

FORM B – BUILDING

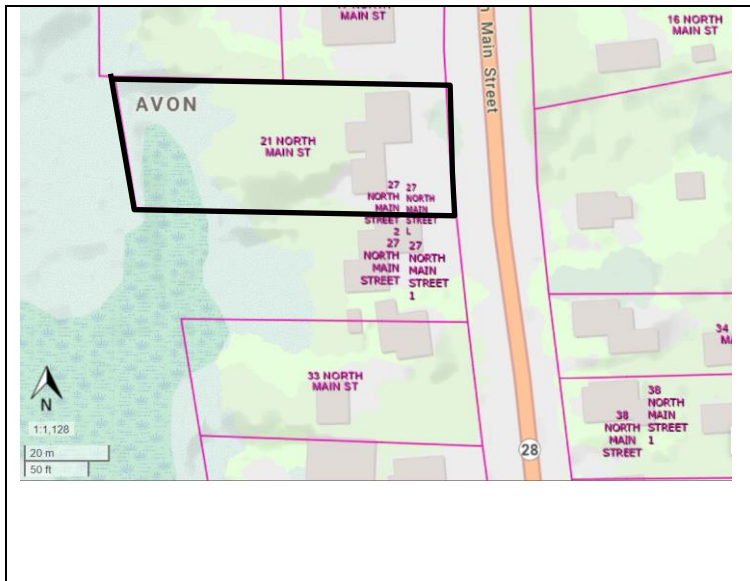
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View looking northwest.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (month / year): December 2022

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

D7/ 2/ 4/ 1

Blue Hills

AVO.6

Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 21 North Main Street

Historic Name: Briggs House

Uses: Present: Multiple Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1800

Source: Visual Assessment

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding, Wood Shingles / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (*with dates*): South ell (post-1978);
Replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20th C or early 21st C)

Condition: Poor

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.58

Setting: Located in a suburban setting beside the busy north-south State Route 28. Surrounding residences are of similar age and size. A strip shopping center abuts the property to the north. De Marco Park is located southeast of the house.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

21 NORTH MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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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 level lot, the house is oriented to the east, toward the street. A narrow strip of lawn separates the house from the street; the remainder of the lot is wooded. Asphalt-paved parking areas are located along the north and south elevations of the house. The house consists of a 2-story main block and a 1-story perpendicular ell. The house rests on a cut stone slab foundation and rises to a side-gabled roof with a shallow overhang at the façade and no overhang on the side elevations. A slender brick chimney is located at the south end of the roof ridge. The house is covered with vinyl siding on the façade and wood shingles on the remaining elevations. The pair of pressed-panel Colonial Revival-style metal doors centered on the façade is sheltered by a flat-roofed porch supported by wrought iron posts. The porch floor is constructed of concrete faced with brick. The façade's first and second stories each contain two bow windows consisting of five metal-frame casement windows. The side elevations are three bays wide with a pair of windows in the gable peak. The windows are vinyl or metal-sash replacements with internal faux muntins. The wood-shingled ell rests on a poured concrete foundation and rises to a side-gabled roof. The pressed-panel metal door centered on the façade is framed by shallow bow windows that each contain three casement windows. A similar door framed by 1/1 wood sash connects the ell to the main block. An exterior brick chimney is centered on the south elevation.

The 1978 MHC survey form states that construction details such as wood pegs and hand forged nails were present at that time. The 1978 survey also noted a 1929 fire and "renovations" in 1955 that altered the house. Interior inspections were beyond the scope of this survey, but a closer examination of surviving framing, floorplans, and interior features and finishes by an architectural historian with expertise in early Massachusetts building technology could provide additional insights into a likely original construction date and on the physical evolution of the building over time.

The building has undergone extensive alterations that have resulted in a low level of 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.

