

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

## Photograph



View looking northwest.

## Locus Map



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

D3/ 1/ 59/ /

Brockton

AVO.2

**Town/City:** Avon

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

**Address:** 607 West Main Street

**Historic Name:** Amariah and Elizabeth Harris House

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1763

**Source:** MHC B Form; Marriage date

**Style/Form:** Colonial

**Architect/Builder:** Not Known

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard, Wood shingles / Wood trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:** Shed; Detached 2-car garage.

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): Shed dormer on rear roof slope. Chimney rebuilt or reworked.

**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 1.7

**Setting:** Located on a busy suburban thoroughfare. With the exception of a single Craftsman bungalow located on the adjacent lot to the north, the house is surrounded by 1- and 2-story houses constructed as part of a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century residential development.

**Recorded by:** Stacy Spies

**Organization:** Avon Historical Commission

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

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

607 WEST MAIN STREET

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

AVO.2

☐ 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 northeast toward the street. The house is located at the east end of a deep lot covered with lawn around the house; the west end of the lot is wooded. An asphalt-paved driveway leads past the south elevation to a detached two-car garage located southwest of the house. A brick walkway leads from the driveway to the entrance. The frame house rests on a cut stone foundation and rises one story to a side-gabled roof with a box cornice along the façade. A brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge. The façade is clad with clapboards trimmed with a narrow frieze and cornerboards. The side elevations are clad with wood shingles with a molded rake board lining the gable peaks. The symmetrical 5-bay façade contains a center entrance accessed via a single cut stone step. The vertical-board door hangs from strap hinges and is framed by half-height sidelights and a molded surround. The side elevations are two bays deep. The gable peaks contain a pair of sash windows flanked by small, square 4-light windows. Unless otherwise noted, windows throughout the house are 9/6 wood sash with wide, unmolded surrounds and functional louvered wood shutters with metal shutter dogs.

The house is a good example of local colonial-period architecture. 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.*

607 West Main Street is reported to have been constructed in 1763 for Amariah Harris of Brookline.<sup>1</sup> Amariah Harris (1736-1788)<sup>2</sup> married Elizabeth Linfield (1743-1827) in 1763 in Stoughton. In that year, Amariah Harris purchased 20 acres from his father, Timothy Harris,<sup>3</sup> and four acres on the west side of "the County Road"<sup>4</sup> (i.e., West Main Street). The 1794 map of Stoughton includes a house in this area identified as that of "Harases." Amariah Harris was part of one of the six companies of Stoughton militia that responded on April 19, 1775 to the call from Lexington. Harris' unit was commanded by Peter Talbot and included at least eighteen East Stoughton residents.<sup>5</sup> Amariah Harris was also a member of the "East Militia" that responded to the call in March 1776 to assist in the occupation of Dorchester Heights.<sup>6</sup>

Amariah and Elizabeth Harris' son, William Harris (1767-1860)<sup>7</sup> and his wife, Vashty Leach Harris (1770-1850),<sup>8</sup> married in 1796 and made this their residence. Census records indicate that William Harris worked as a farmer. William and Vashty Harris' son, bootmaker William Harris, Jr., also lived with them as an adult. The property later passed to William Harris, Jr.'s son, Samuel B. Harris.

<sup>1</sup> Orville Stockwell, "Amariah Harris House," MHC B Form AVO.2, June 15, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/70183841/amariah-harris>. Accessed April 25, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds Book 164, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup> Suffolk County Registry of Deeds Book 164, p. 209.

<sup>5</sup> Hanna: 19, citing Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War. Massachusetts State Archives, Vol. 13, pp. 134, 134a.

<sup>6</sup> Hanna: 22.

<sup>7</sup> Findagrave.com Memorial #70183921. Accessed Oct. 5, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Findagrave.com Memorial #70183944. Accessed Oct. 5, 2022.

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Isaac B. Beals purchased the house in 1881.<sup>9</sup> Isaac Beals (1837-1905) lived here with his wife, Marcia, and operated Isaac Beals & Co. boot factory. Beals was "instrumental in securing the extension of the Brockton Street Railway [trolley] through Avon."<sup>10</sup> The Brockton Street Railway company constructed the Highland Park Amusement Park in Avon as a means to attract trolley riders. Isaac Beals also worked as superintendent of Highland Park Amusement Park. Isaac Beals owned several properties in town, but 607 West Main Street appears to have been his residence. The property passed to their son, Wallace Beals, and his wife, Bertha. Wallace Beals and his family lived at 558 West Main Street (AVO.\_\_\_\_). Wallace Beals worked as a farmer, as a "land salesman," and, later, as a restaurant proprietor. 607 West Main Street remained in the Beals family until 1937.<sup>11</sup> Robert and Mary Paine owned the house from 1937 until 1956.<sup>12</sup>

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View looking southwest.

<sup>9</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 533, p. 446.

<sup>10</sup> *Biographical Review*, p. 497.

<sup>11</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 2142, p. 138.

<sup>12</sup> Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 3495, p. 413.