

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

D5/ 5/ 7/ 1	Blue Hills		AVO.44 AVO.45
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**Town/City:** Avon

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*):

## Photograph



View looking southwest.

**Address:** 163 East Spring St.

**Historic Name:** Asa and Izannah Brett House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1846-1850

**Source:** Deed; Census

**Style/Form:** No Style

**Architect/Builder:** Not Known

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Asbestos Shingles / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** Barn/Carriage House

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Asbestos siding; Replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20<sup>th</sup> C or early 21<sup>st</sup> C)

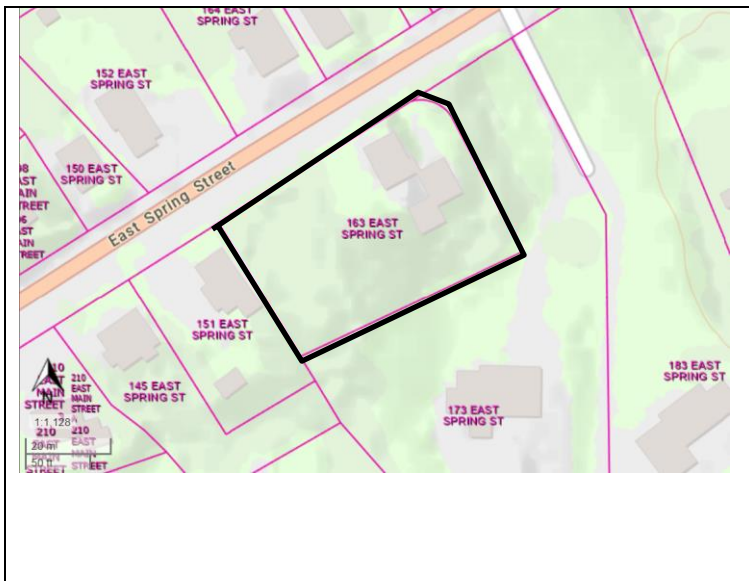
**Condition:** Fair

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.57 acres

**Setting:** Located near a busy intersection and truck route. Surrounding buildings are 2-story frame dwellings constructed during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies

**Organization:** Avon Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): December 2022

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

163 EAST SPRING ST.

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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	AVO.44
	AVO.45

☐ 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.*

The house is located close to the street on a sloping site covered with grass near the house; the lot is lined with mature trees. An uncoursed stone retaining wall lines the street frontage. A gravel driveway leads past the house's west elevation to the barn located just south of the house. A second gravel driveway leads past the house's east elevation to a carriage house/garage. A flight of cut stone steps leads from the house (upper level) to the lower driveway and carriage house (lower level). The 1½-story frame house is oriented to the west and perpendicular to the street. The house rests on a cut stone foundation and is capped with a gable roof with overhanging eaves and molded gable-end cornice returns. The east and west roof slopes each contain an interior brick chimney with a corbeled cap. The façade is five bays wide with a projecting center vestibule with a gable roof. The paneled wood door is flanked by half-height sidelights. The side (north) elevation is two-over-three bays wide with a small fixed window located in the gable peak. Windows throughout the house are 1/1 vinyl sash replacements with narrow, molded surrounds. The house is extended by two bays at the south end; here, the east basement level is exposed and contains two sash windows.

A connected barn and carriage house (ca. 1850, AVO.45) is located at the southeast corner of the house. The barn has a gable roof with no overhang at the gable ends. The barn is covered with asbestos shingles. The carriage house has a side-gabled roof with no overhang on the side elevations. The building is covered with narrow wood clapboards and rests on stone piers. The north elevation contains a large, top-hung sliding door constructed of wood vertical boards. A 6/6 wood sash window with a four-light wood-frame storm window is located on either side of the door. A sash window is located at the south end of the east elevation.

While the house has been altered with the application of asbestos siding and replacement windows, the carriage house retains a high level of integrity and is a now-uncommon survivor from Avon's agricultural past. The barn was not sufficiently visible to assess its integrity.

### 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.*

163 East Spring Street was likely constructed between 1846 and 1850. The 1850 census records Asa Brett and his family in this location. In 1853, Asa Brett purchased additional land next to his "homestead" on the south side of "the road to Randolph."<sup>1</sup> Asa Brett (1802-1871)<sup>2</sup> and his wife, Izannah White Brett (1805-1888),<sup>3</sup> married in 1823. Asa and Izey, as she was known, Brett were both born in Stoughton. Asa Brett worked as a boot maker and a farm laborer. Asa and Izey Brett's daughter, Mary, worked as a schoolteacher.

In 1889, the Brett family sold the house to Ella Beals and her husband, John P. Beals.<sup>4</sup> Ella and John Beals' son, Ira, and daughter-in-law, Mabel, lived here in the 1910s-1970s.<sup>5</sup> Ira Beals worked as a salesman and as a shipyard clerk, according to census records.

<sup>1</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 168, p. 319 and 220, p. 371.

<sup>2</sup> Findagrave.com Memorial #86326677. Accessed Oct. 20, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Findagrave.com Memorial #86326691. Accessed Oct. 20, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 617, p. 553.

<sup>5</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 5574, p. 95.



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Sherman, G.A. *Atlas of Norfolk County*. New York: Comstock & Cline, 1876.  
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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION



View looking southeast toward house. Barn partially visible at right rear.



View looking southwest toward carriage house / garage. Barn visible at rear.



View looking southwest.



Assessor's photograph of façade (west elevation).

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