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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Denton Homestead

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 60 Denton Avenue

city or town East Rockaway

state New York code NY county Nassau code 059 zip code 11518

☐ not for publication

☐ vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Ruth A. Pimental DAHPD
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/15/14
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain): _____

for Edison H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

11.12.14
Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

REVIVALS / Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brick

walls: Wood

roof: Asphalt

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Denton Homestead is located on the west side of Denton Avenue in the Village of East Rockaway within the Town of Hempstead in Nassau County. A densely packed residential street, Denton Avenue is lined by trees and concrete sidewalks; similar residential streets are located to the east and west. The Mill River and the Long Island Railroad are located about a quarter of a mile to the east. Denton Avenue, which was laid out on Denton family land by 1900, extends north from Main Street. The Denton Homestead, which was originally built on Main Street, was moved slightly west to accommodate the construction of Denton Avenue. In 1924, the house was moved a second time, to a location further north on Denton Avenue; this allowed for the extension of Atlantic Avenue. The nominated parcel is the .46 acre lot that has been associated with the Denton Homestead since 1924; the lot is approximately twice as large as any other along the street. A concrete driveway runs along the south side of the wooded lot to a carriage house at the rear. The property includes the residence and a ca. 1900 carriage house.

Narrative Description

The Denton Homestead is a two-and-a-half story, five-bay, center-hall, vernacular colonial house. The frame building is covered in wood shakes and rests upon a concrete block basement and foundation constructed when the building was moved. A one-story, hipped roof addition projects from the south elevation. The side-gabled roof has three front-gabled dormers covered in shakes; each has a four-over-four window. A brick chimney is visible at the crest of each gable end of the roofline.

Though the Denton Homestead was built during the eighteenth century, changes over time and two historic-period moves have obscured the building's early configuration. A detailed historic structures report would help to clarify the physical history of the building. Historic images demonstrate that the house had a two-and-a-half story, three-bay section on the north and an adjoining one-and-a-half story, two-bay section on the south by the late nineteenth century. Both sections are two rooms deep. A one-story, shed-roofed porch connected the facades of the two buildings by that period.¹ It is likely that the one-and-a-half story section was built initially, and that the two-and-a-half story section was added either during the building's use as a tavern or during the Denton family's early ownership. The house was likely reconfigured to its current center-hall plan at that time. An expanded roofline, dormers, shingle siding, and a first-floor addition were constructed after the house was moved in 1924. Though the fenestration pattern was retained, the original twelve-over-eight windows were replaced at that time.

A one-story, shed-roofed porch runs across the full façade and extends slightly onto the south elevation to meet the one-story addition. The porch is supported by square wooden posts with stepped, square capitals; the posts are connected by a simple balustrade. Underneath the porch roofline, the building is covered in clapboard siding with an ovolo molding. The central entrance is flanked by two sets of four-over-six parlor windows. The wide, wood-paneled entrance door has two arched, molded panels on the top, and two rectangular, molded panels at the bottom; it appears to be an earlier door that was modified during the late nineteenth-century. A two-pane transom is located over the door. Five four-over-four windows light the second floor; their slightly asymmetrical placement is indicative of the house's earlier two-part massing.

On the south elevation, an additional entry door from the porch provides access to the room that served as the Denton office. The addition, second floor, and half story are each lit by two four-over-four windows. The north elevation also has

¹ "The Denton Homestead," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 21, 1895; Photograph, ca. 1900, Denton Family file, courtesy of Ellen Morrison.

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two four-over-four windows on each story. The west (rear) elevation has two one-story, shed-roofed porches. A one-bay entrance porch with a simple railing is located in the southernmost bay, and a two-bay, shed-roofed, enclosed porch is located near the center of the elevation.

On the interior, the first floor is divided into a central hallway, large parlor, dining room, office, and kitchen. The central hallway, which extends to the rear of the rear wall, is divided into an entry foyer and stairhall by a central archway. The archway is supported by square, engaged columns on each side of the hall. The simple, Colonial Revival staircase is located on the south wall of the stairhall. A wood-paneled, eighteenth-century exterior door with strap hinges and a four-light transom provides access to the rear enclosed porch. The large parlor is located to the north of the hallway. A summer beam with molded edges runs across the center of the ceiling. A fireplace with a federal-style mantel is centrally located on the north wall; the room retains early trim and flooring. The dining room, south of the hallway, features a built-in corner cabinet with leaded glass, the remnants of a federal mantelpiece, an eighteenth-century door, and early trim. The original fireplace was likely removed during one of the two moves; however, the wooden mantelpiece was retained within the wall. The Denton office, which retains its original trim and exterior door, is located to the south of the dining room. The kitchen, to the west of the dining room, was expanded and updated during the early twentieth century. Two sets of cabinets with glass pane and beadboard cabinet doors were added at that time. The second floor has a central hallway, five bedrooms, and a bathroom. The finished half-story has a central hallway, two bedrooms, and storage space. Each of the bedrooms on the upper stories retain early trim, flooring, and board and batten doors.

