

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1361

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District

other names Methodist Episcopal Church, East Rochester Congregational Church, Briggs Lane or Woodside Cemetery

2. Location

street & number 355 County Road ☐ not for publication

city or town Rochester ☐ vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Plymouth code 023 zip code 02770

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon November 20, 2007
Signature of certifying official/Title
Massachusetts Historical Commission Brona Simon State Historic Preservation Officer Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
 - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
 - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

1-9-08

East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Name of Property

Plymouth, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
5	1	objects
9	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: auditorium

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID 19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other STONE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth), Massachusetts

Summary Paragraph

The East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District is a rectangular 1.25 acre site along County Road in Rochester, Massachusetts, on its border with Wareham. The district consists of two properties, a church and a cemetery, which, since the second quarter of the 19th century, have been the symbolic public center for a linear rural neighborhood. East Rochester Church is a 1½-story wood-frame Greek Revival church dating from 1857. This gable-front building has recessed-panel pilasters, a wide divided trim band below the cornice, and tall 12/12 sash windows. The square pilastered belfry, on a pilastered base, contains an 1872 bell. The interior of the church retains features dating from an 1892 redecorating and subsequent improvements early in the 20th century, including a tin ceiling and eighteen long, divided, slip pews. East Rochester Church was built in the southeastern corner of the pre-existing neighborhood cemetery. This 1-acre cemetery lot contains approx. 180 burials, dating from 1828 to 1997, but most from before 1890. At present, the East Rochester Church and Cemetery are owned, respectively, by the Rochester Historical Society and the Town of Rochester.

Location and Setting

The setting of the East Rochester Church and Cemetery is distinctly rural, on the northeastern edge of the largely rural town of Rochester. Located on a slight rise (between 60 & 70 ft. above sea level), the district is on the western side of County Road, at its intersection with Pierceville Road in Wareham. County Road serves as the municipal boundary between Rochester and Wareham, although the latter began as part of Rochester. Historically, County Road was the main route between Rochester Center and Plymouth. It was also the only passage between the wetlands of the Sippican River in Rochester and the Weweantic River in Wareham, both of which flow southwards into Buzzards Bay. A mile to the north of the district, County Road intersects with MA Hwy. 28, the "Cranberry Highway;" at that intersection County Road becomes Massachusetts Highway 58, the main road from several south coast towns to the county seat at Plymouth. A half mile beyond this intersection to the north, County Road/Highway 58 connects with U.S. Interstate Hwy. 495 at Exit 2. Just over a mile south of the district, County Road is intersected by Marys Pond Road, the main street to Rochester Center. A half mile to the east of the district is the Wareham hamlet of Tremont, once a switching station where the main line of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad branched off to various coastal towns. A mile to the southwest of the district, at the intersection of High Street and Pierce Street, is Douglas Corner (formerly Pierceville), a settlement with which this church and cemetery has long been associated. The area immediately surrounding the district is sandy woodland, interspersed with logging swamps, pastureland, cranberry bogs, ponds, reservoirs, and gravel pits. Directly across County Road from the district, and along both sides of County Road, are 19th and early 20th century single-family houses on relatively large lots, interspersed with wetlands. The 1943 USGS topographical map shows housing density on County Road comparable to that of today. Several lots south of the district, but north of High Street, stood Pierceville School in 1943, although it has been demolished since then.

The East Rochester Church and Cemetery were once part of the same rectangular lot, although its legal history is complicated. Together the two make a generally rectangular plot, measuring approximately 150 feet wide and 280 feet deep; East Rochester church occupies an approx. 100 x 100 ft. plot in the southeast corner of this larger lot, defined by a deed in 1857. Ownership of the cemetery previously to 1971, when the town acquired it for a public cemetery, is unclear. The cemetery lot has been defined primarily by preexisting use and by transfers of the land surrounding it. Both the East Rochester Church and Cemetery have been known by a variety of names through their history. The church has been known, variously, as the Methodist Protestant Church (1857 references), Pierceville Meeting House (an 1880 deed for an adjacent property), and, since 1892, East Rochester Congregational Church. Various referred to as Pierceville Cemetery or Briggs Lane Cemetery in the 19th century, the East Rochester Cemetery has been known as Woodside Cemetery since at least 1940.

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East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth), Massachusetts

East Rochester Church: Summary & Exterior

East Rochester Church is a 1½-story clapboarded wood-frame church, on a brick foundation, whose original building measures 33 feet, 6 inches wide by 40 feet, 8 inches long (**Photograph 1**). Dating from 1857, this gable-front building has several prominent Greek Revival characteristics, including recessed-panel pilasters, a wide divided trim band below the cornice, and tall 12/12 sash windows. The three-part wall entablature is an unfigured frieze and architrave, clearly divided by a trim board, supporting a projecting cornice. The front vestibule of the building, an 1892 addition, measures 10 feet deep and 20 feet, 4½ inches wide. The church building is surmounted by a square two-level belfry with recessed-panel pilaster cornerboards. The belfry base is clapboarded, while the upper section is louvered, and contains an 1872 bell. Each of the belfry facades appears to be identical, and the belfry is capped with a low-pitched pyramidal roof and lightning rod. The church sits fairly close to this busy paved arterial road, with only a short front sidewalk dividing the narrow front yard.

Facing County Road, the eastern facade of the building is also the only symmetrical elevation (**Photograph 2**). The original facade of the building is clapboarded, with a simple facade gable and gable end returns supported by the recessed-panel Doric pilaster cornerboards. A small signboard, with a low gable-arched top, attaches to the wall in the middle of what would be the tympanum of the gable. It is blank, and partially obstructed by the peak of the gable roof of the vestibule addition. The vestibule is centered in the eastern facade and the front-gabled roof of the vestibule copies the angle of the roof of the original building. The vestibule is covered in a sequence of patterned shingles, which interact with the Greek Revival character of the building in interesting ways, while establishing a clear Victorian decorative surface. In the front gable, for example, just below the cornice board, rows of octagonal-patterned shingles cover the peak, followed by two rows of straight shingles, then hexagonal shingles, then another band of straight shingles connecting the cornice return, set atop a trim band of jagged triangular shingles, which define the base of the tympanum. Rows of straight shingles represent the frieze and architrave, and correspond to the frieze and architrave trim boards on the side elevations of the vestibule. Below these, a wide band of octagonal shingles wraps all three elevations of the vestibule and extends down to the top of the doors and windows. A row of jagged triangular shingles completes this band, and accentuates the door and window lintels. The wall surface below this point is clapboard. Thin pilaster cornerboards and cornice returns complete this modified Greek Revival/Victorian composition.

The primary entry to the building is through large double doors into the vestibule on the eastern facade. Painted green, these metal replacement doors each have four decorative panels. The front steps are also a recent replacement, with contemporary metal stair railings. The two tall windows on the eastern facade of the original building frame the vestibule. They are simple 12/12 double-hung windows with flat framing, a slightly overhanging drip lintel, and a shallow sill. Four windows light the vestibule, one each on the north and south elevations, and two on the eastern elevation, framing the front doorway. They are much shorter than the tall windows that light the hall. The doors and windows of the vestibule are both framed in a similar manner, with plain side boards and a single-board top lintel which simply projects slightly over the side boards. Most of the windows have aluminum-framed combination storms.

The Greek Revival characteristics are also pronounced on the clapboarded north and south side elevations of the East Rochester Church (**Photograph 3**). Recessed-panel pilaster Doric cornerboards frame the composition on both sides, supporting a wide divided trim band below the cornice, the frieze corbelling out twice above the architrave. The projecting cornice includes wooden guttering. On both the north and south sides the hall window placement is identical and asymmetrical, with the three tall windows placed closer to the western end of the church, allowing more light to the front of the church. On the south elevation, a six-panel side door (ca. 1928) opens directly into the main hall. A small

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Rochester (Plymouth) , Massachusetts

wooden scaffold landing, with an open staircase of four treads, provides access from the driveway to this door. Two small windows in the brick foundation light the basement. On the north elevation, three small 6/6 windows light the basement (**Photograph 4**). On the western end of the north elevation, a door provides direct access from the driveway into the church basement. A small end-gabled shed, 4 feet, 9 inches wide x 5 feet, 2 inches deep, dating from the mid-20th century, is attached to the foundation here as a vestibule.

