

# FORM B – BUILDING

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

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

11-45	Marion	MRN.H	MRN.120
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**Town/City:** Marion

**Place:**(*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village / Old Depot

**Address:** 381 Front Street

**Historic Name:** Old Depot

**Uses:** Present: Commercial

Original: Commercial

**Date of Construction:** 1855

**Source:** Deed and map research

**Style/Form:** Gothic Revival / Italianate

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard / Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

None

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

Replacement windows

**Condition:** Excellent

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

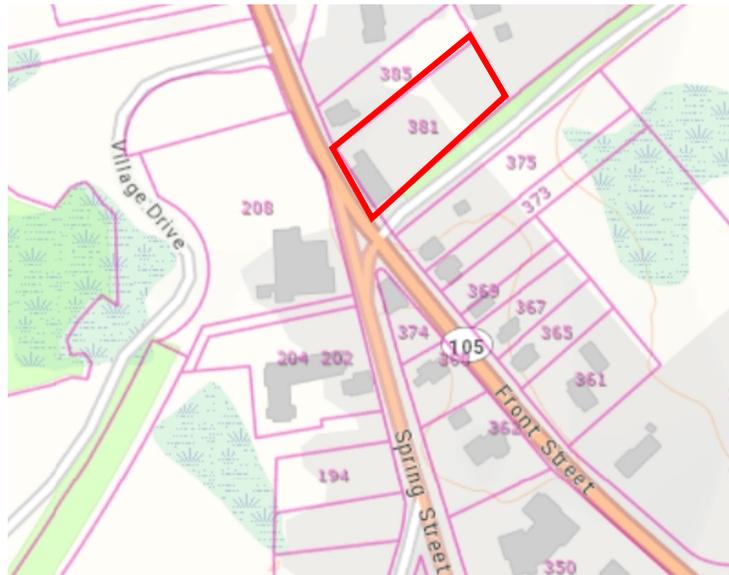
**Acreage:** 0.79

**Setting:** Small, primarily residential neighborhood developed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Housing stock represents a range of styles including Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial Revival. Surrounded mostly by moderately-sized, wood-frame, single-family houses on small to medium-sized lots.

## Photograph



## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Lynn Smiledge

**Organization:** Marion Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): July 2022

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

381 Front Street

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Area(s) Form No.

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MRN.H

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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.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

**381 Front Street** occupies a trapezoidal parcel on the east side of Front Street at the intersection of Front and Spring Streets. The building is positioned close to the street and faces west. It fronts a shallow strip of grass, and low foundation plantings are clustered at its northwest corner. A wide paved driveway entering the property from Front Street along the northern property line expands to a deep parking lot that nearly spans the parcel. A row of trees borders the west end of the parking lot beyond which is an expanse of open yard enclosed by a tall vertical slat fence. The southern property line is bordered by a row of trees and an unpaved access road to the adjacent commercial property to the east.

The building is a two-story, three-bay-by-two-bay, side-gabled wood-frame structure with a rectangular plan comprising a main block and two dependencies. A shed-roofed open porch spans the façade and projects one bay beyond the southernmost bay to shelter a one-story shed-roofed addition that wraps the south and west elevations. The second addition comprises a small, one-story, two-by-one-bay hipped-roofed block at the northeast corner of the main block. These dependencies are not seen on an 1880 photograph of the building. Constructed ca. 1855 and exemplifying no particular architectural style, it is nonetheless a handsome building that retains the majority of its character defining features. The building rests on a granite foundation and is clad in wood clapboards with contrasting wood trim. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles.

Trim elements consist of corner boards and a water table. The eaves at the east and west gables and the southernmost two bays at the façade are trimmed with bargeboard in a sawtooth pattern; this decorative bargeboard is seen on the 1880 photograph of the building. Openings at the facade comprise an entry at the third most southerly bay flanked by double-hung, six-over-six windows with flat surrounds, lipped lintels, and false muntins. This window configuration is seen at all elevations of the main block and additions. The entry contains a six-panel wood door framed by pilasters and an architrave. The door surround is ornamented with recessed openings comprising arched channels at the pilasters and a row of arched elements at the architrave, all painted in a contrasting color. The porch has a two-part frieze board and narrow rectangular posts with unembellished, flat-sawn arched brackets; neither element is seen in the 1880 photograph of the building. The porch shelters a concrete floor.

