



# TOWN OF CONCORD COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

141 KEYES ROAD, CONCORD, MA 01742  
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SEP 13 2024

PLANNING DIVISION  
TOWN OF CONCORD MA

## Application for CPC Funding

Due no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, September 13, 2024

Applicant\*: Town of Concord  
Federal Tax Id. No.\*: 046-001-121  
Co-Applicant (if applicable): Concord Historical Commission

Project Name\*: Historic Preservation Survey of Modern Structures

Project Location/Address (if applicable): 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA

Purpose\*: (Select all that apply)

- Open Space     Community Housing     Historic Preservation     Recreation

Project Budget\*:

Amount of CPC Funds Requested: \$ 50,000  
Amount from Other Funding Sources: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Project Budget: \$ 50,000  
(If multi-year project, note current phase only)

Please check which of the following is included with this Application:

- |                                                                                 |                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One Paragraph Project Summary *             | <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural plans, site plans, photographs (if appropriate)                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Map (if applicable)                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of IRS determination letter (Non-profit Organizations only)*                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Narrative *                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Audit or most recent Financial Information (Non-profit Organizations only)* |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Selection Criteria and Needs Assessment     | <input type="checkbox"/> Letters of Support (if any) <b>Forthcoming.</b>                                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detailed Project Budget *                   |                                                                                                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Feasibility Assessment                      |                                                                                                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statement of Sustainability (if applicable) |                                                                                                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timeline *                                  |                                                                                                              |

Project Contact Person\*: Ann Clifford, Senior Planner  
Project Contact Address\*: 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA 01742  
Project Contact Phone\*: (978) 318-3290 Email\*: aclifford@concordma.gov

Authorized Signature of Applicant\*: *Kerrey S. Taylor* *Ann Clifford*

Authorized Signature of Property Owner\* (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

\* Required

**For Historic Preservation Projects Only** – please check the box below left and acknowledge:

- I/We have read the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and understand that planning for and execution of this project must meet these standards.


# CPC Application FY26. Historic Preservation Survey of Modern structures. Cover sheet. Sept 2024


Final Audit Report

2024-09-12


Created:	2024-09-12
By:	Shannon McAndrew (smcandrew@concordma.gov)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAANY_3JnYKN89tbzJ4NeLxizMXc31_zCrh


## "CPC Application FY26. Historic Preservation Survey of Modern structures. Cover sheet. Sept 2024" History

 Document created by Shannon McAndrew (smcandrew@concordma.gov)  
2024-09-12 - 5:13:34 PM GMT

 Document emailed to Kerry Lafleur (klafleur@concordma.gov) for signature  
2024-09-12 - 5:14:05 PM GMT

 Email viewed by Kerry Lafleur (klafleur@concordma.gov)  
2024-09-12 - 10:44:44 PM GMT

 Document e-signed by Kerry Lafleur (klafleur@concordma.gov)  
Signature Date: 2024-09-12 - 10:44:51 PM GMT - Time Source: server

 Agreement completed.  
2024-09-12 - 10:44:51 PM GMT

## BRIEF PROJECT SUMMARY

The Town of Concord and Concord Historical Commission (CHC) seek \$50,000 in Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding to hire a historic preservation consultant to survey Concord’s Modern structures and neighborhoods. This thematic survey project will provide direction, set priorities and inform preservation decisions. It will streamline review and enhance knowledge about some of the most significant yet least documented historical and cultural assets of Concord, benefiting property owners, real estate agents, developers, educators and the general public.

