

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Area

B

Form no.

59



LOCATION IN RELATION TO NEAREST
cross streets and other buildings
or geographical features.
Indicate north.

ReadingAddress 49 Pleasant StreetHistoric Name Reading Municipal BuildingOriginal Town Offices, Fire Dept.,
and JailPresent Fire StationOwnership: ☐ Private individual
☒ Private organizationPublic Town of ReadingOriginal owner Town of Reading

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1883Source Carved on window lintelStyle Renaissance Revival and StickArchitect Horace G. WadlinExterior wall fabric Brick, brownstone,
wood, granite

Outbuildings

noneMajor alterations (with dates) New door,Pleasant Street side; engine entrance
remodeled from 3 round-arched openings
to 2 flat-arched openings, 1940'sMoved NO DateApprox. acreage Under 1/2 acre

Recorded by Architectural Preservation
Associates
Organization Reading Historical

Setting At triangular corner, close
to commercial district.

Date November 1980Date 6/82UTM: 19/32740/4709860

(Staple additional sheets here)

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

This building combines features of a number of different styles, which is unusual for an architect-designed structure. However, the common design source seems to have been the Italian style. The main block is chiefly in the Renaissance Revival mode. It has a blocky, straight-sided appearance; a corbeled brick cornice with brick "brackets"; and corbeled-brick belt courses, one of which links horizontally the windows of the second floor. The round-arched windows of the first floor suggest an arcaded basement story. The segmentally arched windows of the second floor have caps that resemble the stilted arch characteristic of the High Victorian Italianate style. The three round-arched doorways originally in the west facade -- now (con't)

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

The village of Reading was incorporated in 1644 by the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It included the present town of Wakefield, and later, North Reading. Reading was set off as a separate parish in 1769, and built a meetinghouse on the Common, thus helping to define the center of town. Wakefield incorporated separately in 1812, North Reading in 1853.

This was the first building erected by present-day Reading for the purpose of housing its official business. In 1864-65 the town rented space from Jonathan Frost for this purpose, but by 1883 a special building, which combined town offices, jail, and fire station was advisable.

By 1918 the official work of the town's greater complexity demanded expanded space, and the present Town Hall was erected facing the Common. The Fire Department retains this building.

Early fire protection regulations required residents to have a ladder that reached to the chimney, and later, to have two fire buckets in each home. By 1813 or 1815 a piece of pumping apparatus was purchased, but it had to be filled with water by bucket brigade. The town established a Board of Fire Engineers after an act of the Legislature in 1854. When this structure was built, there were about 160 members of the fire department. Permanent positions were filled in 1913, and steam engines replaced the hose companies. By 1919, the department was completely motorized, and horse-drawn equipment was a thing of the past.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1875 map C. D. Wright (land) (Carroll Davis)

1889 map Town Building

History of the Reading Fire Department, 1673-1974

Town Reports, 1864-65, 1882, 1883-84

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:	Form No: B 59
Property Name:	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

altered into two wider, flat-arched doorways -- were suggestive of the Romanesque style, being low and massively treated. And the upper sash of the second-floor windows is Queen Anne in detail, with a border of small lights framing a large, central one.

The single most outstanding feature of the building is its Stick style/Queen Anne tower, which springs from a corbeled brick base. Essentially, it is a display piece for the late Victorial love of varied texture and shapes, with its fish-scale shingles, vertical siding, decorative stickwork, small windows, bracketed cornice, and high gable roof with paneled bargeboards and ornate weathervane.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The first Reading Municipal Building is significant (1) for its role in the development of Reading town government; and (2) for its impressive if eclectic design, done by local architect Horace Wadlin. It retains integrity of location, general design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling, and meets Criteria A. and C. of the National Register.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 6/4/84

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 849

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Reading Multiple Resource Area
State Middlesex County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| 71. Parker, Joseph, House | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 72. Parker, William, House | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 73. Pierce House | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 74. Pierce Organ Pipe Factory | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 75. Pratt House | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 76. Pratt, Stillman, House | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 77. Reading Municipal Building | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 78. Reading Municipal Light and
Power Station | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 79. Roberts House | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |
| 80. Rowhouses at 256-274 Haven Street | Entered in the
National Register | for Keeper | <u>Melvin Byers</u> 7-19-84 |
| | | Attest | |