The western elevation of the East Rochester Church is similar in frame to the eastern facade (**Photograph 5**). It has a simple facade gable and gable end returns supported by recessed-panel pilaster cornerboards. However, unlike the rest of the church, this elevation is shingled with unpainted cedar shingles. An exterior brick chimney stack (ca. 1907) rises from the ground, through the southern side of the overhanging cornice, and ends above the ridgeline with a pair of corbelled brick courses. Two iron collars anchor the chimney stack to the wall. The shingle covering may be a repair after fires in 1930 and the 1940s. A single doorway in the building's southern corner opens into the basement. It is slightly below grade and set into a concrete well, and fitted with a modern replacement door. Four windows light this elevation, including three centered under the ridgeline: a round stained glass window over the altar in the main hall, and two 6/6-light windows lighting the attic and basement. Another 6/6-light window opens into the northern end of the basement. A fuel-oil tank and other utility hook-ups clutter this elevation. Each of the four entries to the building has a single-bulb fixture directly above the door, as the main illumination of the exterior.

The grounds of the East Rochester Church slope gently from the southeast corner to the northwest corner, where the basement doorway is at grade. Wide blacktop driveways (particularly on the south) provide the only parking, and are joined by a gravel path behind the church to form a single horseshoe driveway. Signs encourage visitors to enter the driveway to the south of the church, drive around the building, and exit back onto busy County Road without having to back up. In the southwest corner of the lot is a two-room, four-seater wood frame **Outhouse/Privy** (**Photograph 6**). This gabled building faces east and has two small windows high in the north and south gables. A copper pipe bracketed to the north elevation of the outhouse indicates that it once had a front eavestrough to keep the ground in front of the entry from getting too wet. The privy is inactive but has been preserved. For the purposes of this nomination the Outhouse/Privy is a contributing building.

A walk leads from the front door of the church to the street. A recent (ca. 2003) addition to the site is a two-post signboard directly south of the church building, which gives the street number, and reads "EAST ROCHESTER CHURCH" and "Rochester Historical Society Museum." The **Signboard** is, for the purposes of this nomination, a noncontributing object.

East Rochester Church: Interior

Apart from the vestibule and basement, the interior of the building is primarily the 1½ story worship hall, which measures approx. 32 ft. wide x 39 ft., 4 inches long (**Photograph 7**). The hall faces west, with a 7-ft. deep, 16 inch high raised platform that extends the full width of the west end. Access to this platform is by a single inset step on the north and south end, and most of the platform is fronted by a pipe railing fitted with a cloth curtain. An 8-inch high raised dais atop the center of this platform holds the movable ecclesiastical furniture (the pulpit and chairs). The sanctuary focus is further indicated by a single round stained-glass window in a varnished circular frame, the center panel of which depicts an open bible with the words "HOLY BIBLE" written across the top of the pages. On either end of the center pulpit are simple wall sconces with single electric bulbs and frilled frosted glass shades (**Photograph 8**). A wooden hymn-number board with a gable-end top hangs just to the south of the southern sconce. A locked glass case attached to wall (on the western end of the north wall) contains the parish's pewter 5-piece communion set: a pitcher, paten, and three cups. A large

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console pipe organ sits on the northern end of the platform, marked "Organ—Vocalion, Mason and Risch, Worcester, MASS." The Canadian firm of Mason & Risch built the Vocalion in Worcester ca. 1890 to ca. 1903. The organ may date from the ca. 1892 redecoration of the church, or it may be the used organ from the Humphrey estate donated in 1932. The front of the church today is further crowded with display cases, memorabilia, and a mannequin belonging to the Rochester Historical Society. Large stand-alone wall bookcases now line much of the eastern wall. Presumably the gallery taken out in 1892 was along this now-blank eastern end; no location is indicated in church records.

Eighteen slip pews that measure 12 feet, 4 inches long, occupy most of the hall, arranged in two rows of nine pews each. The pews include a center divider, and open onto either the center or one of the two side aisles, thus making 36 pew spaces. The aisles are relatively narrow, measuring about two feet wide along the north and south walls and only three feet wide in the center. Metal numbers affixed to the pew ends indicate that the front pew has been removed on each side. This fact is further confirmed by an old seating plan showing 40 pew spaces. The aisle sides of these varnished slip pews have a gothic arch incised panel decoration. The backs and arms of the pews have a sinuous curved rail, terminating in a disk- or tendril-like curl.

The floors are covered with narrow tongue-and-groove boarding, running east-west throughout. The walls of the hall are circled by a varnished chair-rail-like board at three feet high, with narrow varnished vertical boarding below and plaster walls above (**Photograph 9**). The sills of the seven-foot tall windows rest upon this rail. The windows are 34 inches wide, set in simple varnished framing boards which are five inches wide. The framing board above the windows is slightly raked, with a gable peak in the center, and topped by a projecting cornice. The doorways in the south elevation and into the vestibule both have this same peaked cornice, indicating they all likely date from the initial construction of the church. The windows are fitted with sets of varnished interior folding shutters (ca. 1900). The plasterwork of the ceiling is evident only in the attic; the ceiling of the entire hall was covered in an elaborately patterned tin ceiling in 1910-11. This tin ceiling is in excellent shape throughout. Lighting for the sanctuary is provided by five electric fixtures suspended from the ceiling. The four corner lights consist of two single bulbs suspended from a pipe fitting, with glass shades (**Photograph 10**). An elaborate, and apparently older, chandelier hangs in the center of the room. It has eight arms, four of which support cups holding kerosene lanterns. Four of the arms have apparently had their lamp cups removed and replaced with a pipe fitting similar to the corner lights, each pipe holding two electric lights (see **Photographs 7 & 8**).

The vestibule, an addition built onto the eastern exterior wall of the building, is about 19 feet long (north to south) and 9 ft., 6 inches deep. Double doors on pivot hinges allow entrance into the main hall. These wooden doors have four recessed panels, long panels on top and short panels on the bottom. As in the main hall, the walls are plaster above and vertical wainscoting below. The windows have double folding inside shutters. A five foot-wide opening in the south end of the vestibule floor holds a staircase into the basement. A balustrade with turned balusters separates the stairwell from the hall. The steps and walls of this staircase are concrete block, except for the eastern wall that is foundation brick. The front sill and the cut ends of flooring boards in the wall above indicate that this interior staircase to the basement was inserted after the vestibule was completed, possibly when the vestibule underpinnings were replaced in 1909. The use of concrete block confirms this, or at least indicates that the staircase has been rebuilt in the 20th century. Just to the south of the doorway from the vestibule into the main hall, a wooden ladder ascends to a small trapdoor in the vestibule ceiling (adjacent to the original building). The bell rope also ascends to the belfry through this trapdoor. Within the vestibule attic, at its gable peak, a second trapdoor has been cut through the eastern facade of the original building, into the church attic; apparently the height of the roof of the vestibule was dictated by the height of the attic floor in the original building.

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The attic of the church reveals the nature of the building's pinned mortise-and-tenon frame. Four center king-post trusses, resting atop the east and west wall plates, carry most of the weight of the roof above and support the ceiling below. Each king post spades out at its top and bottom and is pinned into its tie beam below; the principal rafters rest against (and are tenoned into) the spade above. Side struts rise from the bottom spade of the king-post to the midpoint of the principal rafters, to both strengthen the truss and further support the side purlins. The purlins are trenched into the principal rafters. Two-part secondary rafters rise from the plate to the purlin and from the purlin to the ridgeline, where they are pinned together. The roof has no ridge pole. From the attic, the original ceiling is visible, complete with lathing and plaster. The eastern two bays of the roof have been somewhat reconstructed and reinforced over the years to support the weight of the roof belfry. The knob-and-tube wiring of the building (ca. 1914) is also visible in the attic.

The two-level belfry is a mortise-and-tenon framed structure, its beams held in place with pins. Only the side louvers and the pyramidal cap at the top appear to have been rebuilt. The bell is bolted to a carriage, which ends in side pins that fit into side yokes. The bell operates by a pulley in the floor and a side flywheel. On the side of the cast bell is the raised legend "William Blake & Co. formerly H.N. Hooper & Co. Boston Mass 1872." The bell carriage has a raised "3."

The basement of the church extends only under the original hall, not east under the added vestibule. Access to the basement is through exterior doors in the northwest and southwest corners and a door in the northeast corner which opens off the vestibule staircase. The walls of the basement are covered in narrow horizontal boarding. Built-in storage cabinets line the eastern wall, while kitchen cabinets and fixtures such as a stove and a sink line the length of the southern wall. Small-diameter metal poles (ca. 1928) reinforce the floor of the hall above. Except for some visible furnace ductwork, the ceiling has been finished and fitted with single bulb, glass-shade lighting fixtures. Most of these basement improvements appear to date from the early to mid-20th century, within the period of significance. The only improvements to the basement since the period of significance are the rooms built along the western wall: a furnace room, restroom with sink and toilet, and storage room. These appear to date from 1983, the year the church received Rochester Building Permit #736 to complete the work.