## NARRATIVE

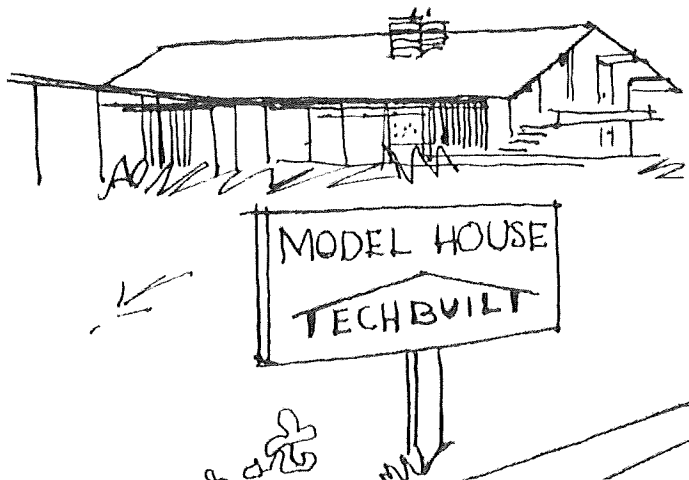
“The entire range of Concord’s historical assets is intrinsic to our Town character and sense of history.”

Concord Community Preservation Plan, 2023

Guided by Envision Concord and the CPA-funded Historic Preservation Planning effort now underway, the CHC is renewing its lapsed preservation survey efforts of the 1990s. Documentation and analysis of historic resources are after all the bedrock of the preservation field, guiding preservation decision making and enhancing knowledge about the world around us. Preservation recognizes that the streetscapes and landscapes that surround us reflect ideas, events and people who came before with valuable lessons for today.

When the CHC conducted its last major survey effort in the 1990s, it followed standard practice by limiting its survey to structures fifty years or older, which at the time were those built before World War II. Now, thirty years later, the fifty-year threshold for historic structures extends well beyond the 1930s to also include the ‘40s, ‘50s, ‘60s and early ‘70s. The CHC survey has remained largely static for decades, but the number of older structures has tripled, from 1295 built prior to 1941 to 3820 built prior to 1971. This leaves over 2500 mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century structures in Concord that have not been documented or evaluated for historical significance.

Concord’s traditional structures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are less likely to be significant than its modern structures. Concord and its surrounding communities are widely renowned for their experimental mid-century Modern buildings and neighborhoods designed by influential masters and students of architecture at Harvard and MIT. As early as 1992, the CHC consultant Anne Forbes identified mid-century Modern communities like Conantum in Concord as a high priority for study, once they “came of age.”



Mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century European designers brought humanist and socially conscious views to American universities and a generation of students. They spread a deeply held belief that innovative design solutions could help alleviate society's most pressing issues, such as reasonably priced housing for a broad middle class. Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer and Serge Chermayeff were some of the most famous designers who lived and taught in the region after fleeing Europe in the years leading up to World War II. Students like Carl Koch, William Burkes and Peter Chermayeff lived, designed and mentored in Concord.

Concord became a center of creativity, part of a regional community of architects, economists and educators experimenting in new ways of living in homes and neighborhoods designed for “every man,” nestled in nature with a modern ethos and aesthetic. Influential writings of Concord's Emerson and Thoreau helped inspire master architects of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to create a distinctly American organic architecture at one with the landscape. Leading mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century architects of MIT and Harvard continued to explore this idea on a broader scale for the wider public in the woods and fields of Concord, Lincoln, Belmont, Lexington and Carlisle. Like the outer Cape, this was “a body of work unlike any other, a regional modernism that fused Bauhaus ideals and postwar innovations with [New England vernacular] building traditions.” (McMahon and Cipriani, *Cape Cod Modern*, 15)

Communities surrounding Concord have documented, studied and celebrated their mid-century Modern neighborhoods such as Moon Hill (Lexington), Middle Ridge (Lexington), Five Fields (Lexington), Snake Hill (Belmont), Woods End (Lincoln), Brown's Woods (Lincoln), Beaver Pond Road Area (Lincoln), and Kendal Common (Weston). Docomomo (the International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and neighborhoods of the Modern Movement) recognizes the importance of this region, as does Historic New England which opens the Gropius House in Lincoln to thousands of visitors each year. The Concord Museum, *Discover Concord* and the *Concord Journal* have raised awareness of modernism in town through exhibits, articles, symposia and tours. Concord's preservation team has some catching up to do.

