

Area	Form no.
	131

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

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PHOTO (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)  
Staple to left side of form  
Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

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Town Stoneham

Address Spring and Washington Streets

Historic Name William Bryant / Octagon House

Use: Original residence

Present residence

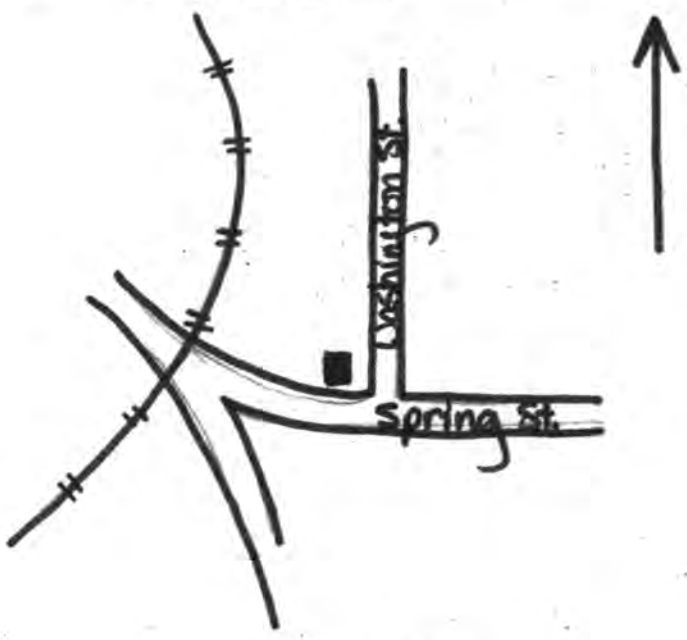
Ownership:  Private individual, William B. Larsen and Ellen B. O'Donnell

Public \_\_\_\_\_

Original owner William Bryant

SKETCH MAP

Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings or geographical features. Indicate north.



DESCRIPTION:

Date ca. 1851

Source records of the Stoneham Historical Society

Style octagon

Architect Builder: Worcester Brothers

Exterior wall fabric clapboard

Outbuildings none

Major alterations (with dates) no

Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage 27,180 sq. ft.

Setting mixed nineteenth and twentieth century residential; busy intersection

Recorded by Carole Zellie (ed. Candace Jenkins, MHC)

Organization Landscape Research

Date January 1979

Assessor's Map #12-221

Boston North Quad 1:25,000  
UTM: 19 327850 4705180

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)**

The William Bryant octagon is a simply detailed but well preserved example of this unusual mid-nineteenth century residential form. As the name implies, it is constructed with eight equal sides, and it rises two stories to a low pitched bracketted roof with a central cupola. An ell extends from the rear (north) wall and the entry is located on the opposite wall. The entry is framed by full length side-lights and a transom, and is protected by an open porch. It is approached by three granite steps with a low curved edge. Windows have simple frames and contain 6/6 sash. The house is sheathed in clapboards and rests on a granite foundation. The house faces south on Spring Street at the busy intersection of Washington and Pleasant.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)**

The William Bryant Octagon possesses integrity of location, design, materials and, is significant as a well preserved example of the mid-nineteenth century octagonal house form. It meets criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places.

One of three octagon houses in Stoneham built between 1850 and 1855, the William Bryant house retains most of its original surfaces and details. Octagonal houses were popularized at mid-century by Orson Fowler in his pattern book "The Octagon House: A Home for All" as an inexpensive way to house the nation's growing population. Reportedly built by Worcester Brothers, the house occupies a site near the location of the second meeting house; the open side yard may have been the site of the town common c. 1804. Bryant was a shoemaker, so this house represents an alternative to the Greek Revival cottage in which most contemporary shoe workers lived.

Of Stoneham's other octagons, one has been heavily altered and the other has been included as number 256 in this nomination. All three appear to have been built of interlocking timber construction, as recorded for Wakefield Octagons by the Essex Institute.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Directories  
Stoneham Historical Society Records

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 2/26/84

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 7

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Stoneham Multiple Resource Area  
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

- |                                      |   | Determined Eligible | Date/Signature          |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Lang, William Bailey, House       | Substantive Review<br>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION | Keeper              | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 2. Martin-Maxwell Estate             | Substantive Review<br>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION | Attest<br>Keeper    | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 3. Sweetser, Warren, House           | Substantive Review<br>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION | Attest<br>Keeper    | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 4. Almshouse                         | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 5. Beard, Padilla, House             | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 6. Boston and Main<br>Railroad Depot | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 7. Bottume, John, House              | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 8. Brown, C. H., Cottage             | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 9. Bryant, William, Octagon<br>House | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |
| 10. Buck, Charles, House             | Entered in the<br>National Register       | for Keeper          | <u>MacBryde</u> 4/13/84 |