A one-and-a-half story, side-gabled, ca. 1900 frame carriage house is located to the west of the house. It is covered in clapboard and rests on a concrete foundation. The primary façade has two sets of double doors made of vertical clapboard; the doors are offset from center. A small central hayloft door made of vertical clapboard is located under a small, through-cornice gable. Each of the gables on the north and south elevations are clipped; small rectangular vents are located under each gable.

Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century features have been retained throughout the house, including doors, hardware, flooring, trim, and mantelpieces. However, the Denton Homestead primarily retains integrity to the early twentieth century. Relocating the house to Denton Avenue, a new residential street on family land, moved the house away from an increasingly commercial corridor and facilitated its expansion to suit both the family and its business. The house features a blend of Colonial and Colonial Revival elements, and reflects the Denton family's status in the community throughout the period of significance.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☒ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1795 – 1960

Significant Dates

1808, ca. 1900, 1924

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The house was moved twice during the period of significance. Both moves relate to the Denton family's efforts to develop their land and lay out new roads and lots.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Denton Homestead is significant under Criterion A for its association with the locally-prominent Denton family's involvement in the planning and development of East Rockaway. Over the course of four generations, the Denton family shaped the development of significant acreage in East Rockaway and frequently participated in the civic and political life of the community. Oliver Denton, who purchased the Denton Homestead in 1808, grew wealthy through his real estate deals and became one of the Town of Hempstead's largest landowners. His son, Oliver S. Denton, established a successful surveying and civil engineering office that operated from the Denton Homestead until 1960. Delameter S. Denton, who was the primary surveyor and civil engineer for the planned community of Garden City, expanded the business. He also began the process of subdividing and selling the family's land in East Rockaway for residential development. Delameter Denton II oversaw the final stages of the family's development in East Rockaway and continued the family surveying business and tradition of active civic engagement. Built ca. 1795, the Denton Homestead is also locally significant under Criterion C as a rare surviving former tavern and farmhouse from the village's early period. Though it was moved twice to accommodate the Denton family's development plans for their land, the Denton Homestead retains much of its early form and interior details.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Early History of East Rockaway

The Town of Hempstead developed slowly during the eighteenth century. In 1643, the Dutch governor negotiated a peace treaty with the Rockaway Indians; this land encompassed part of the Rockaways and the Town of Hempstead. The governor established a patent and sold the land to Robert Fordham and John Carman, two Englishmen from Connecticut, on behalf of a group of 30 families led by Reverend Richard Denton. Generally, settlement was uneven and occurred near valuable natural features, such as inlets and freshwater streams. A settlement at Near Rockaway was first mentioned in the Hempstead town records in 1665. However, the land was primarily valued for its use as pasturage.²

After Joseph Haviland established a grist mill on the Mill River in 1688, a small commercial hamlet began to develop. Located on a deep, natural channel, the Haviland mill enabled quicker and cheaper shipping of milled flour through coastal trade. In the years after the Revolutionary War, East Rockaway began to flourish. After the New York City customs house was opened in 1799, business increased at East Rockaway and Raynortown, the only free ports remaining in the region. In addition to the grist mill, oystering, fishing and lumbering industries began to develop. A store, a Methodist church, and a scattering of taverns and houses were built to accommodate the hamlet's commerce and small, but growing, population.³

Local histories indicate that the Denton Homestead was originally built by ca. 1795 to serve as a tavern. Located on Main Street approximately a quarter-mile from the mill, the building was well-situated to serve sailors and travelers coming through the port. The earliest configuration of the building is unknown, as the earliest known images and descriptions of the building date to the late nineteenth century. By that time, the building had evolved into a two-and-a-half story, side-hall, Long Island half-house with a one-and-a-half story, side-hall, half-house section attached to its west elevation. The one-and-a-half story section may have been built earlier in the eighteenth century. The two-and-a-half story, side-hall

² Patricia C. Sympson, *East Rockaway* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), 7 ; Town of Hempstead, "History of the Town," available at <<http://toh.li/archives/history-of-the-town>>.

³ National Register of Historic Places, Haviland-Davison Grist Mill, East Rockaway, Nassau County (97NR01169).

