

IDENTIFICATION

492 - 496 Merrimack Street

MAP SHEET # 137

- 1) CURRENT OWNER TRS Merrimack Street Nominee Trust OWNER OCCUPIED no
Joseph H. McNiff, Trustee
- 2) HISTORIC NAME Jewett Building
- 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 c.1882-1896
 SOURCE 1882 Sanborn and 1896 Richards atlas
- 2) ARCHITECT OR BUILDER _____
- 3) HISTORIC OWNER _____
- 4) ORIGINAL USE: GF _____ UF _____
- 5) PREVIOUS BLDGS ON PROPERTY frame building DATE c.1832-c.1896
 SOURCE 1882 Sanborn shows 2-part frame commercial bldg.; 1832 map, atlase

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

- 1) ARCHITECTURAL STYLE
Panel Brick
- 2) PRESENT USE:
 GF stores
 UF apartments
- 3) NO OF STORIES 4
- 4) PROP SQ FT 2,731
- 5) PLAN rectangular
- 6) ROOF flat
- 7) STRUCTURAL SYSTEM
load bearing masonry
- 8) OUTBUILDINGS
none
- 9) MATERIALS:
 FOUNDATION
not visible

VIEW FROM northPHOTO TAKEN Nov.1992FACADE red pressed brick, common bondTRIM granite sills and banding

- 10) NOTABLE SURFACE & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS none

ADDRESS 492 Merrimack Street

VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 1) CONDITION OF BUILDING FABRIC good
- 2) IF DETERIORATED, CAUSES n/a
- 3) INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BLDG FABRIC: GF intact with minor changes
UF intact original fabric
- 4) SURROUNDING LAND USES commercial, residential
- 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

This handsome, well-proportioned four-story Panel Brick commercial/residential building is notable for its brickwork and use of a variety of materials. On the ground floor, the three-bay building has a center recessed entrance to upper floor apartments, flanked by two storefronts which retain their original brick side piers and iron center piers and have handsome wood storefront mullions and paneling. A metal entablature separates the ground level from the brick upper floors, where 1/1 windows are paired within recessed bays which extend from level two to level three and are connected between levels by wooden panels. A band of brick dentils together with a granite band separates the third floor from the top story, which has three pairs of arched 1/1 windows. A terra cotta panel with the building name "Jewett" is centered above the fourth floor windows, just below the distinctive brick corbel table cornice.

ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The Jewett Building was constructed between 1882 and 1896, when the building first appears on the atlases labeled "Est. of Jere. P. Jewett." Early businesses located there include the Joseph A. and Henry W. McDonald Brothers store, which sold clothing, boots and shoes (1894), McDonald Brothers Clothing and a dentist (1896) and a dentist and optometrist (1917). The upper floors were residential. The building remained in the Jewett family until sometime between 1906 and 1924, when it was sold to George Husson and became part of the Royal Theatre complex (see 484 Merrimack Street). In 1936, it is shown as one building with #484, as the Royal Theatre under the ownership of Rose Husson. On an 1945 map, it was occupied by the Hart clothing company.

Maps and atlases dating before 1896, including the 1832 map, show a previous building on the site. On the 1882 Sanborn atlas, this is shown as a two-part frame commercial row occupied by a tailor and dry goods store.

SOURCES

Maps: 1832, 1850, 1945. Atlases: 1879-1977
Lowell city directories

ARCHEOLOGICAL COMMENT

Archeological remains which could be recovered in the small unpaved rear yard would relate to the commercial/domestic use of the site since c.1832.

