

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

D5/ 1/ 4/ /

Blue Hills

AVO.30

Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



View looking northwest from East Main Street.

Address: 113 East Main St.

Historic Name: Clifford and Arathusia Keith House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1833

Source: Deed

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut; Brick

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Detached 2-car garage (late 20th or early 21st C)

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Chimney removed; Replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20th C or early 21st C)

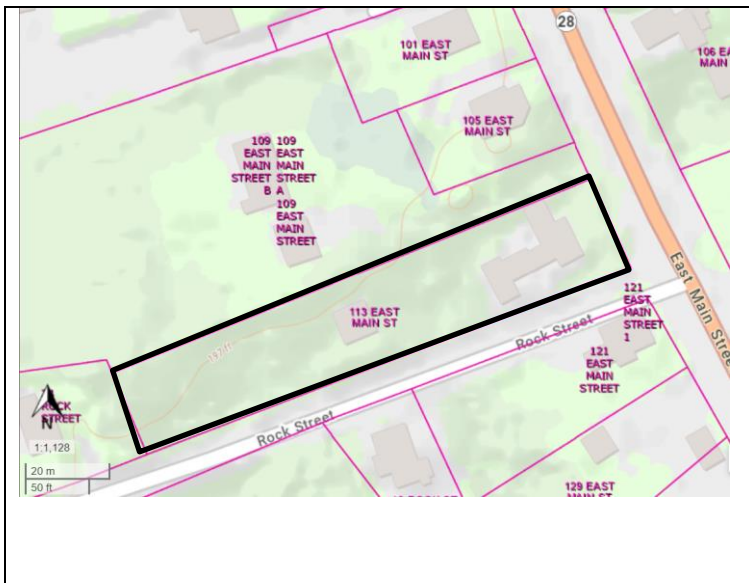
Condition: Fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.64

Setting: Located on a busy north-south regional route amid 1- and 2-story residences, small retail buildings and commercial establishments.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

113 EAST MAIN STREET

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

Located on a wooded level lot edged by a narrow strip of lawn along the south and east lot lines, the house is oriented to the east, toward the street. A shallow gravel driveway/parking area is located at the Rock Street elevation. The 1-story frame house has a side-gabled roof with a box cornice at the façade and no overhang at the side elevations. The building is clad with wood clapboards and trimmed with wood cornerboards, a narrow, molded wood cornice, and a skirt board. At the façade, the foundation is constructed of large cut-stone slabs; the foundation is constructed of brick at the secondary elevations. The main block's 5-bay façade contains a center entrance topped by a gable-roof shelter supported by curvilinear brackets. The façade features 2/1 wood sash windows with narrow, molded surrounds and metal-frame external storm windows. The main block's side elevations are two bays deep with two windows in the gable peak. The gable-end windows project from the wall plane, while those on the façade are set flush with the wall plane. Side elevation windows are 1/1 vinyl sash replacements.

A small, offset ell is attached to the northeast corner of the main block. An interior brick chimney rises from the north end of the roof ridge. The façade contains three 2/1 sash windows similar to those on the façade. The ell is clad with wood clapboards on the east elevation and wood shingles on the north elevation. A long, 1-story, perpendicular ell extends from the center of the main block's rear (west) elevation. The ell has a gable roof with no overhang and is clad with wood shingles. The east end of the ell (closest to the main block) contains four bays of 1/1 vinyl sash replacement windows. A multi-light pedestrian door is located adjacent to the windows. A garage bay with an overhead door is located at the west side of the pedestrian door. At the west end of the ell, the roof extends to create a carport delineated by a pent roof. A detached, 2-car garage is located at the west end of the rear yard at Rock Street.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The house was likely constructed circa 1833, the year in which Clifford Keith purchased 14 acres of land on the west side of East Main Street.¹ Clifford Keith (1801-1879)² lived here with his wife, Arathusia Harris Keith (1802-1881),³ whom he had married in 1820, and their family. As a young man, Clifford Keith worked as a cordwainer (that is, shoemaker). Keith later expanded his business to become a boot and shoe trader, who manufactured and sold large quantities of boots and shoes. The 1858 map shows Clifford Keith's "Boot Manufactory" at the southwest corner of East Main Street and Rock Street. Clifford Keith is reported to have also worked as a "general merchant."⁴ Clifford Keith served on the Stoughton Board of Selectmen and as a justice of the peace.

Clifford and Arathusia Keith's son, James Keith, inherited the house from his parents. James Keith (1827-1897)⁵ was married twice: first to Eliza Packard (1827-1851)⁶ and second to Lucy Baker (ca. 1827- 1919).⁷ "Upon leaving school, he entered the employ of the old shoe firm of E. Tucker, as bookkeeper...His manner and general acquirements soon won for him the highest esteem and confidence of his employers, a long term of service being the result. About [1872] he opened a general store in the

¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 101, p. 80.

² Findagrave.com Memorial #204464820. Accessed Oct. 12, 2022.

³ Findagrave.com Memorial #204464836. Accessed Oct. 12, 2022.

⁴ *Biographical Review*, p. 419.

⁵ Findagrave.com Memorial #204464850. Accessed Oct. 12, 2022.

⁶ Findagrave.com Memorial #204464861. Accessed Oct. 12, 2022.

⁷ Findagrave.com Memorial #204464880. Accessed Oct. 12, 2022.

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building occupied by him as a residence and...continued in that business [until his death].⁸ At his store, James Keith sold "stationery, periodicals, and gentlemen's furnishing goods."⁹ James Keith was appointed East Stoughton postmaster in 1867 and served for 17 years; Keith's store served as the post office. When Avon became its own town, James Keith served as one of the three auditors appointed at the time of the town's incorporation and served for two years.¹⁰ The house remained in the Keith family until circa 1915.

From 1931 until 1996, the house was the residence of Willis and Signe Meigs and their two children.¹¹ Willis Meigs worked as a sheet metal worker.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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"Long a Resident of Avon, James Keith, One of the Town's Pioneer Shoe Men, Died This Morning." *The Boston Globe*. 16 October 1897, p. 2.

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View looking south from East Main Street.



View looking northeast toward ell and rear of main block from Rock Street.

⁸ "Long a Resident of Avon," *The Boston Globe*, 16 Oct. 1897, p. 2.

⁹ *Biographical Review*, p. 419.

¹⁰ Hanna: 71.

¹¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 1924, p. 482 and Book 11570, p. 57.