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section was likely constructed to accommodate the building's change in use from a small residence to a tavern. One account suggests that the lower rooms held a bar and parlor, and that a large ballroom was located on the upper floor.⁴

Oliver Denton (1773-1846)

Oliver Denton, a descendant of Rev. Richard Denton, moved to Near Rockaway and purchased the tavern and surrounding land in 1808. While local histories indicate that Oliver remodeled the building to better serve his family, the extent of those changes are unknown. Oliver Denton made a living through farming the land surrounding the Denton Homestead. While no agricultural records exist that date to Oliver's lifetime, the 1850 Agricultural Census indicates that the farm was among the most valuable in the town. Its primary product was butter (400 lb.), but also produced smaller amounts of wheat, rye, corn, oats, potatoes and swine. Some agricultural produce may have been sold locally, but it is likely that much was shipped from Near Rockaway's small port to New York City. Oliver was able to create some wealth for the family as a result of his real estate ventures. He periodically purchased and sold nearby farms and land. He also kept and farmed some of the land. By 1837, Oliver Denton's assets were valued at \$14,700. He paid \$27.93 and was the largest taxpayer in the Town of Hempstead.⁵

Oliver S. Denton (1809-1884)

Near Rockaway continued to serve as a small, but thriving, port. At high tide, 60-ton boats could reach the port. The inlet was lined by oyster houses and boat houses for small fishing operations. A regular packet service from East Rockaway delivered oysters to New York City. About 40 small trading vessels consistently operated from the port throughout the century. An active shipbuilding industry also developed in the hamlet alongside the lumber and coal industries. By 1836, the hamlet had a grist mill, store, three taverns, twelve dwellings, and Methodist church.⁶

Oliver S. Denton was an active participant in both the commercial and civic life of the thriving hamlet. He continued operating his father's farm with the aid of hired staff. The farm primarily produced butter, grains, and began producing honey during the 1870s. The Denton farm increased in value over the course of Denton's ownership, but this is due to an increase in the value of the land rather than any improvements the agricultural operation itself. In 1850, for example, the 78-acre farm was valued at \$4,700 and produced 400 pounds of butter and a combined 550 bushels of wheat, rye, corn, oats, and potatoes. By 1880, the acreage and total produce decreased but the farm was valued at \$6,000. The primarily produced corn (310 bushels), butter (100 pounds), and honey (100 pounds) as well as smaller amount of wheat, buckwheat, and potatoes (approximately 30 bushels each). In addition to farming, Oliver operated a surveying business from his family home; it is possible that he obtained his surveying skills to aid in his father's real estate deals. He was also the area's only Notary Public for decades. Through these two enterprises, he was involved in numerous land and legal transactions in Hempstead. Locally well-liked and trusted, he was known to provide guidance even in cases where he was not directly involved. By 1850, Oliver became a partner in Carman, Denton, and Carman, a store in Hempstead. A radical Democrat, Oliver was politically active in both the Town of Hempstead and Queens County for most of his life.⁷

⁴ "The Denton Homestead," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 21, 1895; Photographs, Denton family file, courtesy of Ellen Morrison

⁵ Denton genealogy, Denton family file; Clinton E. Metz, "Heir to Hempstead's Spirit of 1644," *Long Island Forum* (1970), 72-74; New York, Federal Agricultural census, 1850.

⁶ Benjamin Franklin Thompson, *The History of Long Island; from its Discovery and Settlement, to the Present Time* (New York: Gould, Banks & Co., 1843), 43; M. Douglas Sackman, "An Historical Sketch of the Village of East Rockaway," undated m.s.; Edward Smits, *Nassau: Suburbia, U.S.A.: The First Seventy-five Years of Nassau County, New York* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1974), 19.

⁷ Oliver S. Denton Obituary, Denton Family file; New York, Federal Agricultural census, 1860-1880.

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The 1836 shipwrecks of the *Bristol* and the *Mexico* near East Rockaway shocked the small port community. Oliver S. Denton provided the lumber for the sixty coffins needed to bury the victims of the *Mexico*, and the hamlet erected a monument in honor of the victims. Afterward, Oliver became interested in lifesaving and kept a lifeboat in the yard at the Denton Homestead. He also began working as an agent for the New York Board of Underwriters; he was specifically tasked with looking after their interests in shipwrecks. In 1853, Oliver was appointed to serve as the Superintendent of the Life-Saving Stations on Long Island in 1853. In addition to serving as Superintendent, Oliver also acted as the first keeper of the Long Beach station. Instead of living at the station itself, Oliver built a temporary platform on the roof of the Denton House where he could watch the shore with a spyglass. When he was needed at the station, he would row down the Mill River to the lifesaving station. In 1869, Long Island's lifesaving crews presented Oliver S. Denton with a gold watch and chain in honor of his service as superintendent. They also presented a scroll which praised him for his character and "uniform courtesy, punctuality, and thoroughness."⁸

Delameter S. Denton (1846-1917)

After the Montauk Branch of the Long Island Railroad was completed to Lynbrook in 1869, East Rockaway gained its own post office and its name. While the railroad improved travel, commerce, and communication, it led to the decline of East Rockaway's port. Small oyster dredging operations continued, but oystermen shipped their catch by railroad instead of by packet service. Within a decade, Lynbrook became the center of commerce and trade in the vicinity. East Rockaway attracted some summer visitors, but had trouble competing with south shore communities with a direct rail line; Long Beach's large resort hotel, built in 1880, was particularly popular and drew potential tourists away from the more inland hamlet. East Rockaway had one small hotel, the Carman House, which catered to tourist traffic.⁹

