

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building



Town Newburyport
Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 53 Water Street
Historic Name

Uses: Present Restaurant
Original Residential/Commercial
Date of Construction early 19th century
Source visual inspection
Style/Form ---
Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation Undetermined
Wall/Trim Wood Clapboards
Roof Asphalt Shingle

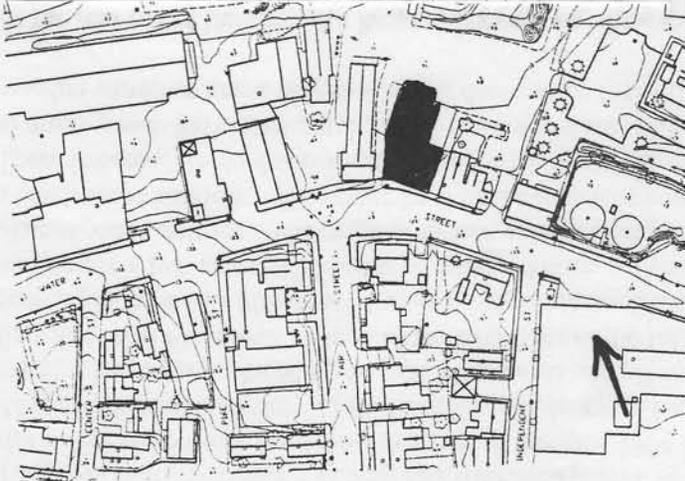
Outbuildings/Secondary Structures
none

Major Alterations (with dates) date? - brick add. on west end; c.1990 - removal of third story, new clapboards, new windows, rear addition with deck

Condition good
Moved no yes Date

Acres 5900 SF

Setting mixed use area along historic waterfront



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf
Organization Newburyport Historical Commission
Date (month/year) May 1999

BUILDING FORM (53 Water Street)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of the building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This 19th century former dwelling has witnessed extensive alterations in recent years. The building was originally 2 or 2 1/2 stories in height but a third story was added between 1906 and 1914, giving the building an asymmetrical gable roof slope. About 1990 the third story of the building was removed leaving a two-story, side-gabled building. The former wood-shingled exterior has been replaced by all new clapboards and all new windows replacing the pre-existing 2/2 with 6/9 windows on the first floor and 6/6 above. Much of the first floor of the facade is shaded by an awning and the previous central entrance has been replaced by an offcenter "Colonial"-style entrance with sidelights and a fluted surround. Spanning the west end of the building is a two-story, 19th century, brick addition with a shed roof. The brick is laid in a common bond and is capped by a plain wooden cornice. The original facade entrance has been reduced in size to accommodate a steel door. Adjacent there is a small fixed window. The upper level of the facade is punctuated by two 8/8 replacement windows with brick header lintels. There is considerable deterioration of the brick where adjacent areas have been patched with incompatible mortar. In addition to areas which have been patched and repointed some of the former windows have been bricked-in leaving just three small 6/6 wooden windows and a diagonal board door on the first floor of the west elevation.

At the rear of the building is a large two-story, wood-shingled addition of recent construction with an outside deck. Originally there were additional storehouses at the rear of the building. These were removed between 1946 and 1961.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Describe 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.

This building appears to have been built in the early 19th century and its early owners were probably associated with the shipbuilding and ocean-going trade which dominated the waterfront neighborhood. The building was located near the head of Cushing's Wharf. It was known as 49-53 Water Street until about 1920 when it was renumbered 53-57 Water Street.

Directories indicate that in 1870 Mrs. John Powers operated a boarding house at 51 Water Street. By 1871 the property was owned by Thomas C. Goodwin, who served as a fish inspector at 51 1/2 Water Street and had a cooper shop at 53 1/2 Water Street. He resided on Milk Street. M.E. Barrett is shown as the owner on the 1884 map.

The exact date of construction of the brick addition is not known although it was certainly in place by the time of the 1888 Sanborn map. The brick building appears to have housed a fish shop for many years. In 1891 fish dealer William Gardner was located at 49 Water Street. Subsequent proprietors included Patrick McCarthy in 1916 and William Wright in 1927.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s the building was vacant. By 1951 the Merrimac Shell Fish Co. was located here. The occupants in 1961 included the Starboard Gallery Art Shop with the Spindrift Coffee House at the rear. The Starboard Galley Restaurant has been located here since at least 1980.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attached a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Newburyport

Property Address
53 Water Street
Area(s) Form No.

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

L,W	396
-----	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Currier, John J. *History of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1764-1906*, vols. 1 & 2. Newburyport: 1906 & 1909.
Erickson, Candace Chapman. "Dooryard and Shipyard: Four Walking Tours of Newburyport".
Essex County, Register of Deeds.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. Historic Resources Inventory: Newburyport.
Newburyport City Directories, various dates.
Sanborn Insurance Maps, Newburyport, 1888, 1894, 1906, 1914, 1924, 1946, 1961.

Maps

Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts. Philadelphia: D.B. Beers & Co., 1872.
Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts. Boston: George H. Walker, 1884.
Beck & Paul. *City of Newburyport*. Framingham, Mass.: Bigelow and Hazen, 1880.
Plan of Newburyport. Philadelphia: H. McIntyre, 1851.
Sanborn Insurance Maps. Massachusetts State Library, Boston, Massachusetts.