East Rochester Church: Condition and Changes since the Period of Significance

Generally, the East Rochester Church is in excellent condition. The wooden gutters along the northern side of the roof are leaking, but do not appear to have caused other damage. The level of continuing maintenance for the building is good. Apart from basement partitions, only minimal updating has occurred since the end of the period of significance.

East Rochester Cemetery

The East Rochester Cemetery, known today as Woodside Cemetery, is an L-shaped 1-acre lot that wraps around the north and west sides of the East Rochester Church in Rochester (**Photograph 11**). Although it has a 50-ft. frontage on County Road at its intersection with Pierceville Road (in Wareham), the cemetery has no street address of its own. The oldest known burial in the cemetery dates to 1828, the newest to 1997. Approximately 180 burials are recorded for the cemetery, which contains about 150 tombstones. The burials mostly face west; many are lined in rows, some are in family plots, and a few appear randomly placed. The grounds are generally level, with a slight slope downwards towards the rear of the cemetery. Woodlands border the plot on the northern and western sides and encroach into the cemetery, and tree growth and branch collapse have damaged stones and parts of the fence along those sides. Circulation in the cemetery is provided by two east-west paths: one along the north fence, and a second from the church westward, which nominally connect in a north-south path at the west end.

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The north, west, and south boundaries are defined by an **Iron Rail Fence**, which consists of 2 long iron pole rails and widely spaced concrete fence posts. The rails pass through holes in the concrete posts; the tops of the posts have a slight rounded arch. Directly west of the church are the **Cemetery Entrance Posts**, two square rubblestone posts with concrete caps (**Photograph 12**). This entrance marks the southern east-west path in the cemetery. For the purposes of this nomination, the fence is a contributing structure and the posts a contributing object.

Almost four-fifths of the burials in the East Rochester Cemetery date from the 19th century, primarily 1830 to 1890, when it was known as the Pierceville or Briggs Lane Cemetery. The oldest stone is that of Revolutionary War soldier Benjamin Gurney, who was born on July 4, 1743 and died on July 4, 1828. His shouldered slate tombstone, which stands in the southwest corner of the cemetery, has a graceful scalloped top and is engraved with weeping willow and urn motifs, quite common at the time. It has significant problems with moss and lichen coverage, as do many of the mostly slate and marble 19th-century stones. Many are weathered, illegible, or in need of repair. About 25 stones are broken with pieces scattered nearby. Approximately ten stones are larger in size than the standard tombstone, including two which are marble with granite bases. None of the tombstones is known to be signed or attributed to known stonecarvers.

The largest family plot is that surrounding the 15-ft. tall **Morse family monument**, a graduated obelisk faced with polished marble and inscribed with Masonic symbols. The monument is set within a twenty by fifty foot rectangular plot, near the northwest corner of the East Rochester Church, and is surrounded by granite curbing. One of the most striking of the monuments is that of **John Q.A. Morse** (1819-1898), a square pedestal with polished sides, topped with a polished marble orb, which stands about six feet tall. Not within the Morse family plot, it stands near the cemetery entrance posts (**Photograph 12**). Nearly a quarter of those buried in the East Rochester Cemetery share the Morse surname.

Another quarter of the burials share one of five surnames: Barker, Barrows, Briggs, Bumpus, and Gurney. Fourteen members of the Briggs family are buried in the East Rochester Cemetery, mostly in the northeast corner. The slate stone of **Ann J. Briggs** (1819-1830) is the second-oldest marked burial in the cemetery. The Briggs burials date from 1830 to 1887, with the exception of two from the 1950s. At least two of those buried in the cemetery were soldiers killed in the Civil War: Sullivan L. Bumpus (at Antietam) and Luther Morse (at Gettysburg).

Apart from the encroaching woods, the vegetation on the site reflects the efforts of various individuals, rather than any perceived master plan. Besides deciduous trees, a number of mature evergreen trees and shrubs are planted on the site, as well as quite large, well-established clusters of yucca plants, both within the cemetery and alongside the church.

East Rochester Cemetery: Condition and Changes since the Period of Significance

Generally the East Rochester Cemetery is in fair to good condition, with the usual weathering, spalling, cracking, and lichen infestation that might be expected for 19th century stones which have had little ongoing upkeep. Encroachment of the surrounding woodlands is probably the problem that needs to be addressed first. Little has changed in the cemetery since the close of the period of significance; fewer than a dozen new burials have occurred.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known in the district or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the district represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to

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wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. Floral and faunal resources in the area would have also been attractive to hunter-gatherers for subsistence and settlement activities. The East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District is located on level to moderately sloping topography within a pitted and dissected outwash plain. Soils in the area are well-drained to excessively drained coarse sands formed in glacial till. The district is located within 1,000 feet of cranberry bogs containing tributary streams of the East Branch of the Sippican River to the west and the Weweantic River to the east. Both rivers become tidal estuaries within the Buzzard's Bay drainage. Given the above information, the small size of the district (1.25 acres), the extent of historic landuse, and known patterns of Native settlement in Rochester and neighboring towns, a moderate potential exists for the recovery of ancient Native American resources.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources in the district. No historic- period landuse has been identified on the property prior to the earliest grave in the cemetery in 1828 and construction of the church in 1857. Few records exist related to construction of the church. Additional historic research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may help locate the sites of barns, carriage sheds, and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) that may exist on the property. In 1890, records of the church congregation documented an affirmative vote to form a committee to erect "horse and carriage sheds"; however it is unknown whether they were ever erected. Structural evidence and artifacts related to these buildings may exist, as well as examples of similar structures from earlier and later periods. A ca. 1900 privy also exists in the southwest corner of the property. Structural evidence may survive from an earlier privy, and/or evidence that an earlier privy was cleaned and rebuilt into the existing structure. Archaeological features may exist related to construction of the church and later renovations. Archaeological evidence may survive related to a fire at the church in 1930.

Important archaeological resources may also survive related to the East Rochester or Woodside Cemetery. Unmarked graves may represent the most common archaeological resource associated with the cemetery. While 150 tombstones exist in the cemetery, records document the presence of 180 graves, mostly from 1830-1890, indicating 30 or more unmarked graves. The earliest grave currently dates to 1828. Additional unrecorded and possibly earlier graves may also exist. The cemetery began as a small neighborhood cemetery, with the town acquiring the cemetery as a public cemetery in 1971. Previous ownership of the cemetery is unclear. Unmarked graves could exist prior to the keeping of written cemetery records, and the initial documented burial in 1828. Both marked and unmarked graves may include a burial shaft, casket, human remains, and personal artifacts related to the deceased. Burials may include single and multiple internments. Burial shafts and human remains may be absent in graves meant to commemorate individuals that died at sea or some remote geographic location. Broken gravestones and artifacts related to memorial services may exist. Structural evidence of outbuildings related to mortuary and maintenance activities may also exist.

(end)

East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Name of Property

Plymouth, MA
County and State

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 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

RELIGION

Period of Significance

1828-1957

Significant Dates

1828 (oldest burial)

1857 (church construction)

1892 (church expansion & renovation)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Look, Jacob (church master carpenter)

William Blake and Co. (church bell)

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:

Rochester Town Library

Rochester Historical Society

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East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth) , Massachusetts

Summary Statement

The East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District, a rectangular 1.25 acre site along County Road in Rochester, Massachusetts, consists of two properties, a church and a cemetery, which have been the symbolic public center for a linear rural neighborhood since the second quarter of the 19th century. East Rochester Church is a 1½-story wood-frame Greek Revival church dating from 1857. This gable-front building has recessed-panel pilasters, a wide divided trim band below the cornice, and tall 12/12 sash windows. The square pilastered belfry, on a pilastered base, contains an 1872 bell. The interior of the church retains some Greek Revival features such as peaked window headers. Other features date from an 1892 redecorating and subsequent improvements early in the 20th century, including a tin ceiling and eighteen long slip pews. The East Rochester Church was built in the southeastern corner of the pre-existing neighborhood cemetery. This 1-acre cemetery lot contains approximately 180 burials, dating from 1828 to 1997, but most from before 1890. Many of the same people who built and renovated the church are now buried in the adjoining cemetery. The district reflects the history of religion and community planning and development in Rochester. The church is an important example of the use of Greek Revival for an ecclesiastical building. Furthermore, the architecture of the church is significant both for its creator Jacob Look (1827-1909), a Rochester housewright and master workman, and the maker of its bell, William Blake & Co. of Boston. The East Rochester Church and Cemetery, owned today by the Rochester Historical Society and the Town of Rochester, respectively, are little altered since their period of significance (1828-1957), and have historic integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; together, they fulfill National Register criteria A and C at the local level, and also qualifies for Consideration D for a cemetery property.