Delameter S. Denton became involved in his father's surveying business at a young age. The business grew substantially under his leadership, as nearby communities were formed and expanded at the turn of the century. Garden City, which was established on the Town of Hempstead's former common lands, was one of the largest projects of Denton's career. Alexander T. Stewart purchased 7,170 acres land for \$55 an acre in 1869, and hired Oliver S. and Delameter Denton to survey and lay out the land soon afterward. One of the earliest planned cities in the United States, Garden City was laid out with wide avenues and large lots under the direction of architect John Kellum. Delameter soon took over management of the project, and worked consistently in Garden City through 1890. Delameter and Oliver expanded their skills while working on the large scale project; by 1880, both men listed their occupations and advertised themselves as civil engineers. A number of the buildings constructed in Garden City during the Stewart, Kellum, and Denton years have been listed on the National Register (93THM00008). Delameter maintained a large building behind the train station as his Garden City office in addition to his office at the Denton Homestead. The high-profile project resulted in increased business, though largely for projects on a smaller scale.¹⁰

In 1880, the Long Island Railroad was extended to East Rockaway. Aware of the possibility for a new railroad line to transform the hamlet into a suburban or resort community, the residents of East Rockaway watched for new developments. Landowners, including the Denton family, continued farming or held their land idle in anticipation of a

⁸ Nathaniel S. Prime, *A History of Long Island: from its first settlement by Europeans to the year 1845* (New York: R. Carter, 1845), 287; Henry Isham Hazelton, *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York, 1609-1924* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1925) ; Van R. Field, *Mayday!: Shipwrecks, Tragedies & Tales from Long Island's Eastern Shore* (Charleston, S.C.: The History Press, 2008), 13-15; Metz, "Heir."

⁹ "Primitive East Rockaway," *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 9, 1894; Sackman, "East Rockaway."; Hazelton, *Boroughs*; United States Coast Guard Historian, "Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard Stations," Point Lookout and Long Beach Stations entries, available at: <<http://www.uscg.mil/history/stations/StationIndex.asp>>.

¹⁰ Hazelton, *Boroughs*; *History of Queens County* (New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1882); New York, Federal Census, 1880; Mildred H. Smith, *Garden City, Long Island, in Early Photographs, 1869-1919* (New York: Dover, 1987), 9.

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boom in local real estate. Even without public improvements, land prices averaged at approximately \$1,000 an acre during the 1890s. While this may have slowed initial investment in and development of the hamlet, their gamble soon paid off. New lots were laid out to the north and west of the railroad station; the local lumberyard and builders were soon busy with new construction. The Village of East Rockaway, with a population of 969, was incorporated in 1900, two years after Nassau County was created in 1898. The new local and county governments facilitated the development and maintenance of infrastructure and led to increased development in the community.¹¹

After his father's death in 1884, Delameter continued to operate the farm on a small scale. Felix Moletikie, a Russian-Polish immigrant was working as the Dentons' farm laborer in 1900. By the turn of the twentieth century, new residential development had begun to reach the Denton family's land. The Denton land, located southwest of the railroad station, ran from Main Street to Wood Avenue, near the railroad line. To accommodate the ideal route of a new road through the center of the property, Delameter moved the Denton homestead and its outbuildings about 100 feet west. He speculatively laid out narrow, residential lots on either side of Denton Avenue. By 1900, two new residences had been built on the land.¹²

Delameter Denton II (1877-1971)

Delameter Denton II grew up at the Denton Homestead as the oldest of eight siblings. Delameter occasionally worked with his father at Garden City and began to learn surveying and civil engineering. He also briefly worked at a large lumberyard in Rockville Centre. After serving in the Engineers unit of the Army during the Spanish-American War, Delameter returned to East Rockaway. For a few years, he worked for a Brooklyn dry goods company that sent its representatives with wagons of supplies to Long Island communities. He married Rosamond Story of Oceanside in 1904, and joined his father's firm in East Rockaway. In addition to his work as a civil engineer, Delameter was active in the local politics of the young village. He joined the East Rockaway Fire Department in 1895, and continued to serve throughout his lifetime. He served as East Rockaway's Village President from 1909-1910 and served several terms as Treasurer.¹³

Though the Village grew, the lots along Denton Avenue filled slowly. By 1922, the population of the village doubled to 2,250. As Main Street began to develop into an increasingly commercial corridor, Delameter decided to move the Denton Homestead further north on Denton Avenue. In 1924, Delameter moved the house and carriage house to a large lot on his family's land. After the move, he expanded the house by increasing the height of the roofline. His Colonial Revival updates, including the addition of new windows and dormers, made the house appear more impressive to potential buyers. It also helped set the tone for new construction along Denton Avenue, most of which was built in common early twentieth-century suburban styles. The move was well-timed. In 1926, the East Rockaway National Bank purchased the former house lot and built a two-story, stone-veneer building at the corner. The sale of lots and construction of new homes along Denton Avenue increased during the late twenties; in 1926, a single builder was involved in six different projects along the street. By 1951, Denton Avenue had been filled with new homes.¹⁴

¹¹ "Primitive East Rockaway," *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 9, 1894; Smits, *Nassau*, 55.

