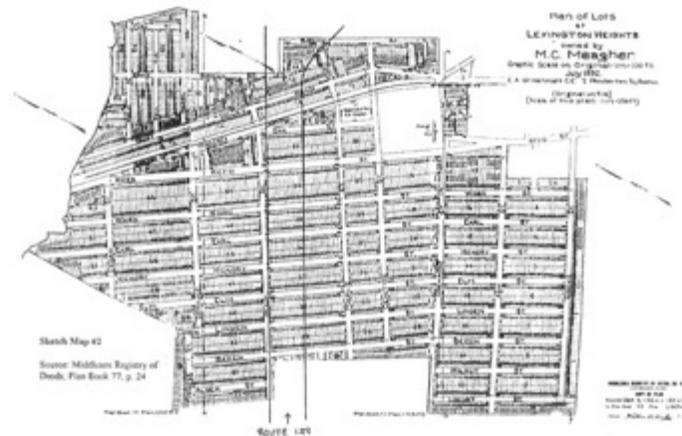


## Area AJ - Lexington Heights/Meagherville

Located in the northwest part of town, Lexington Heights, or Meagherville as it became known, was a residential subdivision that was developed by Chicago resident Mark C. Meagher in 1891. What had been the 260-acre Elm Hill Farm, owned by the Reed family since the early 18th century, was laid out by Meager into 2,814 tiny lots - most measuring 25' x 100'. Unlike the Meriam and Munroe Hill neighborhoods which were being developed at the same time with high-style homes and large lots, Lexington Heights was intended for working-class buyers.



Meagher advertised the lots in Boston newspapers and organized free rail weekend excursions for prospective buyers from the city. Would-be buyers were transported from the rail station in Lexington Center to Lexington Heights by horse-drawn carts. The excursions proved quite successful. The newspaper reported that 150 people had come on a Saturday in October 1891 and by mid October seventy-five lots had been sold, the streets were ready to be graded and two cellars were under construction. Three hundred lots were sold by 1895 and 700 by 1902. The lots were purchased on an installment plan.



*68 Ward Street*



*153 Reed Street*

Although eventually Meagher sold almost every lot, few houses were actually constructed. Those that did build houses owned more than one lot. As it turned out, most of the paper streets were never laid out nor were water or gas lines installed. Other lots were actually located in the Tophet Swamp. Most buyers abandoned their land and did not pay the taxes on it.



*10 Centre Street*



*159 Reed Street*

In 1950 Lexington Heights was bisected by the construction of Route 128. Today, what remains is approximately 138 acres east of Route 128 which includes residential neighborhoods in the vicinity of Reed Street, Ward Street and along Valley Road as well as the 86-acre town-owned Meagherville Conservation Area.



*128 Reed Street*



*4 Ward Street*

The houses which were built in the neighborhood range from the late 19th century to the present day but post-World War II construction dominates. Sprinkled throughout the neighborhood are examples of the Second Empire Style, the Queen Anne style, and the Craftsman. As is the case elsewhere in town, small dwellings on larger lots are increasingly giving way to new construction. Despite this trend, there are still areas which have not been built upon.