The Setting: Rochester

Rochester is a rural town in Plymouth County, fifty miles south of Boston, forty-nine miles east of Providence, and nineteen miles northeast of New Bedford. Named after a town in England, Rochester was founded in 1679 and incorporated in 1686. Rochester originally was a very large town that fronted on Buzzards Bay and included most of the coastline between Fairhaven and Cape Cod. Its coastal precincts, though, separated to become the western part of Wareham (in 1739) and the towns of Marion (1852) and Mattapoisett (1857). Bordered today by Lakeville and Middleborough on the north, Freetown and Acushnet (in neighboring Bristol County) on the west, Mattapoisett on the south, and Marion and Wareham on the east, Rochester covers 37 square miles. Topographically, Rochester is classified as coastal lowland, with sandy and gravelly soils and drainage to Buzzards Bay through the Mattapoisett and Sippican Rivers. Heavily forested (oak, pine, and cedar), the town also has a wide variety of wetlands: natural and man-made ponds, swamps, cranberry bogs, and a glacial kettlehole lake. Small linear settlements arose along the roadways, but even Rochester Center, the location of Town Hall, Plumb Memorial Library, and Plumb Corner Mall, is not densely settled. In the 2000 census, Rochester recorded 4,581 residents, or nearly 125 persons per square mile.¹ Although some suburban development is occurring, Rochester remains largely engaged in farming, logging, and recreation. A twenty-first century town history proudly proclaims, "Rochester continues today to be that rural oasis of the mid-19th century."²

The first English immigrants in the area now known as Rochester arrived from neighboring Plymouth and Scituate to herd livestock for the proprietors as early as 1649. During the century before the Revolution, much of the economic

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¹ "Rochester," MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report, June 1981, "The Official Website of the Town of Rochester," (<http://www.townofrochestermass.com/history.htm>); "Final Report Rochester Community-Wide Historic and Architectural Survey Rochester Massachusetts 1997-1998," Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., July 1998, "Rochester, Massachusetts" DHCD Massachusetts (<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/ipofile/250.pdf>).

² Judith Hartly MacKinnon, *Images of America: Rochester* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2005), 8.

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Rochester (Plymouth), Massachusetts

development took place largely in the coastal precincts of "Old Rochester": Marion and Mattapoisett. In present-day Rochester, the first node of settlement was the Town Green and the (First Parish) Meeting House (1699). The earliest extant houses date to ca. 1690, and early industries developing at the same time were tar production and water-powered mills (saw, grist, fulling, and forge). These mills provided nodes for further development, which continued gradually until the secession of Mattapoisett and Marion in the 1850s. With its main economic engines gone, Rochester entered a long period of developmental quiescence, although agriculture, resource extraction, and sawmill operation (particularly for box boards and shingles) continued unabated. Rochester's declining population recovered somewhat in the first decade of the 20th century, spurred by cranberry cultivation and improved transportation networks. Since the town's last mill closed in 1964, the production and marketing of cranberries has become the main industry of the town. Population increased substantially in the 1970s and continues to grow moderately, with some pressure from suburban development.³

Criterion A: Religion

The East Rochester Church and Cemetery are important to the development of religion in Rochester. In Rochester, as in other early New England towns, the building of a church symbolized the founding of a community. The naming of a "Ministry Woods" (for burying ground and training field; today's Town Green) in 1697 in Rochester Center—and the construction there in 1699 of the first permanent meetinghouse—established Rochester Center as the combined civic and religious center of the growing town of Rochester.⁴ Seven men signed a church covenant in 1703; in 1709 the church membership list of thirty-five contained residents from the farthest reaches of "Old Rochester," areas which later became Wareham and Mattapoisett. The second meetinghouse (1717) was built across from the cemetery gates in Rochester Center, but soon also became crowded. One by one, the isolated outlying neighborhoods rallied for their own separate meetinghouses and civic status. Mattapoisett was set off as the Second Precinct of Rochester in 1735, Wareham as a separate town in 1739, North Rochester as the Third Parish in 1748, and Sippican (Marion) as the Fourth Parish in 1798. Those in each new parish/precinct built a new meetinghouse, taxing the members of the precinct for its construction and maintenance. Rochester exempted Quakers from ministry taxes in 1709 and Baptists later in the century, but church taxation remained Massachusetts law until 1836, when church support was ruled voluntary. The precincts of Mattapoisett and Marion later became separate towns (in 1852 and 1857, respectively), although North Rochester did not.

Rochester and its various Congregational precincts engaged in an ambitious building campaign in the 1830s and 1840s, under the direction of architect and builder Solomon K. Eaton of the Second (Mattapoisett) Parish in Rochester. In 1837, Solomon Eaton designed and built the Carpenter Gothic-style First Congregational Church in Rochester Center. During the decade afterwards, each of the four historic Rochester parishes hired Eaton to build them a new Greek Revival meetinghouse: Marion and North Rochester in 1841, Mattapoisett in 1842, and Wareham in 1845. The story is told in the "Old Rochester" town history:

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³ "Final Report Rochester Community-Wide Historic and Architectural Survey Rochester Massachusetts 1997-1998," Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., July 1998; D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., *History of Plymouth County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis, 1884); Ebenezer W. Peirce, *Historic Sketches of Hanson, Lakeville, Mattapoisett, Middleboro', Pembroke, Plympton, Rochester, Wareham, and West Bridgewater* (Boston, 1873).

⁴ "Rochester Center—Area A," Form A Area, Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1998; Mary Hall Leonard, et al., *Mattapoisett and Old Rochester Massachusetts: Being a History of these Towns and also in Part of Marion and a portion of Wareham* (3rd ed., Mattapoisett: Committee of the Town of Mattapoisett, 1907), 72-74. Chapter V of Leonard's book, "The Early Church and the Precincts," is the most complete and accessible history of the development of religious and social governance in Rochester.

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Between the years 1837 and 1845 all five of these Congregational churches thus formed out of the old First Church in Rochester had new houses of worship of similar architecture, for which Solomon K. Eaton of Mattapoisett was architect and builder. The one at Wareham was burned in 1904, and has been replaced by a building of different architectural style. The other four of these meeting-houses are still in use. They all belong to what has been called the Third or Christopher Wren style of New England church architecture, though modified by the fact that all have square belfries instead of the usual pointed spire.⁵

Eaton's involvement is further verified by a receipt in the files of the North Rochester Congregational Church, signed "S.K. Eaton," which reads "Received Sept. 11 1841 of the Congregational Precinct in Rochester, Middleborough and Freetown by the hand of NC Perkins Two Hundred and Seventy Four Dollars in part payment for building a Meeting House for said Precinct."⁶ No connection is known between Eaton and the East Rochester Church, but under his influence, the Greek Revival meetinghouse became the standard and model for religious structures in the region.

The Founding of the East Rochester Church

The church in East Rochester was formed in 1854, with the Rev. Timothy M. Hall as the first minister, followed by Father P. Brett, and then in 1856 by the Rev. J. Madison Mayall. Mayall led the campaign to build the East Rochester Church. The lot was purchased, and the construction apparently financed, by George Pierce of Rochester. Few records of the early church survive, except for a later transcription of a letter that Mayall wrote in 1857:

This edifice was erected by George Pierce Esq. as a place of worship for the Methodist Protestant Church. . . . In the erection of this temple, no worldly remuneration can ever be hoped for by Mr. Pierce. May great be his reward in heaven. Ere he shall cease to worship in earthly temples, may he see many gathered at this altar that shall prove as pillars in the church of Christ. . . . George Pierce Esq was the first class leader. In 1856 a new class was formed, and Benjamin Morton and Thomas W. Raymond were appointed leaders and hold that office at the present time. The church numbers at this time nearly 50 and is in a flourishing condition.⁷

Thus Pierce and this group of neighbors financed the construction of their new Methodist Protestant meeting house, rather than paying for it through town levies, as had been the case earlier with the (Congregational) churches. Thomas W. Raymond, one of the leaders of the 1856 class, lived in the Greek Revival house (MHC# .155) that still stands next door, south of the new meeting house, at 351 County Road.