Currently, Concord's records in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) document just one “International Style” structure. Yet Assessor's records in Concord identify over 1000 structures as “Modern,” “Contemporary” or “Ranch.” This represents a major gap in Concord's MACRIS survey records, a gap that substantially hinders informed decision making.

Coinciding with the substantial omissions in the inventory, Concord's Demolition Review Bylaw recently applied only to pre-1941 structures. Modernist buildings had no protection whatsoever until as recently as 2021. When the CHC revised the Demolition Review Bylaw to include all buildings over fifty years of age in 2021, an additional 2500 buildings immediately became subject to review. Each passing year introduces about fifty new buildings to the tally, but without any baseline research or context, reviews are currently reactive, spotty and labor intensive. The proposed project would proactively identify historically significant mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century Modern resources to help streamline, develop context, provide direction, set priorities and inform for its routine reviews.

## Survey Content

The specific focus of the survey—that is, the specific sites—will be determined by the consultant in coordination with the Town of Concord Planning Division and Concord Historical Commission. The project will result in MACRIS Area forms for at least two neighborhoods: Conantum by Carl Koch and Jennie Dugan Acres

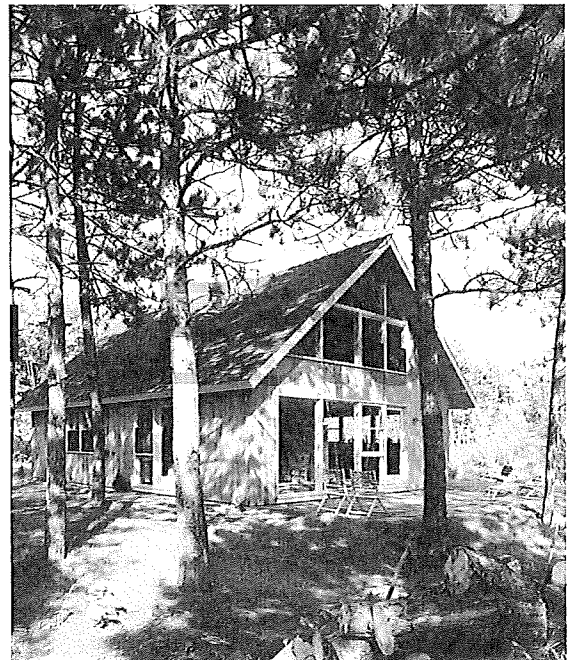
by Deck House and others. Commissioners and staff will draw from their own body of knowledge and reach out to the network of experts in the community for a list of known mid-century Modern structures, such as the Chermayeff house by Peter Chermayeff, the Joseph Adler House by Marvin Goody, and the Peabody School by The Architects' Collaborative. They will also provide consultants with the list of 1000 Modern, Contemporary and Ranch structures generated by the Assessor's Office, including any Town-owned structures. Given the sheer number of buildings to be evaluated, there may well be a need for a phased survey plan.

The survey and preservation of the Conantum neighborhood by the professor and architect Carl Koch has been a goal for the Historical Commission and Town of Concord for quite some time. In a quick search of Town planning documents, preservation goals for this well-loved mid-century Modern community are expressed in 1992, 2001, 2005 and 2018. (See below.)

Carl Koch's earliest designs "played an important role in converting a generation of architectural students at Harvard and MIT to the cause of Modernism [for it]... showed that Modern architecture need not be cold and impersonal." (Maycock and Sullivan, *Building Old Cambridge*, 579-80) This "Wisconsin native obtained a Master's of Architecture from Harvard in 1937 and worked briefly in the offices of Gropius and Breuer before establishing his own practice in 1939. Koch's design concerns reflected the social aspect of the Modern movement in his focus on providing houses for "the everyman" through a combination of technical efficiency and livable design. He was an early advocate of prefabrication and explored this technique's possibilities throughout his life in projects including the Acorn House (1948 ff), The Lustron Corporation (1949-1950), the Conantum Development (1951-1952), and the Techbuilt House (1953 ff.)" (John Daly and Electa Tritsch, LIN.190)

