-bay, center chimney, center-entry house that rests on a granite-block foundation. Both its siding (vinyl) and windows have been replaced. The house has a new ribbed seam metal roof. The wing, which extends west of the house, is early, but has also been substantially remodeled. It was originally a kitchen wing at the east end, shed in the middle, and carriage bay at the far end.



27-28 River Road, photographed mid-20th century. *From Amsden, A Capital for New Hampshire, Chapter 14, opposite page 15.*

Across the road are four outbuildings on approximately 125 acres of land that includes fields, a pond and woodland. Two of the buildings—barn and carriage shed—date from the early 19th c.

The barn (ca. 1800-1820) is a four-bay, gable-front structure situated directly across the street from the kitchen wing of the house. It has a queen post timber frame, with a number of early sawn members. The roof frame consists of principal rafters, purlins and vertical sheathing boards. The main wagon opening is off-center to the east. It has an exterior rolling door. Six-light windows are located low down along the side walls; an additional window lights each gable peak. Exterior walls are covered with recently applied vinyl siding; the roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

² Amsden, Chapter 14, p. 15

AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

The carriage shed (ca. 1800) is a hewn timber-frame structure sited immediately east of the barn, parallel to the road, with main openings along the eaves side. The openings now hold two contemporary overhead garage doors. The building is sheathed with vertical boards; the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A shed-roof addition spans the rear (south) elevation; it appears to date from ca. 1900.

Remaining outbuildings include two poultry houses dating from the mid 20th century, (according to the current owner, there were several more poultry houses in the area where the current 1940 equipment shed now stands) and the aforementioned equipment shed, erected ca. 1940 and which was also used for firewood storage and sales.

The farmhouse at 28 River Road stands on or near the site of an 18th c. farmhouse occupied by three bachelor Elliott brothers that burned. The existing house, thought to be built by Ezekiel Farnum Elliot (b. 1807), was moved here from further east on Washington Street, “on the rise, opposite where [Washington Street] crosses the Outlet to the Island” to take its place. It is also thought that the barn is the one that accompanied the original house. In the mid-20th c., it was known as the Herbert Farnum Place.³ The property has been in the family of one of the current owners, Barbara Smith, since ca. 1902, when the Farnums purchased it. (In the 1930s, it was known as the Herbert Farnum Place.) Barbara Smith’s family (Farnum) acquired the property about 1902. The Farnums also owned what is now the Carter Hill Orchard until it was sold in the 1960s. This property was used for vegetable crops (including strawberries) and hay with a small amount of livestock. The farm also served as a research site for vegetables and timber since Mr. Farnum was associated with the University of New Hampshire. Beverly and Robert Smith acquired the property from her family and moved in between 1974-5 and harvested timber from the property through the early 1980s.

24. Statement of Integrity

The River Road Agricultural Neighborhood, with its late 18th to mid-19th farmhouses and accompanying agricultural outbuildings, as well as expansive agricultural landscape consisting of fields, pasture, and some woodland, retains an exceptionally high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling and association.

27. Bibliography and/or References

Amsden, Grace P., *A Capital for New Hampshire*. Unpublished manuscript in 3 vols., written between 1930 and 1960.

Interviews

Bradford Elijah & W. Louise Monk (owners, 3 River Road)
Nancy Rideout, (daughter of Monks, 3 River Road)
Beverly Smith (owner, 27 & 28 River Road)

Maps & Plans

1858 *Map of Merrimack County*. Surveyed by H. E Walling, New York. Published by Smith and Peavey.

1892 *Town and County Atlas of the State of New Hampshire*. Compiled by D. H. Hurd and Co., Boston.
2006 *Aerial Maps*. City of Concord.

³ Amsden, Chapter 14, p. 15

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 1 description: 130 Washington Street

Roll: 8 Frame: 22 Direction: N



Photo 2 description: 1 River Road, showing farmhouse, wing and connected barn

Roll: 8 Frame: 23 Direction: SW

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 3 description: 1 River Road, showing former shop
Roll: 8 Frame: 24 Direction: SE



Photo 4 description: 3 River Road, showing main house
Roll: 2 Frame: 15 Direction: N

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 5 description: 3 River Road, showing barn and part of kitchen wing
Roll: 2 Frame: 16 Direction: SW



Photo 6 description: 3 River Road, showing the rear (southern) side of house, ell and barn
Roll: 2 Frame: 13 Direction: NE

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 7 description: 7 River Rd, showing front (north) elevation of connected farm buildings
Roll: 3 Frame: 11 Direction: S



Photo 8 description: 7 River Rd, showing east (front) gable end of barn and rear (south) elevations of wing and main house
Roll: 3 Frame: 9 Direction: NW

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 9 description: 7 River Rd, showing carriage shed View of west side of farmstead at 7 River Rd
Roll: 3 Frame: 10 Direction: W



Photo 10 description: 7 River Rd., showing connected farm buildings at left, carriage shed in center & poultry house at right
Roll: 3 Frame: 6 Direction: E

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 11 description: 10 River Rd., showing house and wing
Roll: 3 Frame: 5 Direction: N



Photo 12 description: 10 River Rd., showing wing and west elevation of house
Roll: 3 Frame: 3 Direction: NE

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 11 description: 10 River Rd., showing barn and west end of wing
Roll: 3 Frame: 4 Direction: N



Photo 12 description: 22 River Rd., showing house and barn
Roll: 3 Frame: 1 Direction: NE

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 13 description: 22 River Rd., showing front (south) & east elevations of house and 20th c. addition
Roll: 3 Frame: 2 Direction: NW



Photo 14 description: 27 & 28 River Rd., showing farmhouse & wing on north side of road
Roll: 2 Frame: 12 Direction: NE

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: RIVER ROAD AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDHR



Photo 15 description: 27 & 28 River Rd., south side of road with barn at right & carriage house at left
Roll: 2 Frame: 11 Direction: SE



Photo 16 description: 27 & 28 River Rd., showing west & south (rear) elevations of barn & equipment shed at right
Roll: 2 Frame: 10 Direction: E