¹² Map of East Rockaway, 1900, Denton Family file; Metz, "Heir.,"; Newspaper articles, Denton family file; New York, Federal census, 1900.

¹³ Metz, "Heir.,"; New York, Federal Census, 1900, 1910; New York, Spanish-American War Military and Naval Service Records, 1898-1902.

¹⁴ *Nassau County, New York* [map], 1924, 1951, "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – New York; "Important Sales of Property in and Near Lynbrook Village," *Long Island Daily Press*, April 5, 1926; "Expect New Bank will Build Home at East Rockaway," *Long Island Daily Press*, April 15, 1926.

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Delameter adapted his surveying and civil engineering business to take advantage of East Rockaway's dramatic growth and suburbanization. He continued to operate the firm from his home until he dissolved the business and retired in 1960. Delameter briefly re-entered the field, and worked at the firm of Walter B. White through the mid-1960s. He continued volunteering with the local fire department, and was honored for his 75 years of service in 1960. As honorary chief, he attended meetings and shared the chief's car in parades. In addition to being one of the longest-serving, Delameter was recognized as the oldest volunteer fireman in New York State.¹⁵

Building History

The Denton Homestead is a rare remaining example of settlement period architecture in East Rockaway. The Peter Hewlett house, which surveyed by HABS during the 1930s, historically stood as the Denton Homestead's neighbor to the east along Main Street. The early 19th century, Gambrel-roofed, center-hall building was typically mentioned alongside the Denton Homestead in late nineteenth and early twentieth century articles about East Rockaway's history. It was demolished to facilitate the construction of a new post office during the mid-twentieth century. Other earlier resources were lost to time or to East Rockaway's rapid suburban development. The Haviland-Davison Grist Mill (97NR01169) is the only known building of a similar vintage remaining in the village.

Early architecture on Long Island tended to follow simple, consistent forms based upon vernacular building methods. The two most prominent building types are a three-bay, side-hall plan, or "half-house," and a five-bay, center-hall plan. In either case, these buildings were timber-framed, sided with clapboard or shingles, and had gable roofs. They also had regular window patterns, large central or interior end chimneys and minimal detail and ornamentation. During the early nineteenth century, aspects of national styles, particularly Federal and Greek Revival, began to appear on both new buildings and in minor renovations of earlier homes. In most communities, these conservative building types were used through the mid-nineteenth century. These houses were often enlarged or expanded using similar, traditional construction methods.¹⁶

A thorough investigation is necessary to firmly establish a building history for the Denton Homestead. Though these changes are now historic, twentieth-century modifications and two moves have obfuscated early details. The building's earliest form was likely as a one-and-a-half-story, two-rooms-deep, side-gabled, half house. The two-and-a-half-story, half-house addition was probably built to facilitate the house's use as a tavern. Each section had an interior end chimney. The addition's side-gabled roofline had slightly curved eaves that bore some resemblance to early Dutch buildings in the region. The concrete walls, metal posts, and circular sawn beams in the basement bear the mark of the 1924 move, but hand-hewn beams and wide floorboards bear the mark of the house's early period of construction. After he purchased the building in 1808, Oliver Denton modified it for his family. It is likely that he added the house's two Federal mantelpieces. Several eighteenth-century panel doors with early, latch-style hardware remain, most rooms retain early twentieth-century trim, and early board-and-batten doors remain on the second floor.

By the late nineteenth century, a one-story, shed-roofed porch had been built along the full façade. At that time, the house retained its twelve-over-eight sash windows, and was covered in clapboard siding. By the late nineteenth century, the early panel door was given an exaggerated Italianate treatment. However, it was during the twentieth century that the Denton Homestead saw the most change. The house was moved to Denton Avenue, and rests on a concrete block foundation. At that time, the one-and-a-half story section was raised to match the other section and three dormers were

¹⁵ Metz, "Heir"; "Delameter Denton: Oldest Vamp in State," Denton Family file.

¹⁶ Thomas C. Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1984), 35, 47-48; National Register of Historic Places, Huntington (Town) Multiple Resource Area, Huntington, Suffolk County (90MRA00052).

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County and State

added to the roofline. Much of the siding and all of fenestration was replaced to give a consistent appearance. Kitchen cabinetry, a leaded-glass corner cabinet, and a simple staircase were added on the interior. The third floor was converted to living space; historic roof framing is likely covered by the walls.