Communal land use policies at Conantum were also forward looking and influential. Koch wrote, "What was really innovative was the method of getting the community going.... We had at least half of the total 200 acres in common land and roadways and so on, and only half in lots. The lawyers had a lot of head scratching to do to work out the arrangement for share of the common land and the whole operation to be run by the owners." [Our Tour of Conantum – ModernMass.com | The Janovitz + Tse Team | ModernMASS](#)

Similar to the popular and flexible prefabricated Acorn, Conantum and Techbuilt house systems was the Deck House. William Berkes had worked with Koch at Techbuilt, but left to form his own company Deck House in 1959. In the 1960s, Deck House constructed thirteen houses in Jennie Dugan Acres, including one for Berkes and his family. The neighborhood was considered for designation as a historic district in 2020.



**Survey Phases & Products**

Following Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) survey guidelines, consultants will create the following products:

- Phase I: Identification of documentary materials available for the project and development of methodology.
- Phase II: Identification of properties to be surveyed and production of sample inventory forms and accompanying reference files
- Phase III: Production of complete draft inventory forms and reference files for review by the Concord Historical Commission
- Phase IV: Production of final inventory forms, reports, maps and web-based reference guide.

**BUDGET & FINANCIAL NEED**

Since the Concord Historical Commission does not have an operating budget, grants are its only available source of funding for preservation survey work. The Town and the CHC are seeking \$50,000 to hire a historic preservation consultant to implement this project. This figure is derived from the many examples of successful MHC Preservation Survey and Planning Grant projects and will cover the full project cost described in the Narrative above. If Concord is eligible for a MHC survey and planning grant this year, an application will be submitted for \$25,000 in matching funds.

<u>Income</u>	<u>CPC FY2026 funds</u>	
Historic Preservation Intensive Survey	\$50,000*	\$50,000
 <u>Expense</u>		
Historic Preservation Intensive Survey		
Historic preservation consultant		\$50,000

\* Should the MHC grant become available, funds would be returned to the Concord CPC.

**TIMELINE**

July 1, 2025	FY26 CPC funding becomes available
July-August 2025	Bid award & project start for preservation consultant
Mid September 2025	Phase I: Documentary materials confirmed & methodology developed
Mid November 2025	Phase II: Properties to be surveyed confirmed & sample forms produced
Late January 2026	Phase III: Complete all draft inventory forms for CHC Review
Late June 2026	Phase IV: Final inventory forms, reports, maps completed
June 30, 2026	Project completion

## PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

This survey will provide a solid research base to inform preservation decisions of the Concord Historic Districts Commission and Historical Commission. “In order to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public,” the HDC and CHC document and preserve cultural places and sites, experienced casually or purposefully by residents and visitors from all walks of life. Documentation of those resources in the form of surveys and Historic Structures Reports are widely recognized as fundamental building blocks of historic preservation routinely funded by the CPA.

This study will help advance other Community Preservation Act focus areas: open space and affordable housing. It will help preserve communal open spaces that were designed as integral components of mid-century Modern communities. It will help preserve “naturally occurring” affordable housing which is all around us in the form of older homes and raise awareness of past efforts to solve the timeless challenge of affordable housing.

## CONSISTENCY WITH TOWN-WIDE PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The survey focused on mid-century Modern structures and neighborhoods will help highlight the vital ongoing work of Concord’s Historical and Historic Districts Commissions. It will help achieve long-term goals expressed in *Envision Concord* such as:

- *Goal 2: Promote education and awareness among residents, Town officials, the business community and visitors regarding the existence, variety and value of Concord’s historical and cultural resources. Based on coordinated materials developed under Goal 1, make information more widely and easily available with proactive community engagement.*
- *Goal 3: Undertake additional survey and study work to identify historic resources that are not adequately documented, not fully understood, or currently unknown.*

Concord community-wide planning documents specifically called for the survey and preservation of post-war structures and neighborhoods for decades. This study is long overdue.

