

FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's number  
46/42

USGS Quad  
Plymouth

Area(s)

Form Number  
91

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

Town Kingston

Place (neighborhood or village) Jones River Village

Address 192 Main Street

Historic Name Colonel John Sever House

Uses: Present residential

Original residential

Date of Construction 1824

Source Bartlett 1879

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder \_\_\_\_\_

Exterior Material:

Foundation granite block

Wall/Trim clapboard/wood

Roof asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures none

Major Alterations (with dates) rear ell and main entrance  
(mid 19th c.)

Condition good

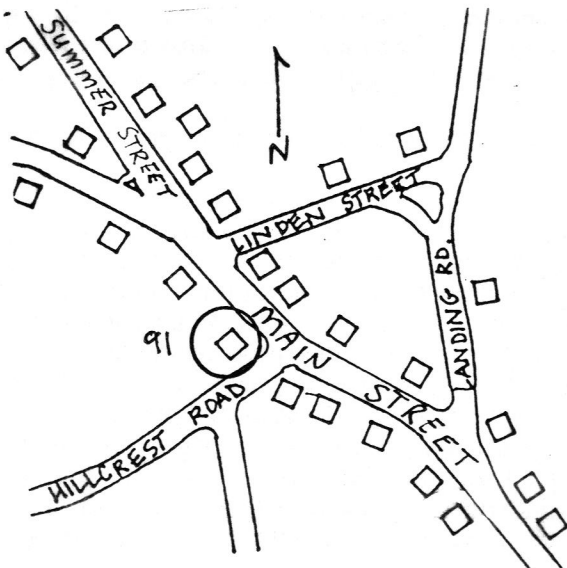
Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date \_\_\_\_\_

Acreage less than 1 acre

Setting set back approx. 20 feet from main Street; grass, trees,  
shrubs; large rear yard; asphalt driveway to the north:

brick walkway from Main Street

Sketch Map



Recorded by V. Adams, N. Avery, M. Harrington, C. Meagher, J. Snow

Organization The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.

Date (month/day/year) June 1997

MASS. HIST. COMM.

## BUILDING FORM

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION see continuation sheet

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

192 Main Street is a rectangular, 2-story, 5-by-3 bay, hipped-roof, Federal-style building which rests on a granite block foundation and is sheathed in wood clapboards with simple wood trim. The main entrance is located in the center of the facade (E) and consists of a paneled wood door with 2 fixed lights in its upper portions and a glass and aluminum storm door. The entrance was modified in the mid 19th century in the Greek Revival style and is flanked by recessed wood panels and protected by a flat-roof portico with octagonal, Doric columns to the front and square Doric pilasters against the house. The entrance is accessed by a brick walkway leading to granite steps. A secondary entrance is located on the north elevation and consists of a paneled wood door with molded wood surrounds and entablature, topped by a semi-circular fanlight. Windows are 12/12 double-hung sash with simple wood surrounds and fixed louvered shutters. Four interior brick chimneys pierce the roofline at each corner. A 1-story, hipped-roof ell is located in the southern end of the west elevation. A brick, exterior chimney is located in the northern corner of the west elevation. This house is one of a number of outstanding examples of the Federal style in this part of Kingston.

There are no outbuildings associated with this property.

### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE X 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.*

In 1717, 41 residents of the northern part of Plymouth petitioned the General Court to be set off from Plymouth as a separate township or a precinct. They were allowed to become the north precinct of Plymouth on the condition that they maintain a suitable minister (Bailey 1920:33). At that time, the central part of the present town of Kingston belonged largely to Major John Bradford who gave the precinct fourteen acres of land in 1717. This land was to be used for the town woodlot, the Training Green, a burying ground, and a meetinghouse (Bailey 1920:36). In 1726, the north precinct, after having been a part of the town of Plymouth for 106 years, acquired its independence and became the town of Kingston (Bailey 1920:41).

The lower portion of today's Main Street was known as the Boston Road from the Plymouth line northward to "the Point" at Summer Street, and then north on Summer Street to the Duxbury town line. Today's Main Street from "the Point" westward was known as the Bridgewater Road (Melville 1976:377). It was around this intersection, on the slight hill which rises from the Jones River below, that the Kingston town center developed.

