

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

D4/ 6/ 2/ 1

Brockton

AVO.104

Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



View looking southwest from West Main Street.

Address: 565 West Main Street

Historic Name: Ira and Zervia May House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1831

Source: Deed

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Hip dormer, porch tower and bay window added and windows replaced (turn of 20th C). Rear ell added.

Condition: Deteriorated

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.65

Setting: Located on a busy suburban thoroughfare. Surrounding houses date from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

565 WEST MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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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 gently-sloping corner lot, the house is oriented to the east toward West Main Street. A lawn fills the area between the house and West Main Street. The remainder of the lot is wooded. An asphalt-paved driveway leads from West Main Street past the house's south elevation. A fieldstone retaining wall lines the driveway. A second driveway leads from South Street to the rear of the house. A low ashlar retaining wall extends from the South Street driveway to West Main Street and extends to the south property line on West Main Street. The 1-story frame house rests on a cut stone foundation and is capped with a side-gabled roof with no overhang. The remains of two brick chimneys are located near the roof ridge. The house is clad with clapboards and trimmed with cornerboards. The house is five bays wide and two bays deep. The symmetrical façade has a center entrance consisting of a paneled wood door framed by sidelights and a pilastered Greek Revival surround. The façade windows appear to be 1/1 wood sash with exterior metal-frame storm windows. A large hip dormer, supported by a frame porch, is located above the entrance. The porch has a poured concrete floor with stairs and piers constructed of granite paving stones. A trio of slender Doric wood columns, located atop the piers, supports the porch. The wood-shingled dormer contains an 8/8 wood sash window in the east elevation and a 6/6 wood sash window in the north and south elevations.

The house appears to have been updated in the early 20th century. These updates include the hip dormer on the façade, a large bay window on the south elevation, and a square tower with a pyramidal roof attached to the south end of the rear elevation. The bay window's center elevation contains a wood-frame picture window with a valance of lozenge-shaped lights. The bay's remaining two elevations, as well as the rest of the south elevation, contain 6/6 wood sash windows. A rectangular window near the top of the tower contains a wood-framed window with lozenge-shaped lights. A gambrel-roof ell extends from the rear (west) elevation. The ell contains a door and 6/6 window beneath a porch that extends the depth of the ell's south elevation. Two shallow bays containing 6/6 wood sash windows project from the south elevation's gambrel slope. The gambrel ell contains two similar bays on the north elevation. A 21-light, wood-frame picture window is located on the ell's north elevation.

While in poor condition, the house is an interesting example of a 19th century vernacular form updated with details popular at the turn of the 20th century.

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.

565 West Main Street was likely constructed circa 1831, the year in which Ira May purchased ½ acre of land here from neighbor John Porter.¹ Ira May (1807-1900)² and his wife, Zervia Fuller May (1809-1874),³ were married in 1828. After beginning his training as a shoemaker in his grandfather's shoe shop, Ira May worked for Isaac Blanchard until 1838, when he opened his own boot-making shop. Several years later, May turned his attention to harness making.⁴ Ira and Zervia May's son, Ira W. May (1849-1916),⁵ joined his father's harness-making business. Ira W. May married Mary Ella Baker (1845-1931)⁶ and the couple made their residence here with his parents. The property remained in the May family until the 1960s.⁷

¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 95, p. 125.

² Findagrave.com Memorial #204463784. Accessed Oct. 5, 2022.

³ Findagrave.com Memorial #204463802. Accessed Oct. 5, 2022.

⁴ Hanna: 38.

⁵ Findagrave.com Memorial #204463860. Accessed Oct. 5, 2022.

⁶ Findagrave.com Memorial #204463874. Accessed Oct. 5, 2022.

⁷ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 4167, p. 515.

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View looking northwest.



View looking south from South Street toward rear ell.