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Bryant, William, Octagon House  
(Stoneham MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. FEB 28 1984  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/80  
Date Due: 3-29-84 - 4-13-84  
Action:  ACCEPT 4-13-84  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection



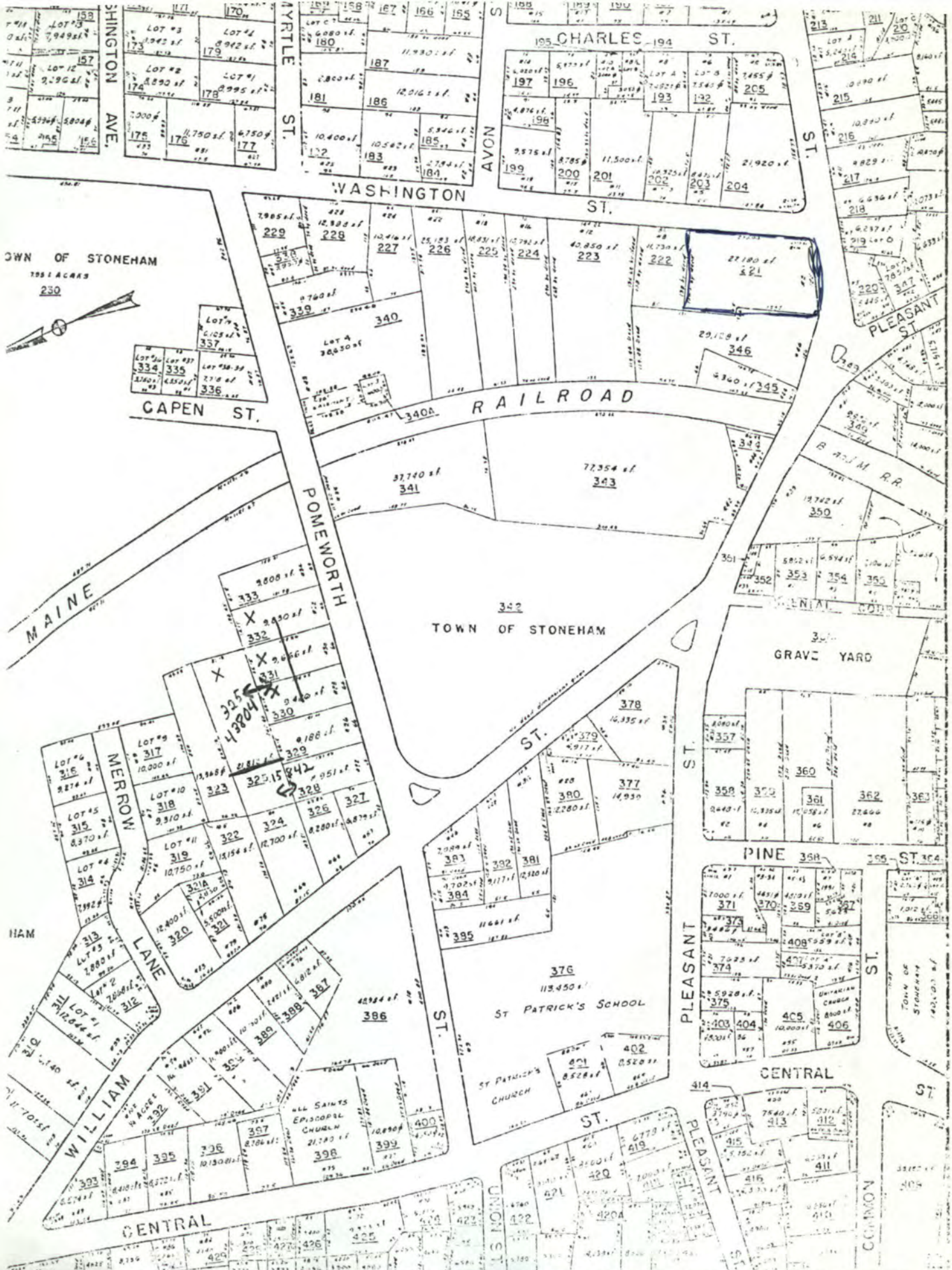


Bryant, William, Octagon House

Stonham MA, Ma

ART-42

78070



TOWN OF STONEHAM PRESENT DATE  
 ASSESSOR'S MAP SCALE 1" = 200'

PAGE 12 INVENTORY  
 LOT 221 (131)

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 64000295