

# MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION FORM B - BUILDING

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BLVD  
BOSTON, MA 02125

### Photograph

(3"x3" or 3-1/2"x5" black and white only) Label photo on back with town and property address. Record film roll and negative numbers here on the form. Staple photo to left side of form over this space. Attach additional photos to continuation sheets.

Roll	Negative(s)



### Sketch Map

Draw a map showing the building's location in relation to the nearest cross streets and/or major natural features. Show all buildings between inventoried building and nearest intersection or natural feature. Label streets including route numbers, if any. Circle and number the inventoried building. Indicate

**Town** Provincetown  
**Place** (neighborhood or village)  
**Address** 186 COMMERCIAL ST  
**Building ID** 447  
**Parcel No. (PID)** 07-2-145-0  
**Mapbase #** 07-2-145  
**Building Area** 2095.13  
**Historic Name**  
**Present Use** Commercial  
**Original Use** Residential  
**Date of Construction** 1880-1900  
**Source** NR Nomination  
**Style/Form** Queen Anne  
**Architect/Builder**  
**Exterior Material** clapboard  
**Foundation** brick, concrete block  
**Wall/Trim**  
**Roof** Hip on mansard  
**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures**  
 Modern shed in disrepair

### Major Alterations (with dates)

Mansard roof

**Condition** Good  
**Moved**  no  yes **Date**  
**Acreage** 0.138  
**Setting**

**Recorded by** Johnette Davies  
**Organization** Kise Straw & Kolodner  
**Date** (month/year) September 2003  
**Form Status**  new  update

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

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

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### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

see continuation sheet

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

186 Commercial St. is a 2-story, 5-bay Queen Anne-style dwelling converted to commercial use; hip on mansard roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles with patterned shingles on lower mansard portion and pent eave with scroll-sawn brackets, gable dormers; exterior is clad in clapboard siding with wood corner boards and trim; building sits on a brick and concrete block foundation; fenestration includes 1/1 replacement DHS and two square bays with 1/1 DHS replacement windows on side facade; primary entrance is accessed by paired replacement doors with a metal-clad shed hood; entrance reached by wood steps and wood deck with balustrade; ramp entry to 1st-floor entrance; octagonal turret with conical roof and bracketed eave on front corner; ramp entry to basement; rear section with large commercial vents and ductwork.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

see continuation sheet

*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.*

As per Tom Boland (1994): It is possible that the structure at 186 Commercial Street is an earlier building which was modernized in the 1880s. Early maps indicate that a structure exists there which has nearly the same footprint as the existing structure. Prior to 1880, the site was owned by G. (Gideon) Bowley and stands directly opposite J.E. & G. Bowley Wharf, also known as Steamboat Wharf (184 Commercial was owned by J.E. Bowley). In 1880, the site still has the G. Bowley name. The only subsequent change is that a porch is indicated as having been added by 1889. It is clear from a photo at the turn of the century, that the corner turret was a later addition. In 1907, the house is owned by William Matheson, who purchased the wharf and the house in 1884. Mr. Matheson managed vessels involved in the Grand Banks and West India trade.

Currently "Esther's Restaurant, Piano Bar, Guest House" and "Downstairs at Esther's" (2003).

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

Barnstable County Atlas., 1880.  
Barnstable County Atlas., 1907.  
The Extremity of Cape Cod. Map, 1836.  
H.F. Wallings Co. Map of Provincetown Village. Atlas, 1858.  
Jennings, Herman A. Provincetown. Or Odds and Ends from the Tip End. 1890.  
National Park Service. Salt Pond Visitor's Center Archives, Wellfleet.  
Resident Directory. W.F. Richardson & Co., 1886.  
Resident Directory. W.H. Hopkins, 1889.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*