Through its architecture and association with the Denton family, the Denton Homestead's history exemplifies the history of East Rockaway's growth from a small maritime hamlet to a dense suburban village. Initially built to serve as a tavern, the Denton Homestead retains its late eighteenth century massing, and its nineteenth-century mantelpieces, trim, floors, and doors. Transformed into a farmhouse, family home, and surveyor's office, the Denton Homestead was at the core of the Denton family's civic, commercial, and personal lives. Through the three generations of their surveying and civil engineering business, as well as the creation of Denton Avenue and house lots on the family's acreage near the core of the hamlet, the Denton family shaped the growth and development of East Rockaway.

Denton Homestead
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Denton Family file, courtesy of Ellen Morrison

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Hazelton, Henry Isham. *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York, 1609-1924*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1925.

History of Queens County. New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1882.

Hubka, Thomas C. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1984.

“Important Sales of Property in and Near Lynbrook Village,” *Long Island Daily Press*, April 5, 1926. Metz, Clinton E. “Heir to Hempstead’s Spirit of 1644.” *Long Island Forum* (1970), 72-74.

Nassau County, New York [map], 1924, 1951, “Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – New York.

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New York, Federal Agricultural Census, 1850-1880.

New York, Federal Census, 1880, 1900, 1910.

New York, Spanish-American War Military and Naval Service Records, 1898-1902.

Prime, Nathaniel S. *A History of Long Island: from its first settlement by Europeans to the year 1845*. New York: R. Carter, 1845.

“Primitive East Rockaway,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 9, 1894. Sackman, M. Douglas. “An Historical Sketch of the Village of East Rockaway.” Undated m.s.

Smith, Mildred H. *Garden City, Long Island, in Early Photographs, 1869-1919*. New York: Dover, 1987.

Smits, Edward. *Nassau: Suburbia, U.S.A.: The First Seventy-five Years of Nassau County, New York*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1974.

Sympson, Patricia C. *East Rockaway*. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2009.

“The Denton Homestead,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 21, 1895.

Denton Homestead
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Thompson, Benjamin Franklin. *The History of Long Island; from its Discovery and Settlement, to the Present Time*. New York: Gould, Banks & Co., 1843.

Town of Hempstead. "History of the Town." Available at <<http://toh.li/archives/history-of-the-town>>.

United States Coast Guard Historian. "Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard Stations." Point Lookout and Long Beach Stations entries. Available at: <<http://www.uscg.mil/history/stations/StationIndex.asp>>.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .46
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>613066</u> Easting	<u>4499926</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

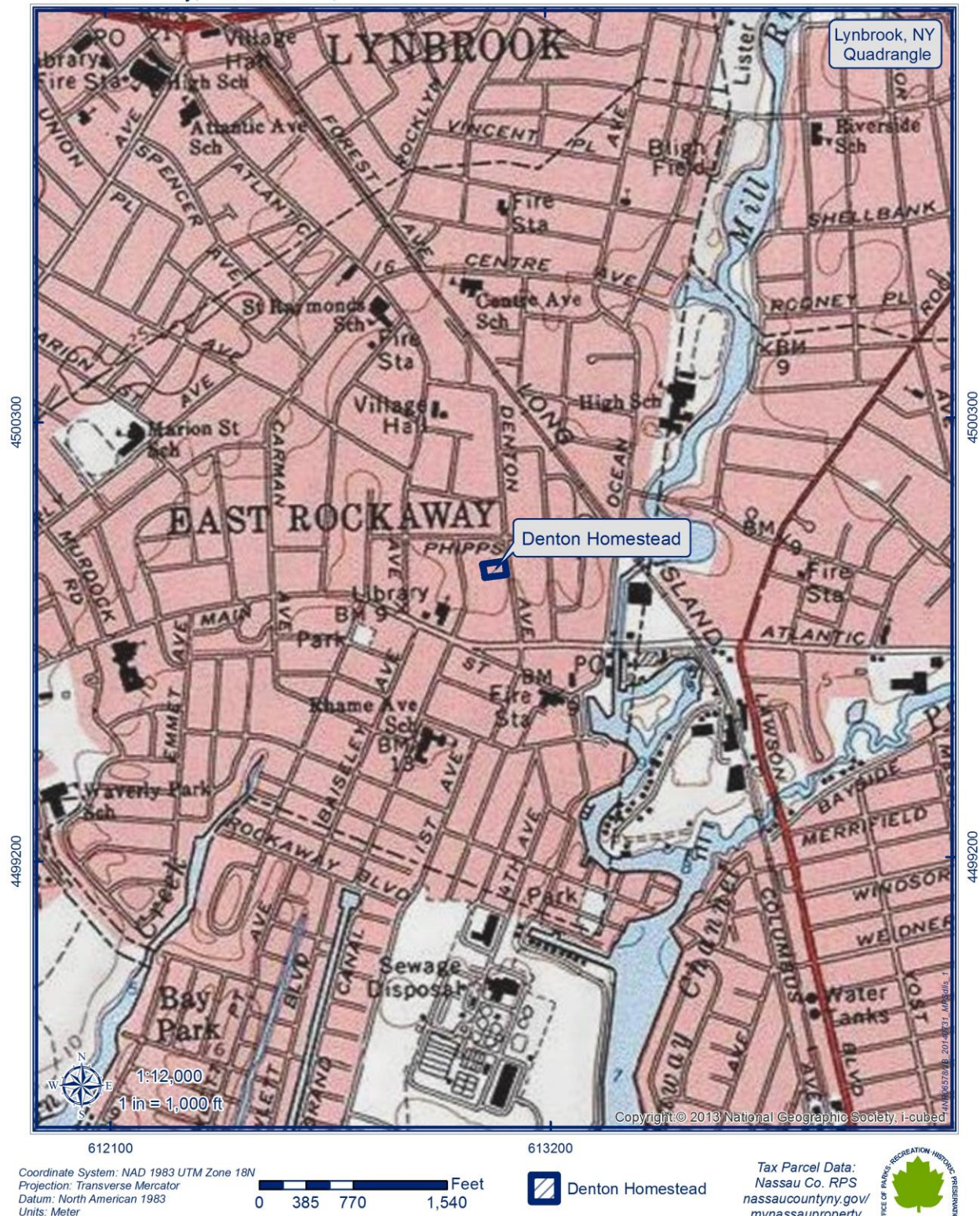
The boundary was drawn to include the parcel that has been historically associated with the Denton Homestead since 1924. This parcel was created from subdivided Denton family farmland that had been associated with the house since the 18th century. Prior to 1924, the house was located approximately .15 miles to the south along Main Street.