Although 381 Front Street does not strongly express any particular architectural style, the building has numerous distinctive features. These include the barge boards, which are characteristic of the Gothic Revival (1840-1880) style; the flat-roofed block at the second story, which is seen with the Italianate (1840-1885) style; and the whimsical entry surround and porch brackets, which are of recent vintage but refer to both the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss 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.*

The town of Marion was established in 1852 when it broke off from the town of Rochester. The Old Depot area of Marion (MRN.H) is named for the building which housed Marion's first rail station, the subject property of this form. It was the location of the Marion stop on the Fairhaven Branch of the Cape Cod Railroad which brought rail service to the town in 1854. Located in the northern section of Marion Village (Old Landing), the area's residences are located in or around the triangle formed by the intersection of Wareham Road, Spring Street, and Front Street. The 1855 map shows this section of town with very few buildings — the train station, a school, and a lone house. The advent of rail service to Marion sparked the town's growth as a desirable vacation destination for well-to-do city dwellers from Boston and New York. A coach service carried passengers arriving at the station to various hotels or cottages located in Sippican Village.

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

381 Front Street

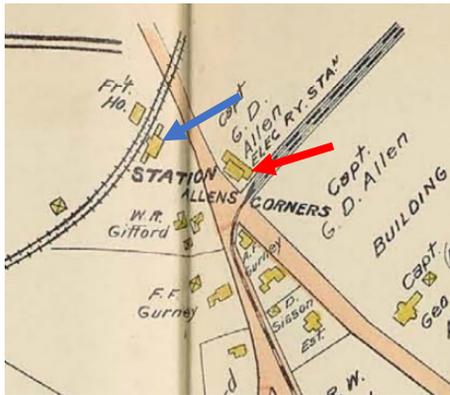
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Area(s) Form No.

MRN.H	MRN.120
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As rail service expanded, the 1855 depot was replaced by a larger building. The depot was sold to the prominent Front Street resident, Captain George Delano Allen (1843-1916) who lived in the grand Greek Revival/Italianate “hybrid” style house at 357 Front Street (ca.1860, Capt. George D. Allen House, MRN.113). Allen moved the old depot building approximately 150 feet to its current location, a site on his large estate. This area came to be known as Allen’s Corners after the enterprising seaman who converted the old depot building into a combination store and pool hall. Near the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Allen subdivided his property to create building sites for several smaller houses along Front Street. By 1903, there was a cluster of houses in this area supported by several stores. Today, a number of the historic resources in the area are used for commercial or mixed-use purposes.



1903 map.

Built ca.1855 at the time of the arrival of the first passenger rail service to Marion, this building is referred to as the Old Depot because it served as the original train station for the town. It appears on the 1855 and the 1879 maps in its original location adjacent to the railroad tracks approximately 150 feet northwest of its present site. The building was purchased by Captain George Delano Allen, who moved it to a portion of the large tract of land which he owned on the eastern side of Front Street. The building appears on the 1903 map with Allen shown as owner in its current location (red arrow) and with the new Marion train station shown on the west side of Front Street at the railroad tracks (blue arrow). In its new location, the building served a number of purposes. The 1921 Sanborn map shows the 1855 building labeled as a combination pool hall and store. Beginning in 1905, the building held the waiting room for the New Bedford and Onset Rail Company which provided electric street railway service between Marion and New Bedford until 1926. The 1931 Sanborn map indicates that the building was again used as a store.