Benjamin Morton, the other 1856 class leader and a carpenter, sold the lot for the meetinghouse to George Pierce in 1857. Pierce bought the land for \$12 from co-owners Morton and Mary Swift.⁸ Pierce granted the lot to the East Rochester church on a long-term lease, although it seems he never legally transferred ownership to the church. In fact, a quit-claim deed in the church records documents the sale by Pierce "unto the said Salem Jefferson the Seat No. twenty-five in the

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⁵ Mary Hall Leonard, et al., *Mattapoisett and Old Rochester Massachusetts: Being a History of these Towns and also in Part of Marion and a portion of Wareham* (3rd ed., Mattapoisett: Committee of the Town of Mattapoisett, 1907), 90-91.

⁶ Church records, attic, North Rochester Congregational Church.

⁷ J. Madison Mayall, "To the members of the Methodist church of the Boston District Annual Conference, Pierceville Station, Rochester Aug. 22 1857." Transcription in the files of the Rochester Historical Society.

⁸ Benjamin W. Morton and Mary Swift to George Washington Pierce, Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Book 282, Page 266, Recorded 8 December 1857.

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New Methodist Protestant Meeting House in Rochester near Thomas Raymond.”⁹ George Washington Pierce (1804-1875), the first leader of the congregation, was a farmer, carpenter, and part-time preacher.¹⁰ The son of William Pierce of Wareham and Betsy Gurney of Rochester, George Washington Pierce married twice, the second time to widow Deborah Turner (d. 1881) in 1848.¹¹ George and Deborah Pierce are buried nearby in Hillside Cemetery at Douglas Corner, a neighborhood known in the 19th century as Pierceville. By the 20th century, Pierceville had come to refer more clearly to its northern end, at nearby East Rochester.

What little record exists of the construction of the East Rochester Church building again comes from the transcription of the letter by the Rev. Mayall: “In 1856 Rev J. Madison Mayall entered upon his labors with this church, and this house was erected during his pastoral charge, in the summer of 1857. Mr. Jacob Look was the Master Workman, assisted by Benj. Marton [sic; presumably Morton], David Morse, Milton Rayme, and Joseph Look.”¹² Morse and Morton were members of the congregation of East Rochester Church and are buried in the East Rochester Cemetery. Joseph Look was Jacob Look’s younger brother, and also a carpenter and builder.

Methodist circuit riders evangelized across the country and began churches at many rural intersections such as East Rochester. A church historian described the process: “Local churches and classes could spring up wherever a few women and men were gathered under the direction of a class leader and were visited regularly by the circuit preacher, one who had a circuit of preaching placed under his care. This system effectively served the needs of city, town, village, or frontier outpost. The churches were able to go to the people wherever they settled”¹³ The East Rochester congregation organized as members of the Methodist Protestant Church, a group which broke off from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1828. This new denomination held to Wesleyan religious principles but preferred congregational governance, demanding that laity share governance of the church along with clergy. It eliminated bishops; the president of each conference appointed the pastors to their charges. Like many other denominations, the Methodist Protestant Church split into northern and southern branches before the Civil War, but reunified afterwards. Most of the denomination rejoined with other Methodists in 1939 to become part of what since 1968 has been known as the United Methodist Church.¹⁴

In the boundaries of “Old Rochester,” at least four Methodist churches were built in this wave of circuit-riding evangelism. A “Protestant Methodist” meetinghouse had been established already in North Rochester in 1830, constructing a Greek Revival building that still stands (289 North Avenue; MHC #28). It was built at the intersection of North Avenue and Snipatuit Road, but quickly failed and had been converted to a store by 1832. Another Protestant

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⁹ George Pierce of Rochester to Salem Jefferson, Quit-Claim Deed, 4 November 1857.

¹⁰ “Doors Close for Congregation: Historical Society to Take over 145-year-old Rochester Church” *New Bedford Standard-Times* 3 October 2002.

¹¹ Vital Records of Rochester, accessed via the NEHGS website. Pierce’s place of birth is unknown.

¹² J. Madison Mayall, “To the members of the Methodist church of the Boston District Annual Conference, Pierceville Station, Rochester Aug. 22 1857.” Transcription in the files of the Rochester Historical Society.

¹³ *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2004*, The United Methodist Publishing House, available online at “History: Our Story,” United Methodist Church at UMC.org.

(http://www.umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnN1LtH/b.1720691/k.B5CB/History_Our_Story.htm).

¹⁴ The Rev. T.H. Lewis, “Historical Sketch of the Origin of the Methodist Protestant Church,” 1904; revised by The General Conference of 1964. (<http://www.methodistprotestantchurch.com>); “History: Our Story,” United Methodist Church at UMC.org. (http://www.umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnN1LtH/b.1720691/k.B5CB/History_Our_Story.htm); “Methodism,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 1911 (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10237b.htm>).

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Methodist congregation sprang up briefly in neighboring Sippican (Marion), but also failed. The Union Meeting House, organized on Walnut Plain Road near Rochester Center, was Methodist during one of its reorganizations. Its 1825 meetinghouse burned, and the church reorganized as a Congregational society.¹⁵ Like its East Rochester counterpart, the 1825 Union Meeting House was built on the corner of a pre-existing cemetery, known today as Union Cemetery (1810; MHC #813). The East Rochester church is the only one of the two surviving buildings that made a sustained contribution to the history of 19th century Methodist evangelism in Rochester. Furthermore, it continued to function as a church into the 21st century.

East Rochester Congregational Church

The Methodist Protestant Church at East Rochester continued to be active until the 1870s, when "after 25 years or more, the church became weakened through the formation of an Advent Church by a part of the members. As a result no regular pastor was appointed."¹⁶ In 1880, services resumed in the East Rochester Church when the remaining members voted to invite the Rev. William R. Joslyn, the minister of the Congregational Church in Rochester Center, to supply the pulpit on an occasional basis. After four years under Joslyn, the church engaged the minister of the Marion Congregational Church for supply. Then in 1886 it hired the Rev. Stipen [possibly Stephen] M. Andrews; on 15 October 1887, six members of the church voted to become a Congregational church. No reason is given in the records for this denominational switch; the change simply may have allowed them to remain congregational in their governance, while taking advantage of the larger pool of available Congregational ministers in New England. The Rev. Andrews resigned in 1889. Under his replacement, the Scotsman Robert Laidlaw Rae, "about fifty converted and quite a number since. About fifty-five were added to the church. At the present time [1892] there are 65 members and in a flourishing condition."¹⁷ With this strong new congregation formed, the members decided that time had come to update their 30-year-old building.

Significant changes to the East Rochester Church building occurred in 1892, under this large revitalized congregation. Congregation secretary George Morse noted: "The building is being repaired to the expense of \$500.00 or more. The gallery was taken down, a portico put on the front, platform enlarged, new pews and pulpit furniture put in and other improvements made."¹⁸ The congregation had voted in 1890 to form a committee to erect "horse and carriage sheds," but whether they were ever erected is unknown.¹⁹ The 1892 campaign to raise money for church repair was led by the Ladies Sewing Circle. At the 1893 annual meeting, about 75 people gathered in the church vestry (basement hall), members and guests alike, to share supper and congratulations for their newly refurbished church.

After the initial 1892 changes, the congregation continued updating the building during the first two decades of the 20th century. The inside shutters went up in 1900. In 1907 the Annual Meeting voted to complete another set of repairs to the church building: patching the roof, rebuilding the interior chimney on the outside of the church, and placing a new brick

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¹⁵ Mary Hall Leonard, et al., *Mattapoisett and Old Rochester Massachusetts: Being a History of these Towns and also in Part of Marion and a portion of Wareham* (3rd ed., Mattapoisett: Committee of the Town of Mattapoisett, 1907), 95-96. According to the MHC survey form for Union Cemetery, the second Union Church, built on the same site as the first, was also razed.

¹⁶ George P. Morse, untitled statement dated 5 August 1892, transcription in the records of the Rochester Historical Society. Morse was one of the six founding members of the new church and its first secretary. The "Advent Church" presumably refers to the Advent Christian Church of West Wareham.

¹⁷ George P. Morse, untitled statement dated 5 August 1892, transcription in the records of the Rochester Historical Society.

¹⁸ George P. Morse, untitled statement dated 5 August 1892, transcription in the records of the Rochester Historical Society.

¹⁹ East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society. See also Record of Church Committee 1898-1916, Rochester Historical Society.