Denton Homestead
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State

Denton Homestead
East Rockaway, Nassau Co., NY

60 Denton Avenue
East Rockaway, NY 11518



Denton Homestead
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State

Denton Homestead
East Rockaway, Nassau Co., NY

60 Denton Avenue
East Rockaway, NY 11518



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 85 170 340 Feet

 Denton Homestead

Tax Parcel Data:
Nassau Co. RPS
nassaucountyny.gov/mynassauproperty



Denton Homestead
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer Betsworth
organization NY SHPO date 8/11/2014
street & number Peebles Island telephone 581-237-8643 ext. 3296
city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188
e-mail Jennifer.Betsworth@parks.ny.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Denton Homestead
City or Vicinity: East Rockaway
County: Nassau State: NY
Photographer: Jennifer Betsworth & Ellen Morrison
Date Photographed: May 28, 2014 & July 28, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 11	NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0001 Exterior, Façade (east elevation), facing west
2 of 11	NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0002 Exterior, Porch detail (east elevation), facing north
3 of 11	NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0003 Exterior, west elevation, facing east
4 of 11	NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0004 Exterior, Carriage House, facing west
5 of 11	NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0005 Interior, Stairhall, facing wests

Denton Homestead

Name of Property

Nassau County, NY

County and State

- 6 of 11 NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0006
Interior, Parlor, Mantelpiece detail, facing north
- 7 of 11 NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0007
Interior, Parlor, facing east
- 8 of 11 NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0008
Interior, Dining room, mantelpiece detail, facing south
- 9 of 11 NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_0009
Interior, Dining room, cabinet detail, facing northeast
- 10 of 11 NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_00010
Interior, Denton office, facing east
- 11 of 11 NY_Nassau County_ Denton Homestead_00011
Interior, Second floor hallway, facing east

