

FORM B – BUILDING

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

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|--------|---------|--|-----|
| 16/387 | Reading | | 374 |
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
 220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town: Reading

Place: (*neighborhood or village*) Downtown

Photograph



Address: 68-76 Haven Street

Historic Name: Brande Block

Uses: Present: commercial

Original: commercial

Date of Construction: 1924

Source: *Chronicle*, July 18, 1924

Style/Form: Commercial

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: concrete block, metal, glass

Roof: tar and gravel

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

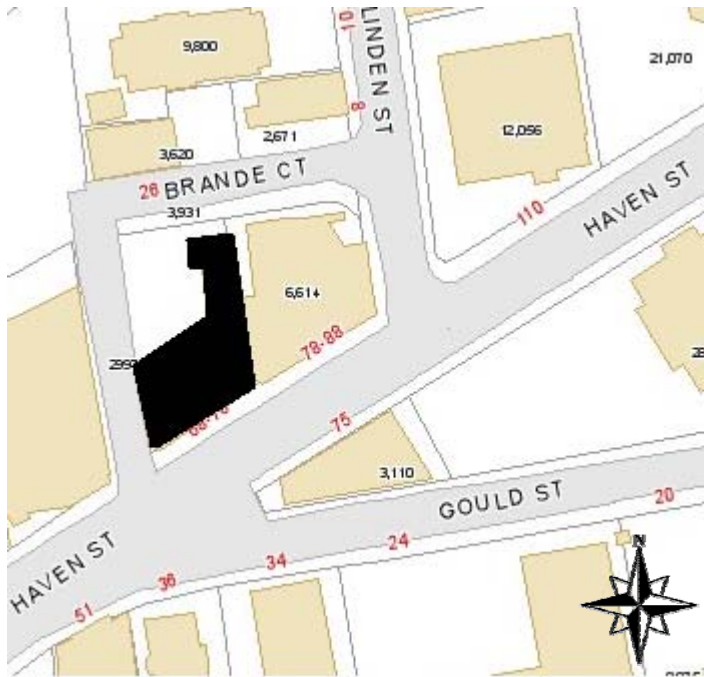
Condition: fair

Moved: no | x | yes | | **Date** _____

Acreage: 0.17 acre

Setting: mixed downtown area

Topographic or Assessor's Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Reading Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2010

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INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

READING

68-76 Haven Street

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

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

The building at 68-76 Haven Street is a simple, utilitarian commercial block dating to 1924. The one-story structure is set on a concrete foundation with rusticated concrete block sidewalls. The four storefronts facing Haven Street have paired, recessed entries. Original wooden doors with large glass windows are still visible in the two east storefronts. The two to the west now contain modern replacements. The angled storefront windows have large plate glass windows set in metal frames, resting on metal bulkheads with prominent ventilation grills. Visible in the corners of the storefronts are metal support columns. Above the storefronts are large Vitrolite or Carrera glass panels set into aluminum frames.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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.

This building (originally 30-36 Haven Street) was constructed in 1924 for Dr. Mahlon Brande, a dentist. Dr. Brande was responsible for various commercial projects that changed the face of the downtown in the early 20th century. In 1910 he had the corner of Chute and Haven Streets rebuilt to provide two storefronts. Also in 1924 he was the owner of the new Reading Theater at 177 (now 565) Main Street. Dr. Brande also owned the Bank Building at 643 Main Street.

The building which Dr. Brande had built at 30 Haven Street consisted of four stores and a workshop at the rear of the east store. As reported in the *Chronicle*: "The business block on Haven st. is substantially fire-proof as far as the structure is concerned, of the modern type that promises investment returns" (July 18, 1924). In 1925 the tenants included Joe Palumbo's fruit and confectionery shop and the Reading Flower Shop. By 1936 the storefronts contained the New England Exchange Cake Shop, a furniture mover and a shoe repair shop. Today, the occupants are Reading Eye Associates and the Bangkok Spice Restaurant.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Palmer, Ed. *Reading, Massachusetts: Then and now*. Turner Publishing Co., 1999.

Reading Chronicle, July 18, 1924

Reading Directories, various dates.

Reading 350th Book Committee. *At Wood End – Reading, Massachusetts 1644-1994, A Pictorial History*, 1994, p. 177.