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underpinning under the church entry. The chimney, at least, was completed that year, as the 1908 Annual Meeting voted to sell the brick left over from the chimney repairs. In 1909, the committee reported that the entry room underpinning had been completed, but that the south side of the roof would need to be reshingled before new carpeting or any other repairs. At the 1910 Annual Meeting, the church voted to close its doors temporarily while another series of repairs was completed. By the 1911 annual meeting, the Ladies' Sewing Circle had raised over \$500 to complete this set of renovations:

Chairman of the Church Committee Bro. Geo. Jefferson stat[ed] his gratitude and surprise at the magnitude of the work. The church was shingled, new metal ceiling of beautiful pattern, walls newly papered, all wood painted, new carpet, lamps, old chimney in the corner removed and various other improvements.²⁰

The meeting further voted to let the Sewing Circle dispose of "old furniture . . . as they saw fit." The 1914 Annual Meeting also thanked the Ladies Sewing Circle, "the Finnish People," and its youth group for donations of \$55 which would be used to install electric lights in the church auditorium and basement. The 1915 annual meeting voted to add "cement steps and walk to street if sufficient funds."²¹

Safety rather than comfort or aesthetics triggered another round of changes in 1928, when the congregation voted to update the building to conform to new state laws. They authorized the hiring of a building inspector to detail all needed changes, especially if metal support posts were needed in the basement to reinforce the auditorium floor, and to use most of their remaining funds to immediately add the "rear exit at the South West window."²² They also installed a new hardwood floor in the auditorium. A memorial fund of \$57 for "Aunt Minnie" was dedicated to adding a memorial window in the doorway (possibly the single stained glass window which at present is behind the pulpit). A fire in 1930 necessitated repairs to the church, although the details and the extent of the damage are not known. This fire may have been the reason that in 1930 the congregation built a new front platform, and in 1931 paid \$140 to install a furnace—presumably a coal furnace, as they began to buy a ton of coal yearly. A second fire occurred in the 1940s, followed by further repairs.

These fires were particularly troubling to East Rochester Church because of its uncertain legal status. The congregation never secured title to the building, no legal transfer of the property ever having been made from George Pierce (or his heirs) to either the original Methodist Protestant congregation or its successor. At the 1895 annual meeting, for example, a "church committee reported unadvisable to insure house of worship as no company could be found that could insure it as we have only a lease of the house."²³ From time to time insurance was obtained; by 1926, the church had found a way to insure the building—at least temporarily.²⁴ Yet the problem remained. At the 1934 Annual Meeting, another committee reported that the church might consider incorporation, at least to once again insure its building: "Our assistant pastor then made it clear that incorporation put the church in possession of no property, but did enable it to hold property, and obtain insurance on same."²⁵ By 1943, the church had once again obtained fire insurance on the building.²⁶

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²⁰ East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society.

²¹ East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society. No connection between the East Rochester Church and Finns or Finland is otherwise known.

²² East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society.

²³ East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society.

²⁴ Policy drawn up by the Abington Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Abington, Mass., for the East Rochester Congregational Church Society, Expiring in 1926; files of the Rochester Historical Society.

²⁵ East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society.

²⁶ Policy drawn up by the Quincy Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Quincy, Massachusetts, for the East Rochester Congregational Church, Expiring in 1943; files of the Rochester Historical Society.

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**East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth), Massachusetts**

The Rochester-Lakeville Congregational Parish

Despite the building improvements, the Annual Meeting minutes of the East Rochester Congregational Church from the 1920s indicate that the congregation was barely scraping by on bills and repairs. The 1928 Annual Meeting voted to pay the Rev. Herbert Wilber "only \$10 a week" for his work and "to leave the matter of a surplus in hands of church committee as last year." During that same meeting the congregation paid Wilber an extra \$50 out of the church's small surplus.²⁷

In 1929, discussions began to form a larger parish out of several small struggling Congregational churches in the area. On 17 July 1930, the Rochester-Lakeville Congregational parish was formed, uniting four parishes—in North Rochester, East Rochester, Lakeville, and Taunton—under a church council of twelve (three representatives from each parish). The merger had the full backing of the Massachusetts Congregational Conference and Missionary Society, which even supplied start-up funding. Two ministers were hired to serve the four churches. When the merger occurred, it was seen as an exceptional step: "The forming of a larger parish was a first in Massachusetts at that time."²⁸ At its Annual Meeting in April 1931, the congregation of the East Rochester Congregational Church voted unanimously to join the new Rochester and Lakeville Larger Parish.

Building changes continued through this period, including a bequest from Mr. & Mrs. Stone of Wareham, who donated an organ from "the Humphrey estate" for the auditorium in 1932. Yet despite the lower costs for the shared ministers, building costs remained a challenge; at the 1936 Annual Meeting, it was reported that the belfry had sunk two inches into the roof and that the whole roof and side entry would need to be resingled. As the Great Depression lifted, the congregation made new investments. In 1940, they added a new rear exit (presumably the basement exit in the southern end of the west elevation) and installed a new sink and pump, stove, and cupboards in the basement kitchen.²⁹

The merged parish prospered briefly, but the frequent turnover in ministers exacerbated other problems. In 1938 the Taunton church withdrew, and a single minister served all three remaining churches. Still, problems continued, and the merged parish eventually dissolved. In 1942, the members of this church once again incorporated, as the East Rochester Congregational Church. It declared itself a "Trinitarian Congregational Church in its policy and denominational affiliations."³⁰

Final Days at East Rochester Congregational Church

Few changes are recorded to the East Rochester Church in the sixty years after it reincorporated as a separate church in 1942. In 1986, the church received a building permit to enclose the furnace room and bathroom.³¹ By the 1990s, the East Rochester Congregational Church had stopped conducting Sunday services in the winter months. The last service took place in 2001. In 2003, the remaining members officially gave the church to the Rochester Historical Society.

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²⁷ East Rochester Congregational Church Register, 1890-1936, Rochester Historical Society. At the end of his career, Rev. Wilber served at North Rochester Congregational Church.

²⁸ Mrs. Joseph A. Chamberlain, "First Wedding in 40 Years to Be Performed in Rochester Church," *New Bedford Standard-Times* 24 July 1960.

²⁹ Information obtained from the East Rochester Congregational Church records by Betty Beaulieu, Rochester Historical Society.

³⁰ "By-Laws of the East Rochester Congregational Church of East Rochester, Massachusetts, Adopted at a Meeting of the Church Held on June 12, 1942"; and Certificate of Incorporation, signed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth on 16 September 1942; both are in the files of the Rochester Historical Society.

³¹ Rochester Building Permit #736. East Rochester Church.

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On a fall day in 2002, a reporter from the New Bedford *Standard-Times* met with two of the last parishioners in the quiet church. His host was Elizabeth Bessey, who told the reporter that she was the great-great-granddaughter of founder George Washington Pierce. Her family had worshipped at East Rochester since it was built. The reporter recorded their visit:

It is a sad thing, to outlive a church. But Mrs. Bessey, in all her Yankee sensibility, is not much given to sentimentality. The same is not entirely true for Florence Zora, the congregation's treasurer. Ms. Bessey is the clerk.

Yesterday morning, the latter opened the church matter-of-factly, and once inside, her friend Ms. Zora began to reminisce. She had been, in 1943, a young bride named Florence Howes, married into a family that "was the backbone of the church," as Mrs. Bessey told it.

"The organ is really something," Mrs. Zora said. And later: "the bell, Betty, remember how they used to ring the bells? That was nice."

Ms. Bessey remembered. They never pealed truer than when they signaled the end of World War II, and "everyone went running up to the church."

That was the nature of it: a church people ran and walked to, built without [a] parking lot up close to County Road, just as it had stood back when the road was called Briggs Lane and, before that, Division Street. In the end, though, a church whose members came mostly on foot just plain ran out of congregants.³²

In 2003, upon dissolution of the East Rochester Congregational Church, the lot and buildings legally became the property of the Rochester Historical Society through a quitclaim deed from the church.³³ Today the East Rochester Church continues as the meeting hall and informal museum of the Rochester Historical Society, a private non-profit formed in 1967.³⁴ No substantive changes have been made to the interior of the church since its acquisition.

