

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

173-01413-231

Warren

STU.234-
STU.237

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Fiskdale

Photograph



Address: 231 Brookfield Road

Historic Name: Jonathan Philips Curtis Farm

Uses: Present: single-family dwelling

Original: single-family dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1804

Source: Registry of Deeds

Style/Form: Cape altered to ranch

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone and concrete

Wall/Trim: wood shingle

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Two garages, carriage barn

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Wing with deck added, ca. 1990;

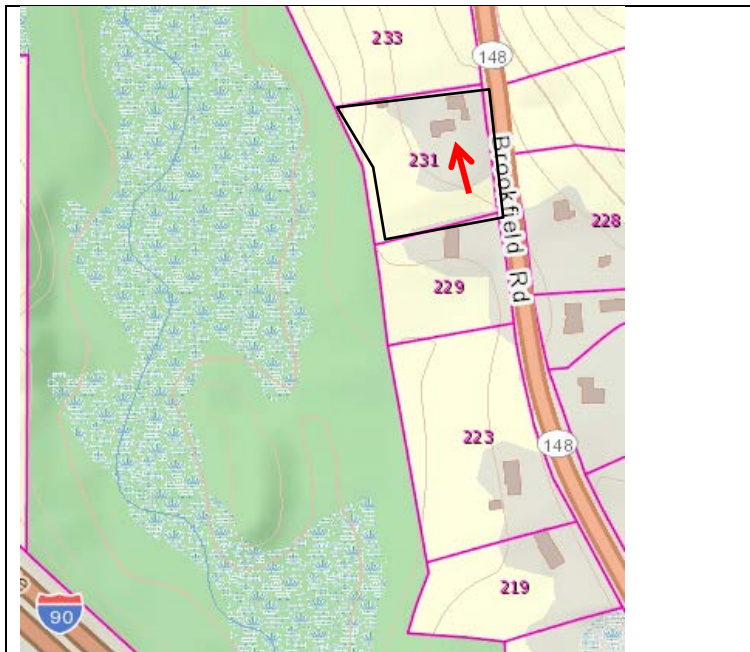
Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1.43 acres

Setting: Large parcel with the residence set back from and facing south along Brookfield Road (MA 148), with a wooded area to the west. The Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) lies further to the west beyond the woods.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Bonnie Parsons, PVPC

Organization: Sturbridge Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): March 2017

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

231 BROOKFIELD ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

STU.234-237

☐ 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.

231 Brookfield Road, the Jonathan Philips Curtis Farm, is a south-facing, shingle-sided Cape form house altered to ranch style with the addition of a wing in the 1990s. One-and-a-half stories its side gable roof is divided into two pitches creating two sections of the house. The more easterly section is the former Cape form house on low stone foundations. It is set back behind a porch on posts. This section is two bays wide with an entry and adjacent window with 24-light fixed sash. Entry and fenestration of this section have been altered to create the modernized ranch. The westerly section is two bays wide with each bay consisting of a double-leaf casement window. There is an interior chimney on its roof ridge and an exterior wall, through-eaves chimney added to the Cape section of the house on its east elevation. North of the house are two garages. Closer to the house is a single-bay garage under a hipped roof. It is sided in shingles and has an asphalt shingled roof. North of it by a few feet is a second garage of two bays under a side-gable roof. It is sided in Texture 1-11 and has an asphalt shingled roof.

A small, eaves-front carriage barn is set onto a low slope northwest of the house. It is vertically wood-sided and has a cupola/ventilator centered on its roof. It has stone foundations that are covered with siding on the exposed south, west and north elevations.

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.

Between 1804 and 1829 Jonathan P. Curtis bought several hundred acres of land in Fiskdale. Piece by piece, he put together a 140-acre farm in the village on the east and west sides of Brookfield Road. Both **231 Brookfield Road** and **213 Brookfield Road** were part of his farm with their respective houses. Curtis then spent a quarter century working the farm. It is likely that he had this house built to live in and rented out the **Marsh House at 213 Brookfield Road**. He died of bilious fever in 1849 at 68. It is from his ownership that the farm took the familiar name quoted several times in deeds as being the "Curtis Farm".

Jonathan Curtis's son Jonathan, Jr. was living in Louisville, Kentucky when his father died, but he sold the farm in 1850 to another Curtis, William, who may have been a family member. Between 1850 and 1866 the farm changed hands three times as investors appear to have leased it out. William Richardson of Brookfield bought it in 1855. Richardson appears here on the map of 1857 and his ownership led to its being called the "Richardson Farm" locally in the 1850s and early 60's and it remained at 140 acres in extent. Though it appears the farm with the two farmhouses changed hands twice between 1855 and 1866, in the latter year it was bought up by Patrick King. King was an entrepreneurial farmer. He bought and sold land throughout Sturbridge from the 1860s after emigrating to Sturbridge from Ireland. King bought the farm in 1866 and he and Mary King lived here from 1866 to 1877. Patrick and Mary King appear in the 1865 state census with their sons John, James, Thomas, Peter, and George, and 60 year-old Thomas Ryan, likely Mary's father. Patrick and his son John were farming, according to the census, and Thomas Ryan was working as a laborer. By 1876 when Patrick King sold the farm to George and Hannah Adams it still contained the 140 acres which included a portion of land in Brimfield of Hampden County.

Several generations of the Adams family then began their ownership of the farm. Between 1876 and 1888 George and Hannah Adams worked the farm and Hannah is mentioned in the 1888 deed as a full owner rather than having dowry rights only. The 140 acres remained through the 1920s when the farm began to change hands rather frequently. In 1925 Ephraim and Albina La Flamme bought it and kept it until 1952. They farmed the 140 acres as a general farm but when they sold it in 1952 they divided it and 213 Brookfield Road was sold with 7.6 acre house lot and adjacent open land and 231 Brookfield was similarly divided with a house lot and farmland. Between 1955 and 1959 the farm was greatly reduced in size. In 1955 Massachusetts took farm land for the Massachusetts Turnpike and in 1959 the United States took land for the East Brimfield Dam and Reservoir, leaving the house lot at 1.43 acres.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps

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Beers, F. W. *Plan of Towns of Sturbridge and Southbridge*, 1870.

Walling, H. F. *Map of Worcester County*, Wm. E. Baker, Boston, 1857.

Primary Sources

Chase, Nelly M. *Photograph Album*, Joshua Hyde Public Library, Sturbridge.

Secondary Sources

Burns, Brian. *Sturbridge: A Pictorial History*, Norfolk, 1988.

Clark, Joseph. *Historical Sketch of Sturbridge, Massachusetts*, Brookfield, Massachusetts, 1838.

Corey, Charles F. "Old Houses in Sturbridge" Quinebaug Historical Society Leaflets, vol.1, no. 5, 1900.

Davis, George. *A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge*, West Brookfield, 1856.

Hurd, D. Hamilton. *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts*, vol. 1, Philadelphia 1889.

Izard, Holly. *Old Houses of Sturbridge*, scrapbook, n.d., Joshua Hyde Public Library, Sturbridge.

Digital Resources

www.Ancestry.com for federal censuses 1790-1940 and Massachusetts State Censuses 1855, 1865.

<https://dp.la/> Digital Public Library of America

www.masslandrecords.com for deeds



Photo 1: Eaves-front carriage barn