- 1992. Concord Survey of Historic Architectural and Cultural Resources, Phase IV, 1992: Methodology. “It is to be hoped that as significant resources such as ... the ca. 1950 community of Conantum come of age, they will be added to the town's historical inventory.” (Methodology, p. 6)
- 2001. [Historic-Resources-Masterplan-2001 \(concordma.gov\)](http://concordma.gov) “Expand the survey to include resources since 1940, such as areas or neighborhoods created as a whole (e.g., Conantum), and all public property.” (p. 169)
- 2005. [Comprehensive Long Range Plan - A Vision for 2020 - Portal App \(preservica.com\)](http://preservica.com) (pages 90, 102 and 103) “Encourage the creation of neighborhood conservation districts to increase awareness of and preserve such areas as West Concord village neighborhoods and Conantum.” (p. 103)
- 2018. [Envision-Concord---A-Bridge-to-2030 \(concordma.gov\)](http://concordma.gov) “Study the use of Neighborhood Conservation Districts for potential positive and negative impacts in appropriate areas, such as the ‘Conantum’ neighborhood.” (p. 97)

## **FEASIBILITY**

Town of Concord Planning Division staff will partner with the Concord Historical Commission to guide and manage this project which will follow MHC standards for the preparation of Historic Preservation Survey Forms and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The Town of Concord Planning Division and its staff have strong track records in project management and currently have a Historic Preservation Planning project underway.

Following MHC best practices, a historic preservation consultant or team of consultants with expertise in architectural history will be responsible for its implementation. Bid documents will adopt the standard MHC scope of work customized for Concord.

## **STATEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY**

National historic preservation organizations remind us that the greenest buildings are the ones already built and that preservation of existing structures is an inherently sustainable practice, the ultimate form of recycling. All existing buildings contain a store of embodied, or embedded, energy in the materials and labor that went into their creation. Removing, recycling, or disposing of a product when it is no longer useful, as happens when a building is demolished, is another form of embodied energy. Reusing a structure saves the embodied energy of demolition, as well as the embodied energy required to extract, process, transport, and install building products from their raw state to their intended new use.

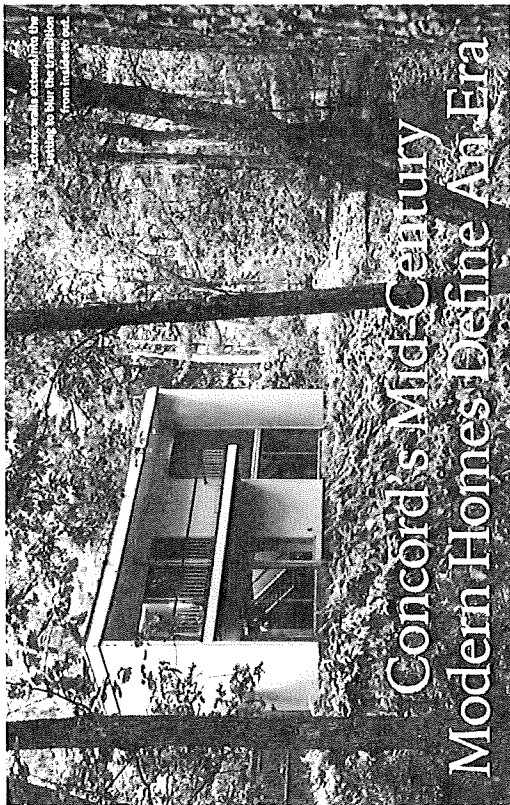
Furthermore, older structures often incorporate time-tested, common-sense sustainable practices that reflect a closer relationship with the surrounding environment and seasonal and daily planetary cycles. For example, orientation of the structure in relation to the course of the sun and landscape features can convey sustainable lessons for today about passive heating, cooling and light control.