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

The Development of East Rochester

When the family of Revolutionary War soldier Benjamin Gurney (1743-1828) placed a slate tombstone above his grave, they likely did not realize that they had just designated a spot that would anchor a community center for nearly two centuries. Gurney, who both was born and died on the 4th of July, was the first known burial in the East Rochester Cemetery. The next recorded grave did not appear until two years later, when the family of Ann Briggs, who died in 1830, interred her in the almost the opposite corner of the field. Both the Gurney and Briggs families lived along what is now County Road, although it has had a number of names. The 1857 deed for the East Rochester Church called it simply "the road leading from Rochester to Plymouth." Later records called it Division Street because it marked the town boundary between Rochester and its former precinct of Wareham. So many Briggs, in fact, lived along the road that it became known as Briggs Lane. In the 1920s, the road name was changed to County Street (later County Road). This sense of slow, incremental change characterizes the development of East Rochester. The two constants despite that change have been the road itself, and this single spot along the road, where first a cemetery and later a neighborhood meetinghouse gave the place its name and identity.

(continued)

³² "Doors Close for Congregation: Historical Society to Take over 145-year-old Rochester Church." *New Bedford Standard-Times* 3 October 2002.

³³ East Rochester Congregational Church to the Rochester Historical Society, quitclaim deed recorded 14 July 2003, Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 25755, Page 326. Despite extensive title search, no record was found of a transfer of the lot from George Washington Pierce or his heirs to the East Rochester Church.

³⁴ Rochester Historical Society website, <http://www.plumblibrary.com/historicalsociety.html>.

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In Rochester, not all burials had this effect of starting a community, as recent surveys of the thirteen extant Rochester cemeteries demonstrate. Seven of these known burial grounds in Rochester contain 35 or fewer stones; four of those hold less than a dozen stones, sometimes isolated in a family plot a long way from the road.³⁵ At least one cemetery reported in historical records has disappeared entirely. Not surprisingly, the oldest Rochester cemetery, First Parish Cemetery, is also the largest, with 1,400 graves. The other cemeteries sprang up over the next century and a half: the last appeared in 1854. Rather than being clearly designated and planned as cemeteries from the beginning, many simply occurred in marginal or unused land. Several had a complicated legal history. Although East Rochester Cemetery has served as a neighborhood cemetery since 1828, its legal ownership never was established clearly. Finally, on 17 February 1971, the Town of Rochester acquired East Rochester Cemetery by eminent domain, to become a public cemetery.³⁶ This act established a legal description for the lot. The town then had the cemetery formally surveyed, and published the survey in 1973. Just as the identity of the road developed incrementally, so the identity of East Rochester Cemetery developed: Pierceville Cemetery, Briggs Lane Cemetery, and finally Woodside Cemetery.

East Rochester has always been a diffuse settlement stretched out along County Road, with swampy wetlands (many now cranberry bogs) defining the western boundary. The 1704 town map shows no development along the road. The oldest house on the road is the Halfway House (ca. 1773; 405 County Road; MHC #157). Its name suggests how isolated this Cape-style house seemed to travelers, a stagecoach stop thirteen miles equidistant from both New Bedford and Plymouth. A recent communitywide survey of East Rochester (MHC# ROC L) has defined the neighborhood primarily by its proximity to the church and cemetery on the south, and a late-19th century mill, now razed, to the north.³⁷ The first development in East Rochester occurred during the Early Industrial Period (1830-1870), because of its transportation connections and waterpower. One or more mills were in operation, and many houses were built along County Road. The families who built the church and filled some of the largest plots in the cemetery appeared in the second quarter of the 19th century: Gurney, Leonard, Morse, Morton, and Raymond.³⁸

Like the church, several of the earlier houses along County Road (primarily to the south of the East Rochester Church and Cemetery) are Greek Revival in style, including the Nehemiah Davis House at 333 County Road (between 1856 and 1879, MHC #155) and another house at 341 County Road. The Greek Revival-style T. Raymond House (before 1856; 351 County Road; MHC #155), directly adjacent to the East Rochester Church and Cemetery on the south, may have been the home of a church founder who also worked as a carpenter during the construction of the church. George Pierce bought the house in 1857, and sold it to the Leonard family, also long-time residents.

North of the East Rochester Church and Cemetery are three houses built by (or for) the children of Nahum Morse: the Savary Morse House at 489 County Road (1885, MHC #49 & 50), the Nahum Morse House at 577 County Road (1885, MHC #51), and the Morses' daughter's house at 531 County Road (1900). The Morses ran the nearby East Rochester mill, which produced box boards and shingles; most of the family is buried at the East Rochester Cemetery. Their houses

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³⁵ *Rochester Communitywide Historical and Architectural Survey 1997-1998* (Pawtucket, RI: Public Archaeology Laboratory, 1998), Binder 6: Cemeteries.

³⁶ "Rochester, Town of—Woodside Cemetery—Acquisition," 1971 Regular Session Chapter 23 pg. 12).

³⁷ *Rochester Communitywide Historical and Architectural Survey 1997-1998* (Pawtucket, RI: Public Archaeology Laboratory, 1998), Binder 3: County Road District, 105-127.

³⁸ *Rochester Communitywide Historical and Architectural Survey 1997-1998* (Pawtucket, RI: Public Archaeology Laboratory, 1998), Binder 1: 15.

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are generally classed as "Victorian Eclectic," with hints here and there of Gothic Revival or Italianate, as is the G.W. Howe House at 373 County Road (1875; MHC #156) and the William H. Cowen House at 435 County Road (before 1879, MHC# 158, 159). As one goes north along County Road, early 20th century styled houses appear, including Craftsman houses and bungalows.

The influence of the East Rochester Church and Cemetery on the development of this crossroads community can most clearly be demonstrated in the migration of the name Pierceville. The large extended Pierce family, along with the Jeffersons and Nickersons, lived nearby in Pierceville, at the intersection of High Street and Brattle Road (known in the 20th century as Pierce Street).³⁹ Pierceville had its own store, school, and cemetery. Development stalled late in the 19th century, the store closed, and the school was eventually moved to County Road. After some years as "Pierceville Proper," the area was renamed Douglas Corner for a later resident. The cemetery in Douglas Corner, home to George Washington Pierce and at least 44 other Pierces, became known as "Pierceville First Cemetery" to distinguish it from the slightly later, and larger, cemetery at East Rochester, also sometimes called Pierceville. The generic mid-20th century names subsequently attached to these two cemeteries, Hillside and Woodside, may have been an attempt to avoid the use of the term "Pierceville" altogether. Of the extant commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings in either Pierceville, only the East Rochester Church continued in its original use into the 21st century.

Finally, the East Rochester Cemetery has other, less tangible community functions. A recent survey of the development of Massachusetts cemeteries noted their importance in defining community: "The burial grounds and cemeteries of Massachusetts are one of the richest cultural and historic records of our past. In addition to providing specific genealogical information about our ancestors, they also tell a broader story about evolving attitudes towards death, burial, and public landscapes."⁴⁰ The East Rochester Cemetery is—yes literally, but also figuratively—a repository of community history. No longer active as a cemetery, it can contribute to the community in other ways:

The gravestones, monuments, memorials and tombs found within the cemetery landscape commemorate the lives of many generations of citizens, from founding members of a community and the state to Revolutionary and Civil War heroes to the newest immigrants. These important artifacts are a unique historic and genealogical record. . . . Some of these stone carvings represent some of the earliest art and written history available. . . . Many also reflect an important artistic legacy, displaying the work of a long tradition of skilled stone carvers and documenting the evolution of funereal iconography.⁴¹

The East Rochester Cemetery presents a unique opportunity to the Rochester Historical Society, which now cares for the adjacent East Rochester Church. Together these two properties illustrate a richly detailed story of community craftsmanship.

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³⁹ *Rochester Communitywide Historical and Architectural Survey 1997-1998* (Pawtucket, RI: Public Archaeology Laboratory, 1998), Binder 1: 15.

⁴⁰ *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, Historic Cemeteries Preservation Initiative, 2002), 5.

⁴¹ *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, Historic Cemeteries Preservation Initiative, 2002), 2.

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Criterion C: Architecture

The East Rochester Church is significant for its architecture and as an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture used for an ecclesiastical building. The church is also significant for understanding the careers of both its creator Jacob Look (1827-1909), a Rochester housewright and master workman, and the maker of its bell, William Blake & Co. of Boston. A case could certainly be made, as well, that the East Rochester Cemetery is significant as an example of cemetery landscape and design as it evolved during the course of the 19th century.

East Rochester Church and Greek Revival Architecture

The East Rochester Church is significant as an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture used for an ecclesiastical building. Dating from 1857, this gable-front building has several prominent Greek-Revival characteristics, including recessed panel Doric pilasters and tall 12/12 sash windows. The Greek Revival characteristics are also pronounced on the clapboarded north and south side elevations of the East Rochester Church. Recessed panel pilaster Doric cornerboards frame the composition on both sides and support the three-part entablature: a wide divided trim band below the cornice, with the frieze corbelling out twice above the architrave. The square two-level belfry with recessed panel pilaster cornerboards repeats these same motifs.