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Reading Municipal Building (Reading MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUN 4 1984

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85

Date Due: 7/5/84 - 7/19/84

Entered in the Action: ☒ ACCEPT 7-19-84
National Register ☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ 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	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

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

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Reading Memorial Building
Reading MRA, Ma

B-59

49 Pleasant St

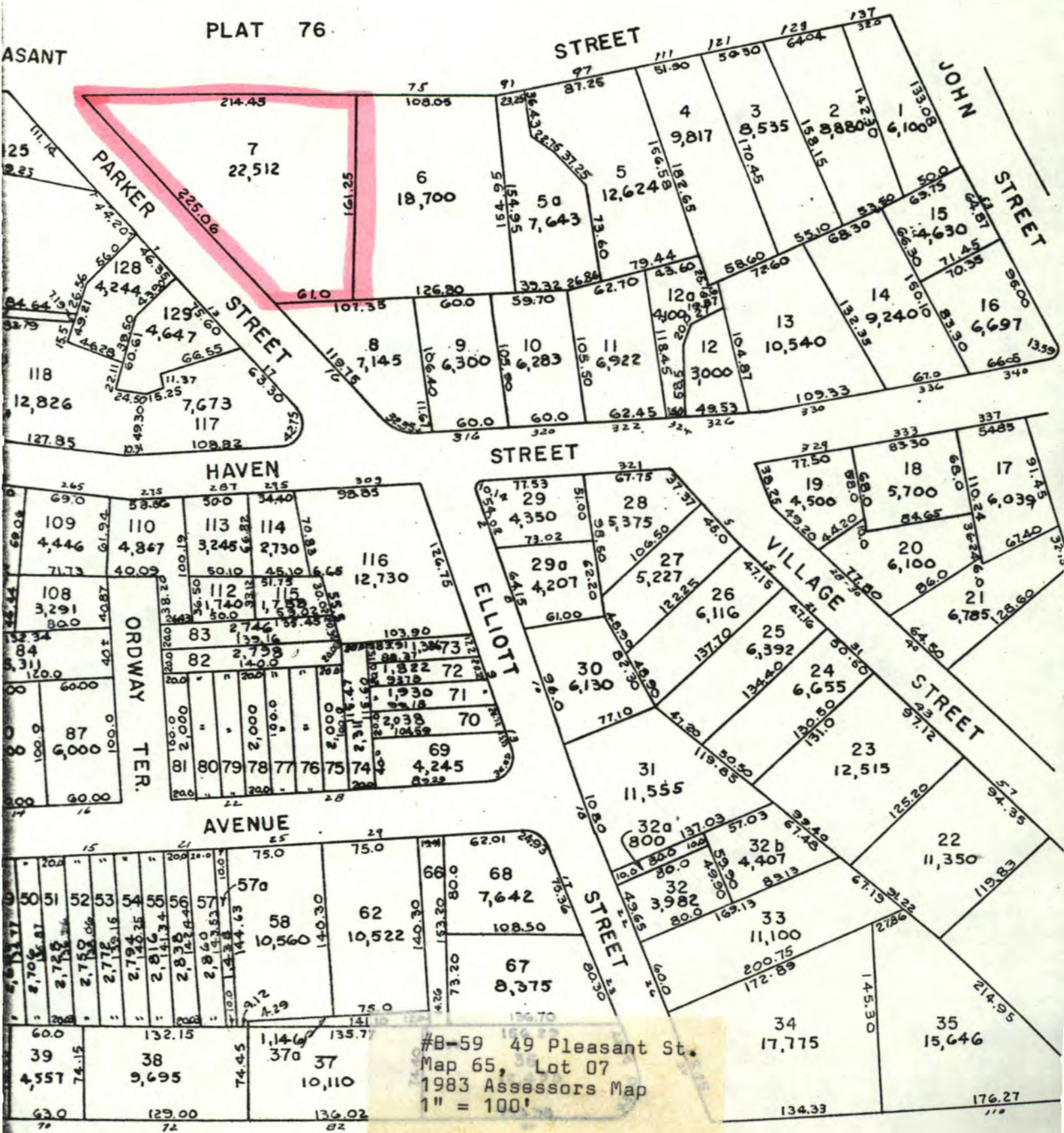
Central Fire House

~~XXXII~~

35A

PLAT 76

ASANT



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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000290