

LOWELL CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION

463 Merrimack Street

MAP SHEET # 137

- 1) CURRENT OWNER TRS KC Realty Trust OWNER OCCUPIED no
Francis R. King, Jr. et.al.tr.
- 2) HISTORIC NAME Wheeler Block
- 3) CURRENT NAME _____
- 4) PROPERTY TYPE commercial, multiple dwelling 5) ZONING CLASSIFICATION B-1
- 6) TAXES: PAYMENTS current STATUS clear
- 7) WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF LHPD

HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

- 1) CONSTRUCTION DATE 1879-1882
 SOURCE 1879 and 1882 atlas
- 2) ARCHITECT OR BUILDER _____
- 3) HISTORIC OWNER _____
- 4) ORIGINAL USE: GF stores UF offices, residential
- 5) PREVIOUS BLDGS ON PROPERTY frame building DATE c.1850-1879
 SOURCE 1850 map (nothing on site); 1879 atlas: frame building

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

- 1) ARCHITECTURAL STYLE
Panel Brick
- 2) PRESENT USE:
 GF stores/offices
 UF apartments
- 3) NO OF STORIES 3
- 4) PROP SQ FT 5,100
- 5) PLAN L-shaped
- 6) ROOF flat
- 7) STRUCTURAL SYSTEM
lead bearing masonry
- 8) OUTBUILDINGS
none
- 9) MATERIALS:
 FOUNDATION
not visible

VIEW FROM south PHOTO TAKEN Nov.1992



FACADE pressed red brick, common bond

TRIM brownstone sills, lintels and banding

10) NOTABLE SURFACE & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS none

ADDRESS 463 Merrimack Street

VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 1) CONDITION OF BUILDING FABRIC good
- 2) IF DETERIORATED, CAUSES n/a
- 3) INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BLDG FABRIC: GF major but reversible changes
UF intact original fabric
- 4) SURROUNDING LAND USES commercial, residential, institutional
- 5) INTEGRITY OF PROPERTY'S HISTORIC SETTING intact with minor intrusions and/or losses
- 6) IMPORTANCE OF PROPERTY TO HISTORIC SETTING integral to character

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

463 Merrimack Street is a three-story Panel Brick commercial/residential building dating between 1879 and 1882, notable for its lively three-dimensional brickwork decoration. The five-bay principal (south) facade facing Merrimack Street features a well-detailed brick semicircular arched entrance at the second bay, above which is a classical entablature constructed of brownstone; both brick and brownstone have been painted white. Also painted white are the brick storefront pilasters and the brownstone entablature separating the ground level from the upper stories. The storefront display window area between the brick pilasters has been bricked in to accommodate smaller metal windows.

On the two upper stories, the facade has an irregular fenestration pattern of single and paired 2/2 windows with brownstone lintels generally used above second floor windows and brick segmental arched lintels above third floor windows. Brickwork decoration is concentrated in the area above and below each set of paired windows and above the banding which joins the segmental arches at level 3. The building has a brick corbelled cornice interrupted by a wall chimney between bays four and five which breaks the roofline and is used as a visual accent. The east facade is seven bays, with the center bay set off by two brick wall chimneys which break the roofline. The north and west facades are unadorned.

An undated 19th century stereoscopic view of the Wheeler Building, taken from the upper floors of the Green School across the street, shows the original storefronts and also the more dramatic original roofline treatment. The wall chimney on the front facade was emphasized by a brick stepped wall gable which increased the asymmetry of the facade and heightened visual interest.

ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The atlases of 1879 and 1882 can be used to date this building. In 1879 there was a frame building on the site; by 1882 it had been replaced by a three-story brick structure used for shops on the first floor and tenements above. The shops shown on the 1882 Sanborn atlas include house furnishings, jewelry, stoves, dressmaking, as well as a print and wallpaper store and grocery on the Tilden Street side. There was also an office occupying part of the second floor. On the 1896 atlas, the building is identified with the owner's name, Marrietta Wheeler (Mrs. Albert Wheeler), and in later atlases the building is labeled as the "Wheeler Block." Albert Wheeler's grocery store was located at 93 Tilden Street in a frame building next to the new brick building.

SOURCES

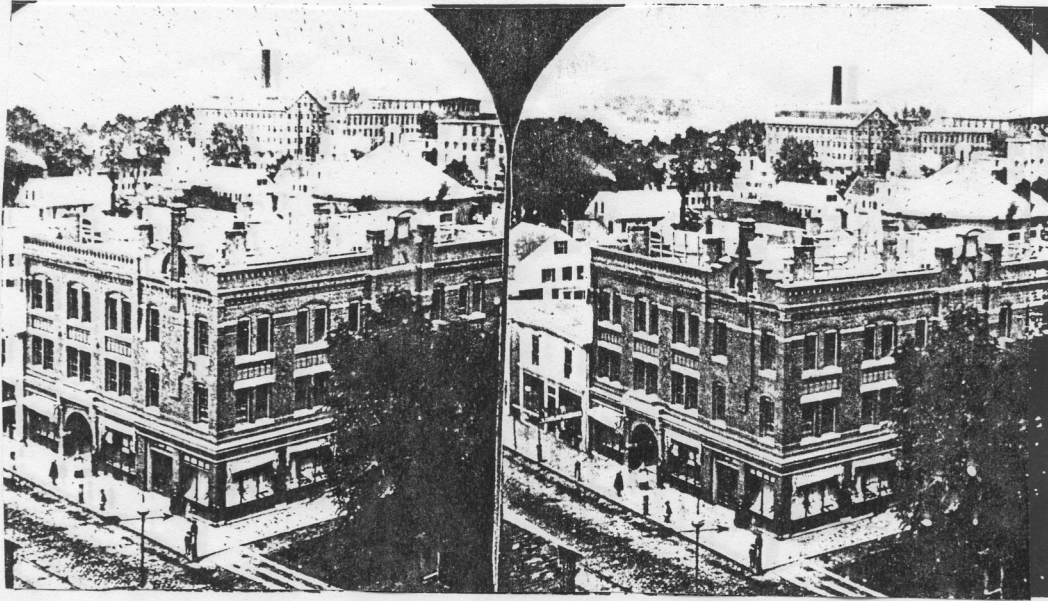
Atlases: 1879 to 1977; Lowell city directories
Stereoscopic "View from Green School House" in Green School photo file, Mogan Cultural Center

ARCHEOLOGICAL COMMENT

The building occupies almost the entire lot, and therefore the archeological potential is low.

sketch map-
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The "Best" Series.



Danell, Mass.

View from Green School House.

463 Merrimack Street

Stereoscopic view taken from the Green School House, undated.
Original located in Green School photo file, Mogan Cultural Center

Note the changes at the roofline.