The first recorded conveyance found for the property was its sale by the estate of Clara Allen Luce, daughter of Captain George Allen, in 1921. The building was in the hands of several owners until it was purchased in 1941 by Harold and Grace Briggs who lived in the building.<sup>1</sup> Harold C. Briggs (1903-1971) was listed in the 1940 census as an owner in the grain retail business and in the 1950 census as a trucker. After the death of Grace Briggs (1902-1987), the property was purchased in 1988 by Mary Ellen (Lalli) McGrath who opened a childcare center, a use that continues today.

### Deed Research

Date	Book-Page	Grantor	Grantee
03-23-2017	48236-215	MEM Realty Trust	381 Front Street LLC
05-07-1998	16177-114	Mary Ellen McGrath f/k/a Mary Ellen Lalli	MEM Realty Trust
05-13-1993	11873-313	Charles B. Lalli, Jr.	Mary Ellen Lalli
03-23-1988	8347-266	Estate of Grace M. Briggs	Charles B. Lalli, Jr.
11-05-1941	1820-57	Homeowners Loan Corporation	Harold C. Briggs
06-12-1937	1728-55	Francis J. Manning (Foreclosure)	Homeowners Loan Corporation
05-11-1934	1670-311	Francis J. Manning (Mortgage)	Homeowners Loan Corporation
08-13-1928	1560-16	Frank H. & Hattie P. Spooner	Francis J. Manning
01-03-1923	1429-531	William W. & Helen F. Hobbs	Frank H. & Hattie P. Spooner
07-16-1921	1393-429	Clara Allen Luce (f/k/a Clara Belle Allen)	William W. & Helen F. Hobbs
Probate		Estate of George D. Allen	Clara Belle Allen

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org: census records, vital records, city directories  
*Atlas of Plymouth County*, Boston, MA: George H. Walker & Co., 1879  
*Atlas of Plymouth County*, Boston, MA: L.J. Richards Co., 1903  
*Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts 1855* H.F. Walling  
 McMaster, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019.  
 Sommers, Olive Hill. *Three Centuries of Marion Houses*. Marion, 1972.

<sup>1</sup> “Day Care Center Planned for Marion Depot,” *The Standard Times*,” New Bedford, MA, Jul 1988.

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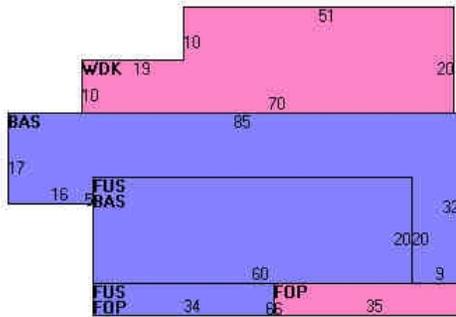
Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Rosbe, Judith. *Marion*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000.

Rosbe, Judith. *Marion in the Golden Age*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009.

Sippican Historical Society: online database

Smith, Pete. (ed.) *A Picture Postcard History of Marion, Massachusetts*. New Bedford, MA: Spinner Publications, 2008



Assessor's card plan



North and west elevations.

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Photograph circa 1880. Courtesy of the Sippican Historical Society.



"New" railroad station built ca. 1900 on the west side of Front Street. Photograph courtesy of Sippican Historical Society.



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Cape Cod Railroad and the New Bedford and Onset Street Railway lines during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, respectively. The potential district's boundaries are those defined in the 1998 MHC survey for the Old Depot Area (MRN.H).

**Under Criterion A**, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level for its association with transportation advances in Marion, including the arrival of rail service in 1854 and the building of a rail station now at 381 Front Street (1855, Old Depot, MRN.120). The advent of rail service sparked the town's growth as a desirable vacation destination for well-to-do city dwellers from Boston and New York and had significant impact on the community's economy.

**Under Criterion C**, the area is recommended as eligible at the local level in the area of Architecture for its nearly intact collection of houses that provides a sense of the progression of architectural styles from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Old Depot Area contains a range of small- to large-scaled one-and-one-half to two-story wood-frame dwellings that represent the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles. Several of these houses have been converted to commercial use.