

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

D5/ 6/ 4/ /

Blue Hills

AVO.28
AVO.29

Town/City: Avon

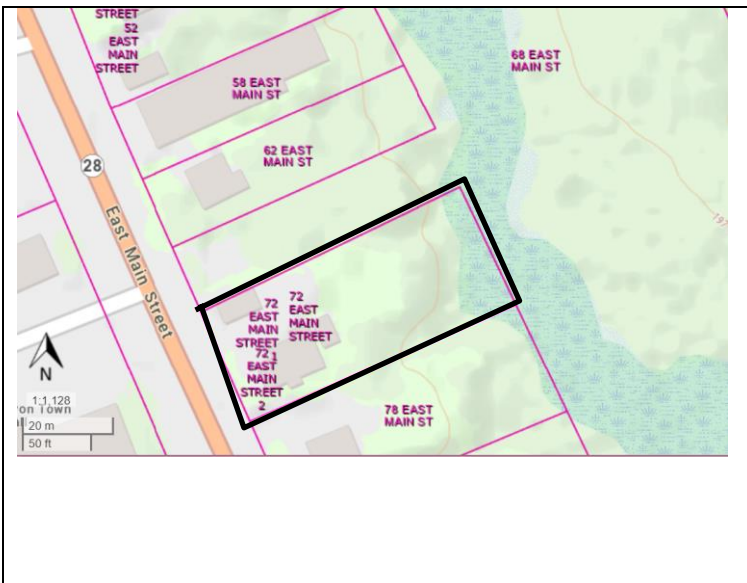
Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



View looking east.

Locus Map



Address: 72 East Main Street

Historic Name: Orrin and Adrianna Whitten House

Uses: Present: Multiple Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1888

Source: Mortgage and Deed

Style/Form: Victorian Eclectic

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Asbestos Shingles / Wood Trim; Vinyl Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Garage / Shop with storefront; Small frame shed.

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Asbestos shingles (mid-20thC); Replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20th C or early 21st C)

Condition: Fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.40

Setting: Located on a busy north-south regional route amid 1- and 2-story residences, small retail buildings and commercial establishments. A large wooded area abuts the property to the east.

Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

72 EAST 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 level lot covered with lawn, the house is oriented to the west toward the street. An asphalt-paved driveway leads from the street past the house's north (side) elevation. A hedgerow encloses the small strip of lawn located between the house and the sidewalk. Mature trees line the east property line.

The 1½-story frame house has a front-gabled roof with overhanging eaves. Slender brick interior chimneys are located on the north and south roof slopes. The building is clad with asbestos shingles and trimmed with a frieze beneath the gable-end cornice returns. The façade contains a side-hall plan entrance and box bay window at the first story and two windows at the half story. A small window is located in the gable peak. The replacement metal entry door is sheltered by a shallow hipped-roof porch supported with dimensional lumber posts and railings. The box bay, which is capped with a similar roof, contains three slender sash windows on the façade elevation and a single slender sash window on the side elevations. Small 1½-story, cross-gabled projections of equal size are centered on the north and south elevations. The north projection is two bays wide and one bay deep; a pair of slender sash windows are located at the half-story. The south projection appears to have contained a tripartite sash or picture window; at present, the sash window centered in the opening is framed by two openings enclosed with clapboard. A single sash window is located in the half-story. Windows throughout the building are vinyl sash replacements and feature shallow crowns enclosed with vinyl or metal trim. A raised wood deck is attached to the rear elevation.

While the loss of materials makes it difficult to discern the extent of the building's original ornamentation, the builder's choice of a vernacular front-gabled form featuring gable-end cornice returns, frieze, and window crowns demonstrates the endurance of local building traditions. The building's form and details were popular in the region as early as the 1850s. This form remained popular in East Stoughton / Avon through the turn of the 20th century.

The Shop (ca. 1915, AVO.29) façade contains two storefront windows and a center full-light pedestrian door. A shed roof supported by angled brackets shelters the façade. A single sash window is located at the west end of the north and south (side) elevations. The pyramidal roof has overhanging eaves and is covered with asphalt shingles. The frame building rests on a concrete foundation and is covered with vinyl siding over wood clapboards.

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 Orrin and Adrianna Whitten House was likely constructed circa 1888, the year in Orrin Whitten took out a mortgage from David and Hiram Blanchard.¹ Orrin Whitten is listed as a resident of East Main Street in the 1891 city directory. At the time of the 1900 census, Orrin Whitten (1847-1910)² and his wife, Adrianna (1855-1918),³ were living here with their children. The couple married in 1883. Orrin Whitten worked as a custom shoe maker and as the foreman of the bootmaking room at the Packard & Fields shoe shop in Brockton.⁴ Adrianna worked as a dressmaker. A Civil War veteran, Orrin Whitten was active with the local G. A. R. posts in Avon and Brockton.⁵ At age 18, Whitten joined Company 1 of the 42nd Massachusetts Regiment "that saw service in Louisiana during the summer and fall of 1864."⁶ When Avon was incorporated, Orrin Whitten was one of the

¹ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 606, p. 388.

² Findagrave.com Memorial #38214616. Accessed Sept. 27, 2022.

³ Findagrave.com Memorial #38214736. Accessed Sept. 27, 2022.

⁴ 1891 City Directory.

⁵ "Services by his Comrades," *The Boston Globe*, 28 July 1910: 16.

⁶ Hanna: 51.

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two constables for the new town.⁷ In 1918, the property was sold out of the family.⁸ The property had a series of short-term and non-resident owners between 1918 and the late 20th century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

City Directories. 1891.

Findagrave.com.

Hanna, William F. *The Story of Avon*. Avon: Avon Centennial Committee, 1988.

Massachusetts Vital Records.

Norfolk County Registry of Deeds.

Robinson, E. *Robinson's Atlas of Norfolk County, Massachusetts*. New York: E. Robinson, Publisher, 1888.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas. 1916.

"Services by his Comrades: Funeral of Orrin Whitten Held in Home at Avon." *The Boston Globe*. 28 July 1910, p. 16.

Town of Avon. Tax Assessor records.

United States Census. Ancestry.com.



View looking northeast.



View looking southeast.



View looking east at shop.

⁷ Hanna: 71.

⁸ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 1407, p. 144.