

FORM B – BUILDING

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

Photograph



View looking southeast. Original building at left. 1970 addition is the three shed-roof pavilions at right.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (month / year): December 2022

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

D5/ 1/ 19/ /

Blue Hills

AVO.95

Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 280 West Main Street

Historic Name: Avon Public Library

Uses: Present: Library

Original: Library

Date of Construction: 1948

Source: Town Report

Style/Form: Contemporary

Architect/Builder: S. Tyson Haldeman; Maurice Finegold (1970)/ Arthur J. Stubbett

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete

Wall/Trim: Wood Shingles / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Large addition (1970)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1.08

Setting: Located on a busy, suburban road across the street from the Avon Middle-High School

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

280 WEST 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.

The Avon Public Library is located on a corner lot and oriented to the west, toward West Main Street. A paved sidewalk and a narrow strip of lawn separates the building from the roadway. An asphalt-paved parking lot wraps around the south and east (rear) elevations. The lot slopes gently to the southeast, allowing for a banked rear elevation.

Domestic in scale, the original library building comprises the north half of the existing building and consists of a 1-story, side-gabled, 2-bay block framed by two smaller, 1-story, side-gabled wings. Each wing is one bay wide and two bays deep. The façade features a shallow box cornice, while the side elevations have no overhang. The 6/6 wood sash windows have molded wood surrounds. (The main block's original center entrance was removed in 1970. See historic photographs below.) An exterior brick chimney with a corbeled cap is centered on the north elevation. The 1-story 1970 addition consists of three stair-stepped, shed-roof pavilions linked by recessed flat-roof connectors. A poured concrete ramp with metal railings leads to the entrance, which was moved in 1970 to the connector that links the original building to the addition. Plate glass windows frame the full-light, metal-framed entry door. The two remaining connectors' facades contain a ribbon of seven slender, rectangular, fixed windows. At the rear of the building, the three pavilions' east elevations are each filled with eight slender, rectangular, fixed windows. A 1-story, flat-roof block extends along the rear elevation, linking the original building and 1970 addition. The contemporary design of the Avon Public Library is locally uncommon.

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 Avon Public Library is the first building in Avon specifically constructed for that purpose. Construction costs were a bequest of Henry Thomas Lawton, who had died four years earlier. Prior to the building's construction, a small library – established in 1892 -- had been located on the second floor of the fire station in Goere's Square. "Its first trustees were Dr. Gifford, John T. Callahan and Orville C. Stockwell; the first librarian was Charles N. Blanchard."¹

Architect Samuel Tyson Haldeman (1898-1991) was born in Washington, D.C. "S. Tyson Haldeman, AIA, studied architecture at Cornell University (1920-1924) and was employed as a draftsman in the Philadelphia office of Paul Cret (1926) before relocating to Massachusetts."² After working as a sole practitioner, Haldeman began a partnership with Eric Jacoby in 1950. During their partnership, which lasted until 1969, Haldeman & Jacoby designed a number of public buildings in the south shore area, including the Unitarian Universalist Church (1954) and the Temple Israel School (1954) in Brockton, the Lincoln, R.I. Junior High School (1955), Marshfield Senior High School, North Attleboro High School, an addition to the Southeast Easton Elementary School (1959, EST.42), and the Robert N. Violette Research Building (1969, DAR.1334) at UMass Dartmouth. The firm also designed private residences and the Boston branch of the Brockton Savings Bank. In 1970, S. Tyson Haldeman was working as President of Haldeman and Goransson Architects of Boston. Building Contractor Arthur J. Stubbett, Jr. (1907-1954)³ was a resident of Brockton. Stubbett also worked as the city of Brockton building superintendent, according to census records.

In 1970, the library was expanded with a 408-square-foot addition designed by Boston architect Maurice (Moe) Finegold, FAIA that also transformed the original library's Colonial Revival appearance. The addition's \$160,000 cost was funded by the Henry Lawton Blanchard endowment. Moe Finegold, as he is known, earned his Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University and his

¹ Hanna: 78.

² Broomer.

³ Findagrave.com Memorial #244840433. Accessed Nov. 22, 2022.

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Master of Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. After eleven years in private practice, Moe Finegold joined the firm of Anderson Notter, which, in 1992, was renamed Finegold Alexander. Moe Finegold's work has included the restoration and rehabilitation of historic buildings ranging from Mechanic's Hall in Worcester to the Preservation and Development Plan for the Miami Beach Art Deco District, as well as the design of synagogues throughout the United States. Moe Finegold retired in 2021.⁴

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- United States Census. Ancestry.com.



View looking South. Original building in foreground.



View looking north.

⁴ "Finegold Alexander Announces Retirement..."

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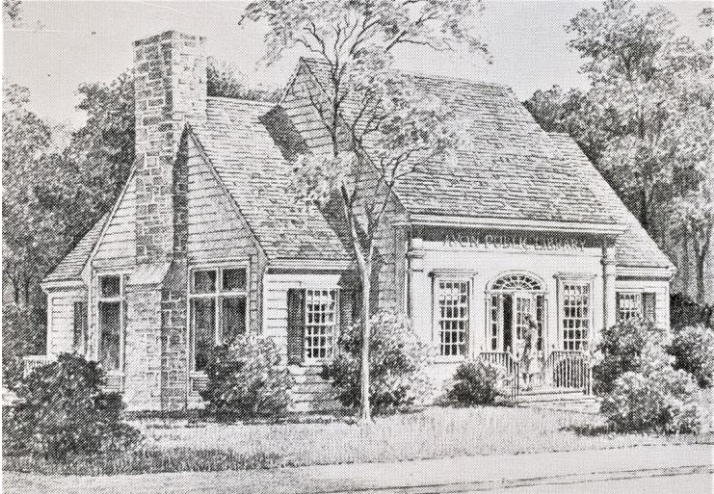
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View looking west at rear elevation. Original building (with gable roof) at right.



Circa 1948 postcard view.



Architect's rendering, as shown in 1948 Avon Town Report, page 80.