73 Summer Street

Built in 1756 for John Barnes Jr. and Margaret Curtis Barnes, 73 Summer Street belongs to a group of houses associated with generations of the Barnes family. Their agricultural holdings extended toward Cohasset and World's End, contributing to the historic character of the area known as Barnes Area and Old Colony Hill.

Thomas Barnes settled in Hingham in 1637 and worked as a farmer and weaver. Later generations built nearby houses, including 88 Summer Street in 1734, 91 Summer St (exact date unknown) and 85 Summer Street in 1806. These closely situated properties reflect the gradual development of a substantial family homestead along Summer Street.

The original house at 73 Summer Street was a one-and-a-half-story Cape with a side-gambrel roof. Its low, broad timber frame rests on a fieldstone foundation. The gambrel's two slopes on each side increased usable space in the upper story, while the centrally placed front entrance faced the harbor. Although the family's livelihood was agricultural, the setting overlooked Hingham's developing maritime economy.

Surviving early fabric includes a structural post in the kitchen and the original entrance hall. A room now used as a sitting room was formerly the kitchen. Two large rear ells, added in the 1890s, expanded the house considerably. An inscription left by W. J. Nelson during an 1895 renovation was discovered in a wall and preserved.

Subsequent alterations brought the building to nearly 5,000 square feet. After a period of use as a chiropractic office, it underwent residential restoration. Wood recovered from the house's walls was reused in the kitchen island, preserving a tangible connection between the eighteenth-century structure and its later adaptation.