

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 35-41 State Street

Historic Name Essex Hall

Uses: Present Commercial/Offices

Original Commercial/Public Hall

Date of Construction c.1855

Source visual inspection

Style/Form Italianate

Architect/Builder Rufus Sargent?

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Brick

Roof Asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

adjacent shorter block at 35 State Street (see text)

Major Alterations (with dates) date? - removal of mastic

covering building, alt. to storefront, replacement

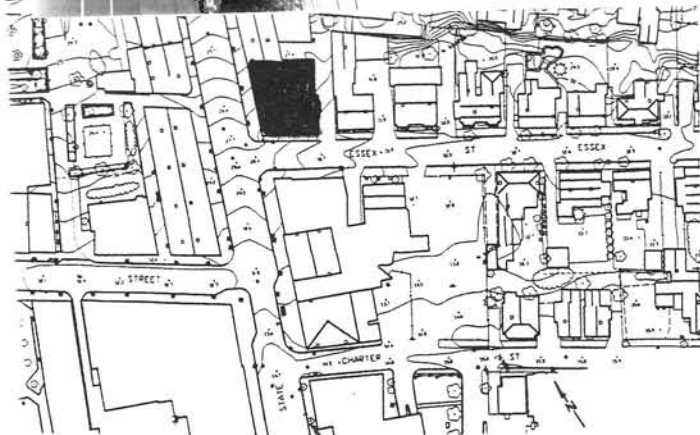
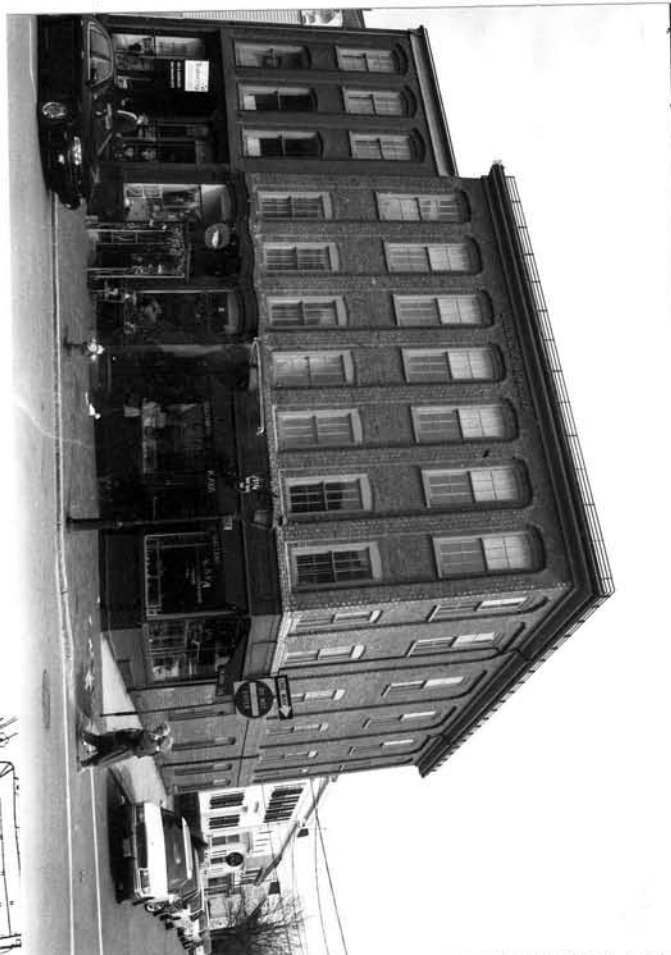
windows

Condition good

Moved  no  yes Date

Acreage 3600 SF

Setting central business district, corner of Essex Street



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) May 1999

## BUILDING FORM (35-41 State Street)

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

Located at the lower corner of State and Essex Streets, Essex Hall is a three-story brick block which dates to the mid 19th century. The exterior of the building was formerly covered in mastic or paint and the removal of the paint has left the brick with a somewhat mottled appearance. The building actually consists of a large block, almost square in plan at the corner, with a three-story section of lesser height just to the north, only three bays wide. It appears that the smaller section to the north is contemporary with the larger block although its detailing is slightly simpler.

The principal elevation of the main building faces State Street and is seven bays wide with the fenestration on the upper floors set into two-story high, rounded recesses, ordered by brick strips. The windows on the second floor contain replacement 6/6 wooden windows which are slightly smaller than the original sash, necessitating the installation of wooden panels at the tops of the windows, underneath low arched header brick lintels. The windows on the third floor have 6/6 sash with the tops of the upper sash slightly arched. The building is capped by a projecting wooden cornice which historic photographs indicate was originally bracketed. Between the tops of the third floor windows and the cornice are raised letters reading "Essex Hall".

The first floor of the main building is divided into two storefronts. That to the north retains much of its integrity. The three bays of the storefront are ordered by fluted Corinthian iron columns although the capitals have lost some of their detail. Curved members span between the iron verticals. The storefront has a recessed center entrance with a glass-and-wood door consisting of a large upper pane with three raised vertical panels below. To either side of the entrance are large display windows with arched transoms. The area below the windows consists of plain panels which may cover glazed bulkheads. The recessed entrance to the upper level (#39) is modern but blends well with the historic features. The modern wooden door has a large upper glass with three panels and an arched transom. The corner storefront has been greatly altered in the recent 20th century and consists of glass display windows resting on a brick base. A metal support column is visible inside. The modern metal-and-glass replacement door has a modern sidelight but retains the original transom. The storefront cornice has been reconstructed and consists of recessed horizontal panels between vertical blocks.

The south elevation of the main building, facing Essex Street, displays six bays of varying widths but set within the same curved recesses as are seen on the facade. The rear elevation is five bays wide. The first floor openings are covered with metal shutters and tie rods and a hoist are visible on the wall above.

The smaller building to the north appears to be a somewhat simplified version of the main building. The openings of the three bay facade are set into segmentally arched recesses outlined by brick piers running the height of the second and third floors. On the second floor the segmentally arched windows have 1/1 sash with rounded moldings while the smaller third floor windows are modern 6/6 replacements. The building is capped by a simpler wooden cornice with a wide, plain frieze.

The most remarkable feature of 35 State Street is the integrity of the first floor storefront. The two display windows retain their original glass and consist of 2 x 2 panes with rounded corners at the top. The two full and two half columns are octagonal with channeled corners and have a raised molding about halfway up, aligned with the horizontal mullion of the adjacent display window. The columns are set above a base which is in turn set on granite. Raised keystones are centered above the windows and door with recessed geometric panels located above the columns. The center entrance retains its original double doors consisting of a large upper glass over a lower recessed panel. The transom consists of two vertical panels with the upper corners rounded.

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