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ellen Morrison

street & number 60 Denton Avenue

telephone 516-889-2485

city or town East Rockaway

state NY

zip code 11518

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

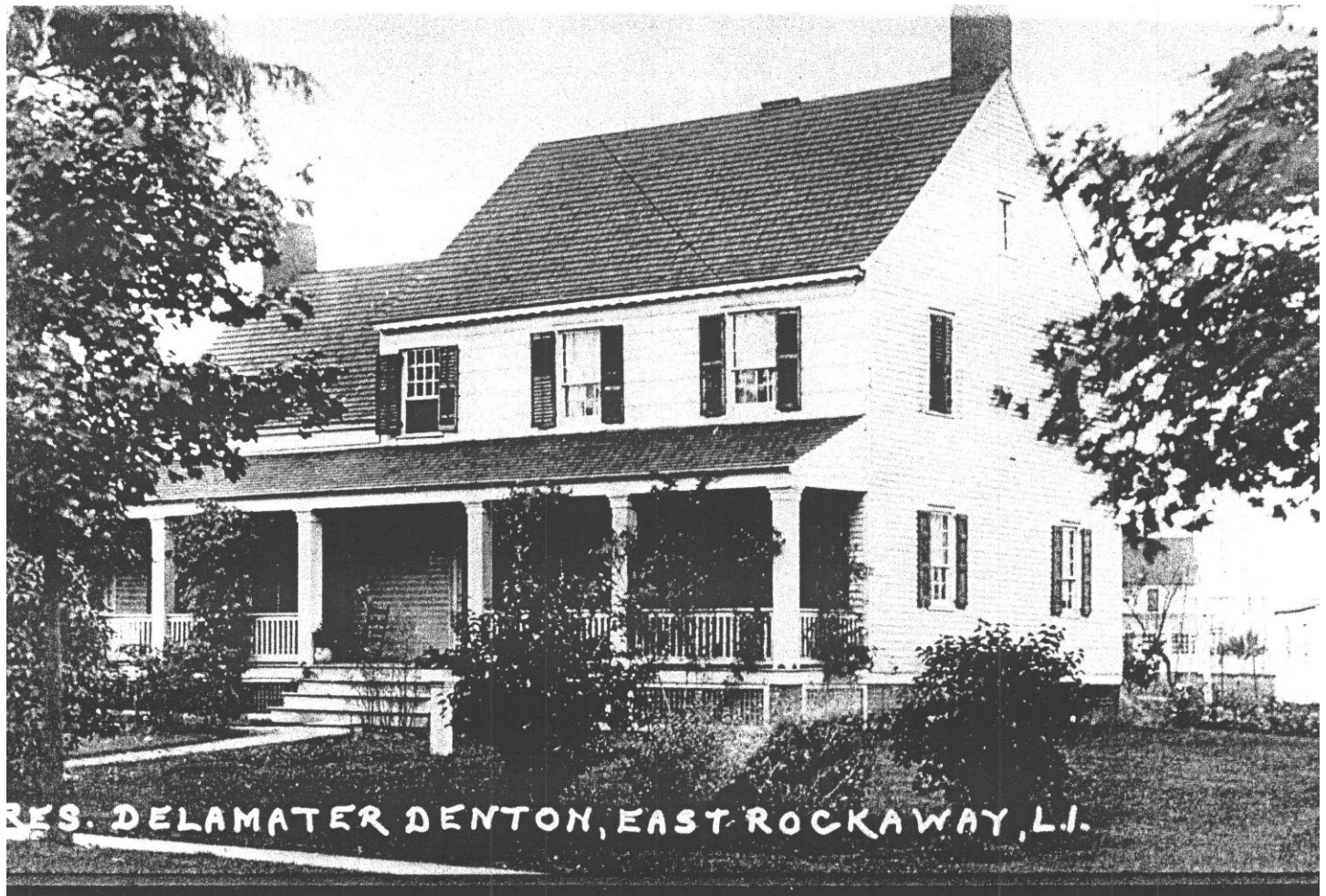
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Denton Homestead

Name of Property

Nassau County, NY

County and State



Denton Homestead, ca. 1900, Courtesy Ellen Morrison























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Denton Homestead
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Nassau

DATE RECEIVED: 9/26/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/12/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000913

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 11.12.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

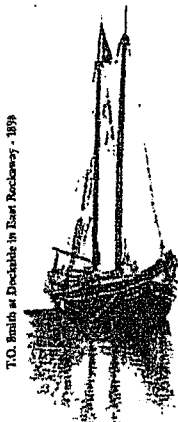
RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

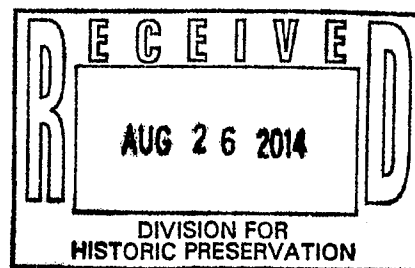
TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Historical
Society
of
East
Rockaway
& Lynbrook



August 24, 2014

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RE: Preservation of the Delamater Denton House, East Rockaway, NY

It is with great pleasure that the Historical Society of East Rockaway & Lynbrook supports the preservation of the Denton Homestead on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Denton Homestead represents two and a half centuries of East Rockaway history. The Dentons for several generations played a significant role in the development of the early economy of the region. The Dentons became players in the fire department which developed prior to the incorporation of the village and Delamater Denton, a Village President and local surveyor, was a concomitant personage with the actual development of many communities on the south shore of Long Island.

We wholeheartedly support your effort to have the Denton Homestead cited on the National Register. It will join Havilland Davison Grist Mill Museum, already in place on the national Register of Historic Places and will add to the extensive history of East Rockaway.

Yours truly,

Patricia C. Sympson, PhD, President
516-887-9094
psympson@optonline.net

IN MEMORIAM
Dr. Santo Barbarino
HONORARY DIRECTOR
Mary Gipson
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
William Leahy
TREASURER





New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

9 September 2014

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose the following five nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Denton Homestead, East Rockaway, Nassau County
Woodlawn Cemetery, Canandaigua, Ontario County
Wayne and Waldorf Apartments, Buffalo, Erie County
Valhalla Highlands, Cold Spring Vicinity, Putnam County
Central Avenue Historic District, Lancaster, Erie County

Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office