

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

415-02925-265 Southbridge STU.A STU.31
NRDIS 11/9/1977

Town/City: Sturbridge

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

Photograph



Address: 265 Main Street

Historic Name: East Schoolhouse

Uses: Present: Multiple Family Dwelling

Original: Public School

Date of Construction: ca. 1832

Source: Town Records (Wilkin 1971)

Style/Form: Federal

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Not visible

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding/Vinyl Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Stone and wood wishing well, mid-20th c.; garage, 1989

Major Alterations (*with dates*): converted from schoolhouse to dwelling, fenestration altered, second story added, ca. 1854; vinyl siding, vinyl windows, side entry porch, late 20th c.; converted to two-family house, 2006

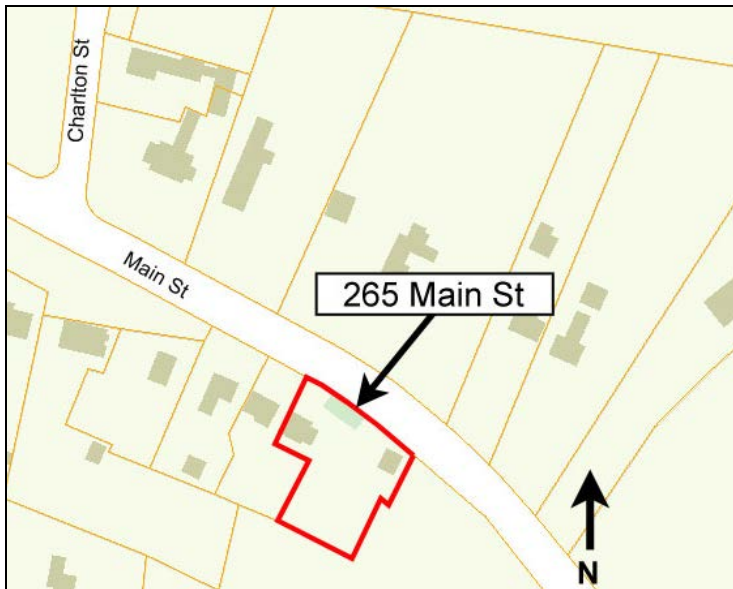
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .46 acres

Setting: The building occupies a roughly T-shaped lot on the south side of Main Street in a mostly residential neighborhood east of the Sturbridge Town Common. It is set slightly back from the road.

Locus Map



Recorded by: L. Kline, G. Pineo, E. Giacomarra; PAL

Organization: Sturbridge Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): May 2018

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

STURBRIDGE

265 MAIN STREET

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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.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The East Schoolhouse (ca. 1832, STU.31) is a north-facing, Federal-style, two-story, five-bay-by-two-bay, wood-frame building with a one-bay-by-one-bay, enclosed entrance porch on the east elevation. The house has a side-gable roof with a rectangular brick chimney in the south slope. The foundation is not visible from the public right of way. The walls are clad with vinyl siding, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The main entrance is in the center bay of the north (facade) elevation and consists of a paneled door with an integral fanlight and simple wood surrounds. A secondary entrance in the entrance porch is protected by a glass and metal storm door. Fenestration consists of symmetrically spaced, one-over-one, double-hung vinyl replacement sash.

A garage (1989) is east of the house, accessed by an asphalt-paved driveway. The garage is a one-story, two-bay, side-gable building. It is clad in vinyl siding and covered with an asphalt-shingle roof. Two overhead garage doors are evenly spaced in the west elevation, and the building is fenestrated with six-over-six, double-hung vinyl sash.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The East Schoolhouse (ca. 1832, STU.31) is in the center of Sturbridge, east of the Sturbridge Town Common. The area was settled ca. 1725 by residents of Medfield, and Sturbridge was incorporated as a town in 1738 (MHC 1984:3–4).

Public education in Sturbridge began in 1753 when the town voted to build three schools, one each in the southwest part of town (now Southbridge), the northwest, and the center. In 1754, the town voted to build a fourth school in the northeast part of town (Clark 1838:11). Ichabod Sparrow Paine traveled a circuit to teach at all the four schools (Clark 1838:11). In 1761, five school districts were formally established in Sturbridge (Clark 1838:12). The subject property was constructed for the Town of Sturbridge about 1832, possibly replacing an early building constructed between 1815 and 1825 (Levine 1971; Wilkin 1971).

In 1852, the town voted to combine the east and west school districts and built the Sturbridge Central School, 301 Main Street (STU.39). In 1853, the Sturbridge School District Number 1 sold the East Schoolhouse to Nelson Bennet (WCRD 519/205; Wilkin 1971; Davis 1856:40).

According to the 1971 inventory form, Timothy Corey converted the subject property to a dwelling in 1854 (Wilkin 1971). However, current research has not found any reference to a Timothy Corey living in Sturbridge circa 1854 (Wilkin 1971). G. Gordon Corey (1829–1907), a carpenter and son of George V. Corey, purchased the property from Nelson Bennett in 1853 and likely converted the property to a dwelling ca. 1854 by expanding the footprint and adding a second story. G. Gordon Corey married three times and had several children. By 1880, he had moved to Worcester, Massachusetts, with his third wife, Elizabeth (WCRD 1853; US Census 1860, 1870, 1880; Find a Grave 2014; Walling 1870; Beers 1870).

In 1881, Corey sold the property to Jonas Rice (b. 1815), a blacksmith, who immediately transferred it to his daughter-in-law, Marion Rice (b. 1852), who was married to blacksmith Eugene W. Rice (b. 1852). Jonas Rice's blacksmith shop was located on the adjoining parcel to the east (the current site of the garage), which was combined with the subject property in the late nineteenth century (Walling 1857; Beers 1870; Richards 1898). In 1900, Eugene and Marion lived at the subject property with their two children and Jonas Rice (WCRD 1086/611; US Census 1900; Richards 1898).

Gilbert Letcher (b. 1837) and his wife, Ellen Letcher (b. 1839), purchased the property in 1904 from Timothy Bailey, who had acquired it in two parcels from Marion and Eugene Rice in 1901 (WCRD 1695/313; 1695/314; 1793/402). The Letchers both died by 1918, when two of their daughters deeded their share of the property to their sister, Ellen Provost (WCRD 2158/222; US Census 1910).

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Ellen (Nellie) Provost (b. 1871) was the widow of George Provost; she lived at the subject property with her son and his family. Her son, Robert S. Provost (b. 1897), worked at the American Optical Company in Southbridge as an inspector; he and his wife Blanche had two sons, Robert S. and Donald (US Census 1930, 1940).

The property remained in the Provost family until 2006, when Ethan T. Hillman purchased it from Donald and Lucille Provost (WCRD 39779/352). The present owner, Dam Nguyen, purchased the house in 2013 (Sturbridge Assessor 2018; WCRD 50384/16).

The East Schoolhouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 9, 1977, as part of the Sturbridge Common Historic District.

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PHOTOGRAPH



Photo 2. Garage, looking southeast.