

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

415-02433-484

Southbridge

STU.E

STU.128
STU.328

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Fiskdale

Photograph



Address: 484 Main Street

Historic Name: Jabez Westgate House and Barn

Uses: Present: General Retail Store, Restaurant

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1840

Source: WCRD 346/85 (1839)

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding/Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Barn

Major Alterations (*with dates*): north flat-roof addition, early-to-mid 20th c.; west addition (originally four motel units, now retail spaces), ca. 1960; barn converted to retail and restaurant space, ca. 1960; vinyl siding and windows, late 20th c.

Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .89 acre

Setting: The house is on the north side of Main Street at the northwest corner of the intersection with Arnold Road. The property consists of a gently sloping lot with grass on the southeast corner and an asphalt parking lot to the north and west.

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

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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 Jabez Westgate House (ca. 1840, STU.127) is a south-facing, Greek Revival-style, three-bay-side-hall plan, wood-frame building with a brick foundation and an end-gable roof. A two-story, three-bay-by-one-bay ell with a side-gable roof projects from the center of the west elevation, and a one-story, two-bay-by-one-bay ell with an end-gable roof projects from the west bay of the west ell's north elevation. A one-story, flat-roof addition fills the interstice between the north ell and the east bays of the west ell. The walls are clad with vinyl siding, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. An exterior stone wall chimney is centered on the east elevation of the main block. The entrance is in the west bay of the main block's south elevation and consists of a multi-panel wood door protected by a glass and wood storm door. The door is flanked by multi-light sidelights and has a multi-light transom. A bay window projects from the south bay of the east elevation. Fenestration consists of one-over-one, four-over-four, and six-over-six, double-hung vinyl replacement sash.

A one-story, eight-bay-by-one-bay modern addition at the west end of the west ell has a side-gable roof with a wide overhang and a concrete foundation. Three nine-light modern doors are evenly spaced across the south elevation with plate-glass storefront windows to the west of each door. Originally built as a four-unit motel, the addition was converted to commercial space sometime in the mid- to late twentieth century.

North of the house is an east-facing, astylistic, two-story, three-bay-by-four-bay, end-gable, wood-frame Barn (ca. 1840, STU.328). The walls are clad with vinyl siding, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Entrances are in the center of the east elevation (from a terrace formed by a dry-laid fieldstone wall) and in the second bay from the east of the south elevation. The south entrance is sheltered by a narrow overhang, and the east entrance is contained within a projecting center bay with an end-gable roof. Fenestration consists of nine-light fixed wood sash and plate-glass fixed sash. In the 1960s, the building was converted to commercial use.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The Jabez Westgate House (ca. 1840, STU.128) is at the east edge of the village of Fiskdale in the town of Sturbridge. Sturbridge was settled ca. 1725 by residents of Medfield and was incorporated as a town in 1738 (MHC 1984:3–4).

Jabez Harding Westgate (1813–1897) was a farmer and trader born in Morristown, Vermont, and was likely the first resident of the subject property.¹ Westgate arrived in Sturbridge by 1840 and married Maria Louisa Phillips (1820–1899) of Sturbridge the following year (ancestry.com 2014; Find a Grave 2014). He acquired the lot next door to Maria's parents from Jesse B. Adams in 1839, with no mention of buildings in the deed, and likely built the house about the time of his marriage (WCRD 346/85). Jared and Miranda Sessions purchased the property from Westgate in 1854 with a dwelling house and barn on it (WCRD 519/604).² Jared Sessions (1820–1868) was a merchant who lived in Tolland, Connecticut, at the time of the 1850 Federal Census (US Census 1850; Ancestry.com 2014). The 1857 Walling map indicates that Sessions had a store west of his house, near the current location of the Otis Block (572 Main Street, STU.151) (Walling 1857).

The Sessions' sold the property in 1857 to Nelson Bennett (1815–1888), a farmer who lived there with his wife Emeline (1818–1892) and their son Emerson W. (1853–1937) (WCRD 579/401). After Nelson's death, the property likely passed to Emeline and then Emerson. The 1898 Richards map indicates that at that time Emerson owned the property, which consisted of a house with

¹ Previous documentation recorded the main house as built ca. 1790 and expanded by 1840, but no documentary evidence has been found to support the earlier date (Holley 1973).

² The Westgates moved next door with Maria's parents following the sale of the property (ancestry.com 2013). After the death of his wife's father in 1869, Jabez and Maria moved to Malden, Massachusetts, although both were later buried in Sturbridge (US Census 1880).

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a west and north ell and a barn with a north ell (Richards 1898). In 1903, the property was sold to Alvin B. Chamberlain at a public auction held by John E. Ladd, the financial guardian of Emerson W. Bennett, who was placed under a spendthrift trust (WCRD 1744/512).

The property had numerous owners throughout the early to mid-twentieth century. In the early 1960s, a four-room motel was constructed off the house's west elevation, possibly by Irving Gourley (Polk 1965). The motel was called the Elms Motel, possibly in reference to the former name of the Publick House on the Town Common (see Publick House Area, STU.O, for more information). In 1969, the property was combined with a second parcel and sold to George and Charlotte Miner (WCRD 4927/498, 4966/513). The Miners owned the property until 1973, when they sold it to William Swiacki (WCRD 5344/254). In 1976, Swiacki sold the property to Francis and Mary Bousquet and Charles Venie, all trustees of the Bosquet Realty Trust (WCRD 5974/246). In 1981, the Trust sold the subject property to Joan and Vincent Menzone, who owned it until 2014, when it was sold to the current owners, MR Main Properties LLC (WCRD 7185/97, 52084/110). It is likely that the four motel rooms were converted to small commercial spaces and the barn was altered to provide retail and restaurant space during the Menzone ownership.

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 2. 484 Main Street, looking northeast.



Photo 3. Barn, 484 Main Street, looking northwest.