

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no. <u>A</u>	Form no. <u>786</u>
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1. Town Northampton

Address Old South Street

Name Rahar's Inn

Present use vacant; may be incorporated
into a proposed multi-service center

Present owner -

Description:

core of house-mid-1800's; addition
Date 1899, 1905.

Source Gazette, 2/20/1897, 7/28/1899,
7/15/1905, 2/27/1906

Style Mansard

Architect 1899-W. F. Pratt, Jr.
1905-E. C.&G. C. Gardiner

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features substantial porch

surrounds building; stone steps

mount the hill from Old South Street

Altered added 1899, 1905 Date _____

Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:

One acre or less x Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 222 feet

Approximate distance of building from street

30 feet

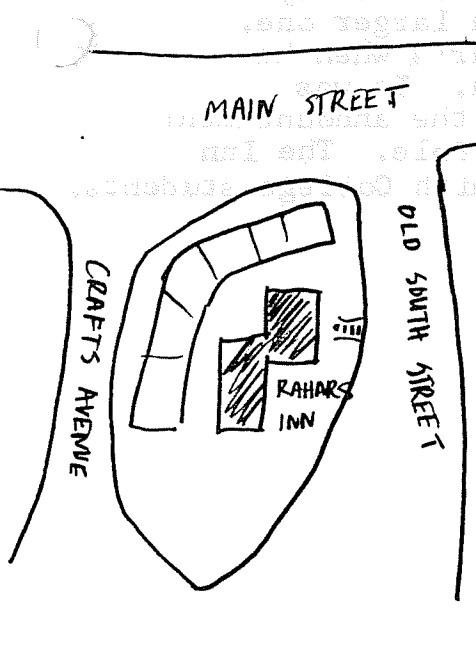
6. Recorded by C. Dubie

Organization Northampton Historical
Commission

Date April 15, 1975



4. Map. Draw sketch of building location
in relation to nearest cross streets and
other buildings. Indicate north.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____

MHC Photo no. _____

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7. Original owner (if known) Enos Parsons

Original use Residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates Inn-1897

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u> </u>	Conservation	<u> </u>	Recreation	<u> x </u>
Agricultural	<u> </u>	Education	<u> </u>	Religion	<u> </u>
Architectural	<u> </u>	Exploration/ settlement	<u> </u>	Science/ invention	<u> </u>
The Arts	<u> </u>	Industry	<u> </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u> </u>
Commerce	<u> </u>	Military	<u> </u>	Transportation	<u> </u>
Communication	<u> </u>	Political	<u> x </u>		
Community development	<u> x </u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

Rahar's Inn was opened in 1897 by Richard Rahar, who purchased the Parson's homestead from John Metcalf. The Inn was enlarged on two occasions: in 1899 William F. Pratt Jr. designed a 17 by 22 foot brick ell, and in 1905, in a more extensive renovation by Ec C. Gardiner and G. C. Gardiner of Springfield, the roof was raised one story and the old veranda was replaced with a much larger one.

President Calvin Coolidge lived at Rahar's when he commenced his practice of law in Northampton. It was reported that the safe in the Inn once held the announcement from Peary that he had discovered the North Pole. The Inn was for years a favorite meeting place of Smith College students.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Daily Hampshire Gazette, February 20, 1897, July 28, 1899, July 15, 1905, February 27, 1906.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

The house as built in 1850 was two stories in height with hipped roof, wide eaves and brackets. The facade was three-bays wide and faced South St. This is the way the house appears on the 1875 "Bird's Eye View" of Northampton. In the early 20th century, just after Rahar's Inn was opened, a large four-bay addition was made to the Parsons House on the northern end. It was probably at this time that the slate Mansard roof with dentil cornice was added as well as the long wrap around porch.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

This was originally constructed in 1850 as Enos Parson's residence. Mr. Parsons was 6th in descent from Joseph Parsons, one of Northampton's original settlers in 1654. He was born on King St. in 1815 and apprenticed with James Ingals, who for forty years was the town's leading barber. In 1835 Enos went into business for himself. However, he wasn't satisfied being just a barber, and in 1838 was appointed captain of the state militia. In 1870 he was admitted to the bar, although he had been practicing law in town since about 1850. He served as justice of the peace and was the leading trial justice of the town before the district court was established. He also served as commissioner of insolvency, was president of the village improvement society in 1878 and 1879, and for many years was the principal auctioneer in town.

After his death in 1892 the homestead was sold to Richard Rahar who in 1897 opened Rahar's Inn. A large addition was made early in the 20th century and this became one of Northampton's most popular hotels. The location provided easy access to Main St. and gave a splendid vista of the Tom and Holyoke ranges south of the city.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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