The house at 192 Main Street was built in 1824 by Colonel John Sever (Bartlett 1879:14). John Sever was a merchant, ship owner, and, in 1844, the first president of the Old Colony Railroad. The Old Colony Railroad was constructed in 1845 and was the 6th railroad built in Massachusetts. This railroad, which offered both passenger

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES X see continuation sheet

- Bailey, Sarah Y., and Emily F. Drew. *The Civic Progress of Kingston [and] A History of Her Industries, Two Hundred Years, 1726-1926*. Kingston, 1926.
- Bartlett, Cornelius A. *Houses, Occupants, etc. in Kingston, Massachusetts (Between the Forge Bridge and the Great Bridge): 1867-1879*. Annotations of 1942 by E.F. Drew and of 1972 by Doris M. Johnson, Kingston, Massachusetts, 1879.
- Board of Registrars. *Persons Listed by the Board of Registrars in the Town of Kingston for the Year 1953*. Board of Registrars, Kingston, Massachusetts, 1953.
- Drew, Emily. *Kingston: the Jones River Village*. 1944 (Edited and annotated by Doris M. Johnson, 1995).
- Drew, Thomas Bradford. "History of Kingston," in D.H. Hurd, *History of Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. Philadelphia, 1884.
- Karr, Ronald Dale. *The Rail Lines of Southern New England*. Pepperell, Massachusetts, 1995.
- Massachusetts Historical Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report: Kingston*. Boston, 1981.
- Melville, Doris Johnson. *Major Bradford's Town: A History of the Town of Kingston, 1726-1976*. Kingston, 1976.

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

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**Community:  
KingstonKIN.91  
Property Address:  
192 Main StreetMassachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Facility  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Area(s)

Form No.  
91**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE** *(continued)*

and freight service, connected Boston with southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod. The Old Colony Railroad had many branches throughout southeastern Massachusetts and was one of the state's major railway systems. In service for over a hundred years, all lines were abandoned by the late 20th century (Karr 1995:312).

The Sever family was a very well educated family and since 1624, all men in the Sever family, including Colonel Sever, attended college. When Colonel Sever died in 1855, his widow donated money for the construction of Sever Hall at Harvard College. After his death, his widow and daughters continued to live in the house until 1865, when Captain Paraclete Holmes purchased the house (Bartlett 1879:14). Captain Holmes was a wealthy ship captain who traded extensively around the world and belonged to the Joseph Holmes family who were successful ship builders in Kingston (Melville 1976:280). Captain Holmes made some repairs before he occupied the house in September of 1865. Holmes was a bachelor and lived in the house with Mrs. Elizabeth Sterns, his housekeeper, Mr. Alden White, his farmer, and a staff of Irish "culinary" help (Bartlett 1879:14). When he died in February of 1867, his brother, Edward Holmes, also a ship captain, purchased the property. After Edward's death, E. Eldridge Atwood, owner of a slaughterhouse, purchased the property (Bartlett 1879:53). He combined the property with other holdings that extended to the Jones River to form "The Lindens" estate (1903 map). His housekeeper, Mrs. Roland Bailey had part ownership of the house at 192 Main Street and when Mr. Atwood died, she inherited the property. After her death, her son Roland Bailey, a town accountant, lived in the house until at least 1942 (Drew annotation of Bartlett 1879:53). By 1953, the house was occupied by Dr. Raymond Russo, a veterinarian, and his wife Mildred (Board of Registrars Directory 1953), who remain there until the present day (1997) (Town Database Records 1997).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES** *(continued)*

*The Plymouth County Directory*. Stillman B. Pratt & Co., Middleboro, Massachusetts. 1867.  
Thompson, Elroy S. *History of Plymouth, Norfolk, and Barnstable Counties, Massachusetts*. New York, 1928.  
Town Database Records, Assessor's Office, Kingston Town House, Kingston, Massachusetts, 1997.  
Vertical Files located at the Local History Room of the Kingston Public Library.

**Maps**

1820-1830 *Five School Districts*. Anonymous.  
1831 *Map of Kingston*. John Gray.  
1876 *Map of the Town of Kingston, Plymouth County, Mass.* E.N. Boyden.  
1879 *Atlas of Plymouth County*. George E. Walker.  
1903 *Atlas of Plymouth County*. George E. Walker.  
1928 *Map of Kingston with Key*.

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## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

☒ Individually eligible    ☐ Eligible only in a historic district  
☐ Contributing to a potential historic district    ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria:    ☐ A    ☒ B    ☒ C    ☐ D

Criteria Considerations:    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☐ D    ☐ E    ☐ F    ☐ G

Statement of Significance by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.

*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The Colonel John Sever House possesses integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. It is an outstanding example of the Federal style in Kingston and was the residence of John Sever, a prominent citizen on both the local and regional level. Sever served as the first president of the Old Colony Railroad, a major rail line connecting southeastern Massachusetts to Boston. Its architectural form, age, and well-preserved setting are all important elements of its local significance. It meets criteria B and C of the NRHP. Its period of significance extends from 1824 to 1947. Additional historical information will be required to complete a nomination.