

FORM B - BUILDING

NRDIS 8/2/1984

Assessor's number
47-39

USGS Quad
Newburyport

Area(s)

Form Number
2962

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building

Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 85 Merrimac Street

Historic Name

Uses: Present Garage

Original Garage

Date of Construction c.1936

Source directories

Style/Form ---

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation Undetermined

Wall/Trim Stucco

Roof Undetermined

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

Major Alterations (with dates)

Condition good

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date

Acreage 7290 SF

Setting mixed use area opposite waterfront



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) June 1999

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM (85 Merrimac Street)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

This early 20th century automotive garage is a single-story, stuccoed, flat-roofed building with a plain front parapet that projects slightly. There is a single offcenter garage bay facing Merrimac Street. The facade is punctuated by three single-pane display windows, each of which is capped by a two-light transom. There is one window to the east of the garage bay and a pair on the other. Each of the windows originally extended somewhat lower but the lower section has been covered. An additional display window of the same type is located on the west end of the building in addition to a garage door to the rear.

The gas pumps in front of the building have been removed.

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.

According to research by local historian, Ron Irving, this building was the only one to survive the "Million Dollar" fire of 1934 which cleared both sides of Merrimac Street from Winter Street and Bridge Road to Titcomb Street. Directories suggest however that the building was not built until after the 1934 fire. The first listing for the property appears in the 1937-8 directory and indicates that the building was then occupied by Philbrick Brothers auto accessories. During this period a type of "Gasoline Alley" developed near the Bridge.

The building changed hands frequently over the years. It was known as Hayden's Jenney station in 1951; as Gallagher's Jenney station in 1961 and was Checkoway's Citgo station by 1971. The building was vacant by the early 1990s. In recent years the building has been used by the Checkoway Oil Company.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Currier, John J. *History of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1764-1906*, vols. 1 & 2. Newburyport: 1906 & 1909.
Irving, Ron. Unpublished research on Merrimac Street.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. *Historic Resources Inventory*: Newburyport.
Newburyport City Directories, various dates.
Somerby, Charles I., Sr., "Fire Demon in Newburyport", *Newburyport Daily News*, March 1, 1951.

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, 1888, 1894, 1906, 1914, 1924, 1946. Massachusetts State Library, Boston, Massachusetts.

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