Some mid-century Modern architects and engineers experimented with technologically advanced passive green design fifty years ago. Problem solvers today can study and evaluate successes and failures of past experiments in sustainability with hindsight over the long term.

## **OUTREACH STRATEGY**

This architectural survey and documentation project is intended not only to inform preservation decisions but also to complement and support the work of organizations like the Concord Museum, The Concord Free Public Library, Town Archives and Visitor Services that reach a broad base of visitors. These departments and organizations with staff dedicated to public outreach will be notified about the study.

The survey forms will be available on the Town website and the state database Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), reaching a global audience. Hard copies will be on file in the Planning Division, the Concord Free Public Library, and the Massachusetts Historical Commission.



Concrete walls resemble the structure's form, the fireplace built to blend the fireplace from an interior view.

# Concord's Mid-Century Modern Homes Define An Era

BY EVE SENBERG

There is more to Concord architecture than white clapboard and immaculate colonials. Like its neighbors in Lincoln and Lexington, Concord abounds with fine examples of mid-century modern homes. Built between 1930 and 1970, these examples of architectural history have largely been ignored until recently – too young to be considered “historicall”.

World War II veterans and young families sought out the fresh air, forest, and farmland, seeking healthy and affordable lifestyles – exchanging the more expensive city and settling in the suburbs. Some of those settlers were well educated and design savvy. They gravitated to forest materials and structure, solidly built houses with fresh, forward-looking style, and they attracted architects from Europe and California who were spearheading a new, Modern movement.

We can divide mid-century houses into two categories: “high design” or unique, customized homes commissioned by clients from local architects, and catalog plan ordered, partially prefabricated in a factory houses for “Everyman” designed by the professor/architect as the new machine for

living. Concord has a plentiful selection of well-maintained examples of each.

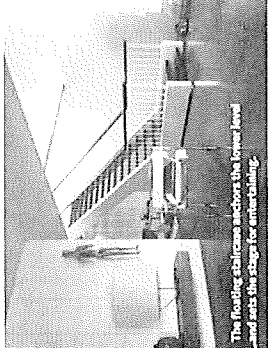
### Marvin Goody Houses: Mid-Century Modern High Design

Marvin Goody (1929-1980) was a Professor of Architecture at MIT and founded his own firm with Richard Hamilton in 1955. In 1960 John Clancy (1930-2004) became a partner. In 1962, the firm name changed to Goody Clancy, as it is still known today.

One of the homes by Goody Clancy was commissioned by Richard Adler (1922-1990), a professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at MIT. He and Marvin Goody discussed plans for this unique house for two years before it was constructed in the winter of 1967. It was designed to suit the family with three boys, who would travel from upper story to lower via a rope which came through an opening in the floor.

The approach to the house is down a loop driveway through

the pine forest. The visitor must follow a buxstone path through an archway, courtyard and staircase to the front door. It is difficult to determine the size of the house from the diminutive entrance. After being received into the low-height entry vestibule, removing shoes and hanging coats in the generous guest coat closet, one passes through a second set of doors and is treated to a two-story view down a rotating staircase and outside through floor-to-ceiling windows into the sloping yard of ferns and forest.



The floor-to-ceiling windows look out toward ferns and into the woods for extra lighting.

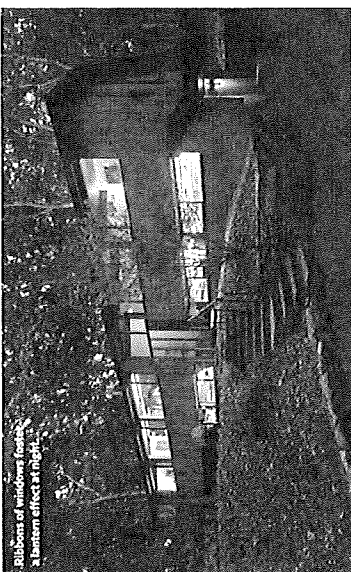
At the bottom of the stairs, the space opens up into a lavishly open entertaining space featuring a partial wall of painted concrete block containing a fireplace and four-toon-foot-long floating fourth perfect for perching and socializing. The rest of the lower floor is an open-floor plan progression from public to increasingly private spaces (dining room, kitchen, tv room, and lud play space) separated gracefully by sliding walls, subtle changes in ceiling height, and cultivated snap-shot views of the Japanese garden along the side of the house.

