

FORM B - BUILDING

NRDIS 2/25/1971; 8/2/1984

Assessor's number  
11-1

USGS Quad  
Newburyport

Area(s)  
L,K

Form Number  
748

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



Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 1-3 Market Square

Historic Name Market House

Uses: Present Restaurant/Arts Center

Original Market House

Date of Construction 1823-5

Source Currier

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Brick/Granite

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

Major Alterations (with dates) 1864 - converted to fire house; 1886 - tower added; 1990 - rehabilitated for use as arts center

Condition good

Moved  no  yes Date

Acreage 7336 SF

Setting between Market Square and the harbor



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) May 1999

## BUILDING FORM (1-3 Market Square)

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

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

Located on the north side of Market Square, the Market House is a two-story, brick building capped by an asphalt-shingled hipped roof. The building which was originally constructed in 1823 and altered in 1864 and 1886, was renovated in 1990 for use as an arts center. The symmetrical facade measures nine bays wide with a central pavilion capped by a pediment. A clock has replaced the original fanlight in the pediment. The pavilion is outlined by second-story pilasters which rest on granite piers at the first floor level. The horizontality of the building is emphasized by a series of horizontal bands on the facade including a continuous stone lintel above the first floor openings and a delicate modillion course under the eaves. Historic photographs indicate that the first floor of the facade was originally sheltered by a shed roof canopy.

Centered on the second floor of the facade is a large 2/2 window flanked by 1/1 sidelights and capped by a semi-circular fanlight with a header brick lintel and stone keystones and springblocks. The remaining second story windows are round-arched openings containing 2/2 sash with brick lintels and stone keystones, springblocks and sills. The first floor of the facade is punctuated by five door openings most of which now contain vertical pane windows over wooden bulkheads and topped by transom lights. In its original form the Market had stalls on the first floor for provision dealers. These were removed in 1864 when the building was altered to serve as a fire station.

Windows on the side elevations consist of a mix of arched openings, rectangular openings containing 2/2 windows with brick lintels and stone sills, and a large modern sliding door on the east elevation. Rising from the rear of the building is a tall brick tower, square in plan. The lower level of the tower is punctuated by 4/4 windows. At the top of the tower, each face has a pair of 6/6 windows sandwiched between a brick belt course and modillion cornice. At the rear of the building is a modern glass addition constructed in 1990.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Describe 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.*

The selectmen of Newburyport were authorized on August 5, 1822 to build a one story brick market house; the following March they were granted permission to add another story to the building providing it could be rented.

This building was originally constructed in 1822-3 as a market house and as the trading center was the focal point of the surrounding commercial district. The building was intended to house the unsightly butchers' shambles, wooden shacks where butchers and fishmongers sold their goods. It was built on the location of the former middle shipyard. The Newburyport Chair Company occupied the unfinished room over the market house for several years. In 1830 the town voted to vacate the lease, finish the interior of the building and lease it to the Newburyport Lyceum association. The annual town meeting was held in the new hall over the market house in 1835. Market Hall was used for once a week winter lectures by the Newburyport Lyceum from 1838 until 1851. In 1850 the police court moved to the former Lyceum Hall in the Market House. The police department took over part of the lower portion of the building and cells were placed in the basement. In 1864 the steam fire company Eon took possession of most of the remaining butchers' stalls in the Market House. The last butcher shop in the Market House left for other quarters in the 1880s. From then until the new police station was erected, the building was jointly occupied by the fire department, the police department, the city jail and the police court.

The building served as the Central Fire Station from 1864 until 1980, when it moved to the new building erected on Greenleaf and Fulton Streets. A tower was added in the late 19th century. The building was rededicated as an arts center in 1990.

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