Based on a visual assessment, deed research, and examination of primary sources, the house at 21 North Main Street was likely constructed in the early 19th century for a member of the Briggs family. The house does not, however, appear to be the ca. 1789 Rev. Joel Briggs house or the ca. 1720 Moses Briggs house, as previously reported. An 1896 newspaper article on the occasion of 84th birthday of Rev. Joel Briggs' granddaughter, Angeline Briggs Crane, recorded Ms. Crane's statement that the "old Briggs house...**stood** where [now] stands the stables of the Brockton street railway company." That is to say, the Briggs house was no longer standing in 1896. The extant house was one of three houses on what was then a 22-acre property owned by the heirs of Rev. Joel Briggs in 1850.¹ A house identified as that belonging to "H. Briggs" appears in this approximate location on the 1858 map. A large building, likely the stables, is depicted immediately north of the house on the 1888 map. Avery Briggs, Rev. Joel and Hannah Briggs' son, sold the property to Angeline Briggs Crane in 1860.² Angeline Crane lived on Pond Street at the time (see 167 Pond Street, AVO.64).

¹ Town of Stoughton, "Valuation of Estates in the Town of Stoughton and Money Tax for the year 1850."

² Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 292, p. 629.

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In 1870, Angeline Briggs Crane sold 21 North Main Street to Dorcas J. Leach.³ Dorcas Jane Coffin Leach (ca. 1833-1881) and her husband, Albion K. P. Leach (1821-1871),⁴ were both born in Maine. Albion Leach worked as a bootmaker and Dorcas Leach worked as a dressmaker and milliner. Dorcas Leach's heirs sold the property in 1882.⁵

From 1884 until 1924, the house was owned by the Brockton Street Railway Company (later the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway Corporation).⁶ The trolley company also had stables on the property. (The trolleys were pulled by horses before motor cars were invented.) It may be that the house was used as housing for the trolley drivers or for the stable hands. (More research is recommended.)

From the late 1920s until the late 1950s, the property was owned by the Randolph Savings Bank.⁷ The 1930 census reported that the building contained two apartments. The William E. and Helen Enright family owned the property from 1965 until 2014.⁸

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³ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 393, p. 453.

⁴ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/196898551/albion-k._p.-leach. Accessed April 27, 2023.

⁵ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 544, p. 578.

⁶ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 555, p. 601 and Book 1610, p. 56.

⁷ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 1936, p. 327, Book 1967, p. 431.

⁸ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 4293, p. 395 and Book 32311, p. 228.

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View looking southwest.



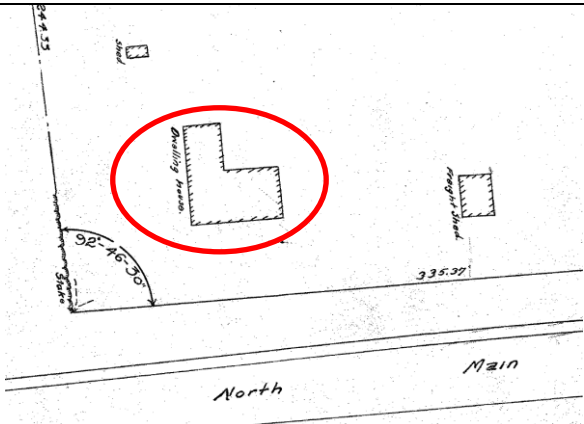
View looking west.



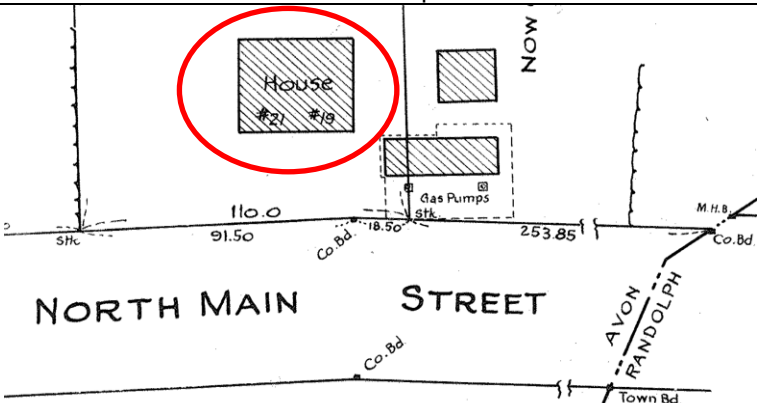
1876 Map.



1888 Map.



1924 Plan. Norfolk Registry of Deeds
Book D1610, Page 56.



1930 Plan. Norfolk Registry of Deeds
Book 1930, Page 327.