The house was technologically advanced in passive green design. Rain collecting on the flat roof is funneled via scoopers through the central chimney under the floor slab, and out the back of the house at the foundation level down into the steeply sloped yard. There are two heating and cooling systems to accommodate the passive solar gain, and to keep the house comfortable through all seasons. The operable windows are positioned to take advantage of winds and microclimates on the property to successfully and quickly cool the interior when needed. The built-in stairs are interior but are not claustrophobic because they receive natural light through skylights.

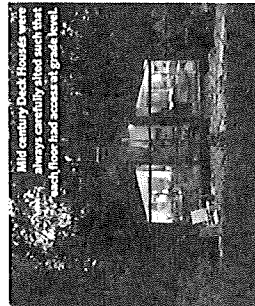
From the outside, this house “seems to” find a shoulder into the hill. It blends naturally with the site, creating a sense of balance and poise/efficiency. The house serves its inhabitants through its form and elevation and represents the finest qualities of mid-century architecture.

### The Deck Houses: Mid-Century Modern Customizable Catalog Plan Houses

The Deck House is a response to the work of MIT professor and architect Carl Koch (1912-1998), whose first innovative community of 1952 pre-fabricated homes in Concord is called Canaanum. After Canaanum, Carl Koch went on to develop the Acan Company and Techair. In 1959, after a downturn for Techair, William Berkes, a draftsman, and Robert Brownell, a construction manager, left and founded the Deck House Company to see if they could design and provide quality houses of excellent design for a reasonable investment.



Stubs of mid-century forest. A pleasant effect of light.



Mid-century Deck Houses were always carefully sited such that each floor had access to grade level.

The Deck House is a post-and-beam, two-story house that has viewed cedar ceilings, panoramic views through expanses of glass, flexible interior space, and is usually sited half way into the ground with the ability to walk out of both floors. It is built from standardized panels manufactured in a factory to save money and was, after the company carefully located the house around the trees and topography, assembled on site by local contractors. Berkes spear headed upgraded materials like Persian mahogany and Canadian cedar, which could not be found in a local hardware store, to give the small houses a feeling of value.

The most prominent feature of the house is the cedar boards which could span the distance between the structural beams to form the roof deck and the floor deck – thus the name Deck House. These boards were assembled on site with glued tongue-and-groove connections that were nailed together such that the roof deck and floor deck acted as diaphragms to resist horizontal/wind loads. This allowed for an open interior (no load bearing walls) and expenses of glass and mulling views.

The ribbons of windows connect so closely with the underside of the roof that the beams supporting the two-foot eaves are continuously visible and seem to piece the windows, drawing attention to the surrounding outdoors. This effect is the same on the first floor due to a two-foot

setback from the floor above which creates a 4’ overhang around the perimeter of the house and protects the foundation from rain and sun-dil. The overall effect is a Japanese pavilion.

The company spared no expense in the volumes of catalogs and advertising, marketing these houses to educated, middle class, young families. The Deck House Company is still building new houses and there are estimated to be 15,000 Deck Houses in the U.S.

Concord boasts one of the first neighborhood developments of Deck Houses. Keep your eyes open as you drive through town for glimpses through the trees of these well-loved homes.

The location is a registered Architect in the State of Massachusetts and a trustee of the non-profit Concord Historical Commission. The Deck House LLC has 5,000 shares in the Deck House neighborhood in Concord.

