

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

D5/ 6/ 8/ /	Blue Hills		AVO.9
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Town/City: Avon

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



View looking northeast.

Address: 98 East Main Street

Historic Name: Seth Alden House

Uses: Present: Multiple Family Dwelling

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1819

Source: Deed

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Not Known

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, Cut

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding / Vinyl Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Vinyl siding and trim; Replacement vinyl sash windows (late 20th C or early 21st C); Chimney(s) removed.

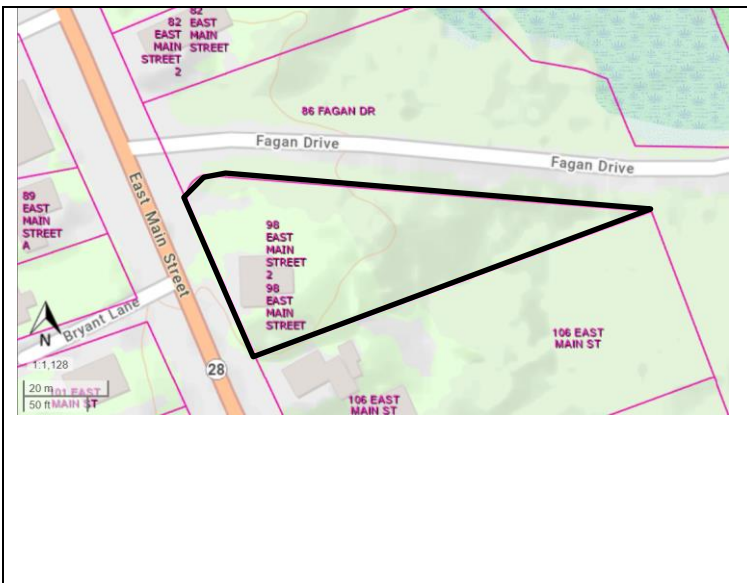
Condition: Fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.58

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.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: Avon Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): December 2022

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AVON

98 EAST MAIN ST

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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 house is located close to the street and oriented to the west, at an angle to the street, atop a level lot covered with lawn. The banked front yard is accessed via three cast concrete steps that lead from the sidewalk to a parged masonry slab at the façade. An asphalt-paved driveway leads from the street past the house's north elevation to a parking area at the northeast corner of the house.

The two-story, five-bay frame building is symmetrical in plan. The house is three bays deep on the south elevation. Fenestration on the north elevation appears to have been removed; the elevation presently contains one bay of windows and one small sash window at the second story. The building is clad with vinyl siding and trim. Two ranks of closely-spaced bays flank the façade's center entrance. The building rests on a cut stone foundation and rises to a side-gabled roof with a shallow overhang on the façade and rear elevations and no overhang at the side elevations. A pedimented vestibule with overhanging eaves is centered on the façade. The vestibule contains a metal frame storm door framed by narrow sidelights. A 1-story perpendicular ell extends from the rear elevation. A poured concrete patio is located between the ell and the south corner of the main block.

Although altered with the application of synthetic materials and removal of original materials such as windows and trim, the building retains the form, volume, and fenestration arrangement consistent with a late 18th or early 19th century construction. 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.

The house was likely constructed in 1819¹ by housewright Seth Alden (1777-1838).² Alden had constructed a house here in 1808, soon after he purchased 80 acres on the east side of East Main Street.³ That house burned in 1819. Born in Abington, Plymouth County, Alden married Harmony Southworth (1781-1822)⁴ of North Bridgewater in 1802. Seth Alden married a second time to Betsy Littlefield (1792-1842)⁵ in 1825. Seth Alden was chosen as deacon of the North Randolph Baptist Church (which would become the East Stoughton Baptist Church) in 1820.⁶ Seth Alden was hired in 1830 to construct a new meetinghouse for the East Stoughton Baptist Church.⁷ (This building was replaced in 1848 by the existing building located at the northwest corner of North Main Street and West High Street, AVO.5.)

In the mid-19th century Seth and Harmony Alden's son, Adoniram J. Alden (1819-1893),⁸ lived here with his wife, Ann Whitney Alden (1819-1875).⁹ The couple married in 1841. Adoniram J. Alden worked as a farmer and as a bootmaker, according to

¹ "Town of Avon 1888-1963 Diamond Jubilee," p. 4.

² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55823859/seth-alden>. Accessed Feb. 27, 2022.

³ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 29, p. 282.

⁴ Webber, *A Genealogy of the Southworths...*: 116.

⁵ Findagrave.com Memorial #70192621. Accessed Nov. 15, 2022.

⁶ Hurd: 196.

⁷ Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 102, p. 33.

⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228889420/adoniram-judson-alden>. Accessed Feb. 26, 2022.

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census records. It appears that the couple's children, Sophronia A. Alden and Adoniram J. Alden, Jr., also lived here with their spouses. Sophronia A. Alden (1843-1906)¹⁰ married boot maker Harrison Glover (1843-ca. 1937) circa 1870. Harrison Glover was a member of the fire department and worked as a farmer on the Harris farm and as a shoemaker.¹¹ Upon Sophronia Alden Glover's death, the property was inherited by her son, Ernest C. Glover. Ernest Glover lived here until his death in 1954.¹²

The 1978 MHC survey form reported that 98 East Main Street was constructed circa 1771 for William Blanchard but provided no information to support that claim.¹³ Born in Braintree, William Blanchard (1747-1814)¹⁴ served in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. The earliest recorded purchase of property by William Blanchard is in 1792, when "Innholder" Blanchard purchased 6 acres of land in Stoughton from Jacob Goldthwaite.¹⁵ That deed does not mention buildings on the parcel. (More research is recommended.)

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⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228889619/ann-j-alden>. Accessed Feb. 26, 2022.

¹⁰ Findagrave.com Memorial #239807932. Accessed Nov. 15, 2022.

¹¹ "Avon's Oldest Citizen Dies."

¹² Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Book 2770, p. 418 and Book 701, p. 258.

¹³ Davey, MHC B Form AVO.9, June 1978.

¹⁴ Findagrave.com Memorial #70192813. Accessed Sept. 6, 2022.

¹⁵ Suffolk County Registry of Deeds Book 173, p. 146.

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View looking southeast.