

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

415-02432-504

Southbridge

STU.E

STU.131

Town/City: Sturbridge

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Fiskdale

Photograph



Address: 504 Main Street

Historic Name: David and Rebecca Atherton House

Uses: Present: Apartment House; Hair Salon

Original: Single Family Dwelling

Date of Construction: ca. 1842

Source: WCRD 366/514 (1842), visual inspection

Style/Form: Greek Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone and Poured Concrete

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Siding/Vinyl Trim

Roof: Slate and Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: None

Major Alterations (*with dates*): rear addition at northeast corner containing six apartments, 1972; vinyl siding and window replacement, late 20th c.

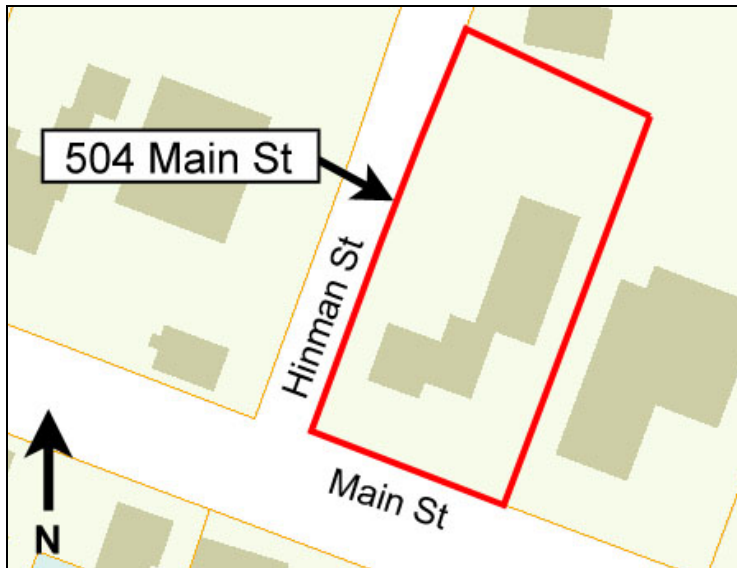
Condition: Fair

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: .44 acres

Setting: The building occupies a rectangular-shaped lot at the intersection of Main and Hinman streets in the mixed-use neighborhood of Fiskdale. It is set back from the street, and most of the lot west and north of the house is a paved parking lot.

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

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

STURBRIDGE

504 MAIN STREET

Area(s) Form No.

STU.E

STU.131

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 David and Rebecca Atherton House (ca. 1842, STU.131) is a south-facing, altered Greek Revival-style, two-and-one-half-story, wood-frame building with a three-bay, side-hall plan and a two-story ell extending from the east elevation. A large, west-facing, two-story, seven-bay-by-one-bay addition built in 1972 is connected to the ell by a two-and-one-half-story hyphen on the north elevation. The house and ell have a slate-shingled, cross-gable roof; the addition has an asphalt-shingled, side-gable roof. The walls of the entire building are clad in vinyl siding. The main house has a stone and parged foundation, while the addition has a concrete foundation. A recessed entrance in the south (facade) elevation of the house contains a four-panel, two-light door with sidelights. A two-story porch spans the west elevation of the hyphen and shelters a secondary entrance. A gable-roof entrance porch with vinyl-clad walls shelters the main entrance to the addition in the central bay of the west elevation. It contains a six-paneled door with sidelights. Fenestration in the original house consists of six-over-six, double-hung wood sash, while fenestration in the addition consists of one-over-one, double-hung aluminum sash.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The David and Rebecca Atherton House (ca. 1842, STU.131) 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).

The house first appears on the 1857 Walling map as the property of Rebecca Atherton (1784–1867), widow of David Atherton (1788–1849). David Atherton married Rebecca Abell in 1812 in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, where they were both born. David Atherton was a machinist and one of the owners of the first cotton factory, established about 1815, in the village of Westville in Southbridge. Atherton was also a signer of the 1814 petition for Southbridge to be created out of portions of Dudley, Charlton, and Sturbridge (Plimpton 1882:36). The couple likely moved to Fiskdale ca. 1842, when their daughter, Rebecca C. Atherton (1818–1892), purchased the subject property from Calvin Shepard, presumably on behalf of her parents for the purpose of building a house (WCRD 366/514).

Rebecca C. Atherton married Daniel Adams, a farmer from nearby Brookfield, in 1860 and transferred the subject property to her mother (Ancestry.com 2011; WCRD 632/424). When her mother died in 1867, she inherited the property, described as having a dwelling house and barn, and sold it to her stepson, Eliakim Adams (WCRD 752/246). In 1880, Eliakim, who ran a saw and grist mill, lived at the property with his wife Lucinda and daughter Helen. His son Charles W. Adams, who worked at a saw mill, also resided at the property with his wife Emma, daughter Ada, and son Clarence. The property remained in the Adams family until 1942, passing from Eliakim to Charles, from Charles to Ada, and finally from Ada to her husband Frederick (Beers 1870; Richards 1898; WCRD 2870/42).

The property changed hands five times between 1942 and 1971. In 1972, a two-and-one-half-story addition containing six apartments was constructed, likely for the RS Flynn Realty Corporation (WCRD 5098/547). After the construction of the apartments, the property again changed hands repeatedly, nine times between 1971 and 1993. In 1993, the Southbridge Savings Bank, which had acquired the property through foreclosure, sold it to the current owner Gregory Cormier (WCRD 15502/97, 15792/44). A beauty salon occupied one unit of the building but is now closed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts, Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

Beers, F.W. *Atlas of Worcester County Massachusetts*. New York: F.W. Beers & Co., 1870.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

STURBRIDGE

504 MAIN STREET

Area(s) Form No.

STU.E

STU.131

Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). *MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report – Sturbridge*. On file, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, MA, 1984.

Plimpton, Moses. *History of Southbridge*. Southbridge, MA: Journal Steam Book Print, 1882.

Richards, L.J. *Topographical Atlas of Worcester County*. Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1898.

United States Bureau of the Census (US Census). *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870*. (M593, 1,761 rolls). National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., ancestry.com database.

_____. *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*. (T9, 1,454 rolls). National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., ancestry.com database.

Walling, H.F. *Map of the Worcester County, Massachusetts*. New York: Wm. E. Baker & Co., 1857.

Worcester County Registry of Deeds (WCRD). Book/Page (Year). 366/514 (1842), 632/424 (11860), 752/246 (1867), 2870/52 (1942), 5098/547 (1971), 15502/97 (1993), 157692/44 (1993).

PHOTOGRAPH



Photo 2. 504 Main Street, looking southeast.