

FORM B – BUILDING

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

D4/ 6/ 1/ /

Brockton

AVO.106

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

Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



View looking southwest.

Address: 577 West Main Street

Historic Name: John and Mehitabel Porter House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1828

Source: Deed; Marriage Date

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Vinyl siding, Replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20th C or early 21st C)

Condition: Fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.71

Setting: Located on a busy suburban thoroughfare. Houses constructed during the early-mid-19th century are located north of the house. Houses to the east, south, and west are part of mid-late 20th century residential development.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

577 WEST MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

AVO.106

☐ 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. The lot is covered with lawn around the house with scattered mature trees around the property boundaries. An asphalt-paved driveway leads past the south elevation. The frame house rests on a cut stone foundation and rises one story to a side-gabled roof with a shallow overhang at the façade and no overhang at the side elevations. A brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge. The symmetrical 5-bay façade contains a paneled wood door at center that is accessed via three brick steps. The wood surround contains half-height sidelights and fluted pilasters beneath a molded frieze. The side elevations are two bays deep. The gable peaks each contain a pair of windows. The house has been expanded over time with a shed dormer on the rear roof slope and a small 1½-story rear ell. An enclosed porch fills the ell's south elevation. Windows throughout the house are vinyl sash with internal faux muntins.

The house's 1-story, 5x2-bay form is a common building form used during the mid-late 18th and early 19th centuries. 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.

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.

577 West Main Street was likely constructed circa 1828, the year in which John Porter purchased 20 acres of land at the southwest corner of West Main Street and South Street (known as the "town road" and the "county road" at the time).¹ Farmer John Porter (1801-1873)² and his wife, Mehitable B. Kingman Porter (1807-1889),³ had been married the previous year. John Porter's parents, Captain Robert and Elizabeth Porter, lived a short distance north of this location, on the west side of West Main Street north of South Street. The house was later owned by John and Mehitable's son, Benjamin W. Porter (1835-1911),⁴ then by Benjamin Porter's son Albert L. Porter, and then by his wife, Mary B. (Lynch) Porter.⁵ The house was sold out the family in 1931. The house was owned by the Nillson (later, Nelson) family from 1931 until 1992.⁶

The building's appearance suggests an 18th-century construction date, especially when compared with its neighbor at 607 West Main Street (See AVO.2.) While the 1828 deed does not mention the presence of a dwelling house, it may have existed at that time. More research is recommended.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

City Directories.

Findagrave.com.

Fisher, Nathaniel. "Plan of Stoughton." 1794. Massachusetts State Archives.

¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 87, p. 132.

² Findagrave.com Memorial #70058039. Accessed Oct. 8, 2022.

³ Findagrave.com Memorial #70058056. Accessed Oct. 8, 2022.

⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/70057979/benjamin-w.-porter>. Accessed Dec. 1, 2022.

⁵ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 632, p. 625, Book 1695, p. 284, and Book 1713, P. 188.

⁶ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 9328, p. 673.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

577 WEST MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

AVO.106

Hanna, William F. *The Story of Avon*. Avon: Avon Centennial Committee. 1988.
Hodges, Joseph. *Plan of the Town of Stoughton*. 1830. Massachusetts State Archives.
Hurd, D. Hamilton. *History of Norfolk County*. Vol. 1. Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co. 1884.
Massachusetts Census. Ancestry.com.
Massachusetts Vital Records.
Massachusetts Probate Records. Ancestry.com.
Norfolk County Registry of Deeds.
Robinson, E. *Robinson's Atlas of Norfolk County, Massachusetts*. New York: E. Robinson, Publisher. 1888.
Sherman, G.A. *Atlas of Norfolk County*. New York: Comstock & Cline. 1876.
Talbot, Newton. [Buildings standing in Stoughton in 1775]. 1929. <https://stoughtonhistory.com/1775map.htm>
Town of Avon. Tax Assessor records.
United States Census. Ancestry.com.
Walling, Henry Francis. *Map of Norfolk County, Mass.* Boston: Smith & Bumstead. 1858.
World War II Draft Registration Cards. Ancestry.com.



View looking northwest.



Facade detail.