Although the term "meeting house" was still used by some in East Rochester when it built this structure, Puritan meetinghouses had evolved significantly over the two centuries since they first were erected. No longer were they the house-like foursquare buildings of the 17th century, or the 18th century's rectangular buildings with door and pulpit on the long sides.⁴² Beginning early in the 18th century, the post-fire London churches of Christopher Wren had begun to influence strongly the Anglican churches built in coastal New England cities, such as Christ Church (Old North; 1723) in Boston, with its gable roof, tower, and spire. As the 18th century progressed, prominent Puritan meetinghouses such as Old South (1729) in Boston adopted the tower and spire, if not yet the tower main entry. After 1750, James Gibbs' design of St. Martin in the Fields in London further influenced many of the larger city churches.⁴³ After the Revolution, the Federal-style church—developed by Charles Bulfinch and popularized by Asher Benjamin in his subsequent designs and pattern books—solidified this idea of a prominent end entry, through a porch or portico, with a belfry tower and spire atop the tower and/or building roof. The pulpit gradually moved to the far end, even in more conservative rural areas. As the 19th century progressed, "Congregational" places of worship, now often known as churches, adopted Greek Revival style:

The Greek Revival, a much simpler mode than its Federal predecessor, featured a portico of imposing and largely unornamented Doric columns with a similarly plain pediment above. Its inspiration was nothing from Christian history but rather derived from the 'pagan' temples of Hellenic antiquity, of which it was a modern-day appropriation. Many, if not most, of these meetinghouses were capped with a steeple, which rests on the body of the church itself rather than extending partly over the portico in the Federal mode.⁴⁴

Smaller and more rural parishes such as East Rochester—Congregational or Methodist alike—often dispensed with the portico, steeple, Doric columns, and other stylistic flourishes altogether, expressing their piety in simple pilasters, entablatures, and a boxy belfry. After the elaborate towers and delicate fanlights of the Federal period, these simple-lined churches of the Greek Revival period must have seemed both new and reassuringly traditional.

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⁴² Philip D. Zimmerman, "Congregational Churches," *The Encyclopedia of New England: The Culture and History of an American Region*, ed. Burt Feintuch and David H. Watters (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 98-99.

⁴³ For a sustained discussion of the evolution of the meeting house form in New England, see William H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and their Architects: Volume 1, the Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (New York: Oxford UP, 1970) and Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana: U of IL Press, 1997).

⁴⁴ Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana: U of IL Press, 1997), 12.

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The Greek Revival-style in America may be said to have begun in 1818 in Philadelphia, with both the construction of the Second Bank of the United States (designed by William Strickland) and the publication of John Haviland's *The Builder's Assistant*, "the first American book to give the Greek orders."⁴⁵ The first Greek Revival church in New England was St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Boston, designed by Alexander Parris. The Greek Revival was "an architectural revolution against which the rock of Boston conservatism would avail nothing. . . . Like the germ of influenza, it swept on across the [Atlantic] ocean, through the East and South, and into the rawest settlements, even beyond the Mississippi."⁴⁶ Greek Revival architecture was popular across the United States from 1820 to 1860, and represented a significant departure from British influence for American architects.⁴⁷ In the second quarter of the 19th century, American architects, builders, patrons, and consumers embraced the Greek Revival as a national style. Architectural historian William Pierson summarized its importance:

The Greek Revival was the first pervasive and self-conscious nationalistic movement in American architecture. Although its initial impetus came at the professional level, where it was used for government buildings all over the land, the total national character came at the folk level, where it achieved the same fulfillment of aspiration toward architectural independence as Jefferson's idealistic adaptation of Roman architecture did more than a quarter of a century earlier.⁴⁸

Although we know nothing of Jacob Look's training as a builder, housewright, and master workman, we do know that anyone successfully working in building at that time would have understood and been able to execute the elements of Greek Revival style. Look most likely learned the principles of Greek Revival through apprenticeship or architectural guidebooks such as those by Asher Benjamin, two common sources of folk or vernacular architecture. Even as a folk manifestation of Greek Revival, the East Rochester Church may be seen as a conservative design, a relatively late use of Greek Revival. Certainly the paneled pilasters bear little resemblance to archaeologically correct renditions of the Greek Doric.

The many changes to the interior show clearly the increased emphasis that New Englanders made on comfort over correctness. As the Puritan meetinghouse gave way to the Greek Revival church, its interior also evolved, as part of a trend toward increased comfort and uniformity in the design and decoration. Jane Nylander has described this process: "The years which saw a gradual architectural change from meeting house to church in New England also saw the dominant interior spaces . . . increasingly warmed with artificial light, stove-generated heat, and decorative textiles. . . . At the very time New England's meeting houses were becoming more church-like, they were also becoming more home-like."⁴⁹ But these changes appear to have come late to East Rochester, possibly long after its construction. In churches in isolated country settlements like East Rochester, this evolution must have taken longer to occur than in city churches.

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⁴⁵ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Volume 1: 1607-1860* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1981), 161.

⁴⁶ Walter H. Kilham, *Boston after Bulfinch: An Account of Its Architecture 1800-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1946), 19.

⁴⁷ Leopold Arnaud, "Foreword," in Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America*, 1944 (rpt. New York: Dover), xv.

⁴⁸ William H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and their Architects: Volume 1, the Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (New York: Oxford UP, 1970), 432.

⁴⁹ Jane C. Nylander, "Toward Comfort and Uniformity in New England Meeting House, 1750-1850," *New England Meeting House and Church: 1630-1850*, Ed. Peter Benes and Jane Montague Benes, Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife: Annual Proceedings 1979 (Boston: Boston University, 1979): 86-100; 86.

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Jacob C. Look, "Master Workman"

Listed as the "master workman" in church records, Jacob C. Look (1827-1909) was the supervising builder, and presumably the designer, for the East Rochester Church. Born in Rochester to Isaac and Susannah (Hoxie) Look, Jacob Look married twice: to Lydia E. Bishop of Rochester in 1851, and to Melinda (Stevens) Gibbs of Wareham in 1869.⁵⁰ Look died in Whitman, Massachusetts (at his daughter's house, after a long illness), and was buried at Colebrook Cemetery there on January 1, 1910.⁵¹ Various Vital Records entries list him as a housewright and carpenter. No other building is known to be attributed to Jacob Look, either in the Rochester survey or in MACRIS.

Although few records survive, the Look family must have been well known in the building trade in 19th-century Rochester. The Look family operated the Look & Stevens Box Board and Shingle Mill on Walnut Plain Road in north-central Rochester. The Look family home still stands today just to the north of the mill site, at 588 Walnut Plain Road.⁵² Members of the Look family lived there from sometime before 1856 until 1910, when the last Look left. The last family member to live there was Joseph Look (1835-1910), Jacob's younger brother, the carpenter and builder who worked with him on the East Rochester Church. Joseph Look and his wife are buried nearby in Rochester's Union Cemetery on Walnut Plain Road. This cemetery was long associated with the Union Meeting House, another Methodist (for at least part of its history) church. Possibly the Looks came to build the East Rochester Church through connections between Methodist brethren. Laura Look, their sister, died in 1849 and was also buried in Union Cemetery in Rochester, indicating that the family had an association there of many decades.

William Blake & Co., Bell Foundry

The bell in the belfry of the East Rochester Congregational Church has this cast lettering around the bell: "William Blake & Co. formerly H.N. Hooper & Co. Boston Mass 1872," indicating that it was cast in 1872 by William Blake & Co. of Boston. William Blake was a partner—along with Paul Revere III and John W. Sullivan—in the Boston Copper Co., which operated from 1823 to 1830.⁵³ Henry N. Hooper, the agent for Boston Copper, along with partners William Blake and Thomas Richardson, formed the successor firm to Boston Copper: Henry N. Hooper & Co., which began in Boston in 1830 and operated until 1869. In addition to many individual bells, Hooper & Co. produced chimes for a number of prominent New England carillons, including Christ Church (Episcopal) in Cambridge (1860), Arlington Street Church in Boston (1860), Grace Church (Episcopal) in Providence (1861), and First (Parish) Church in Charlestown, Massachusetts (1868). Hooper also made Civil War cannons, chandeliers, lighthouse equipment, and statues, including the first casting (1847) of the Nathaniel Bowditch statue at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.⁵⁴

William Blake and William S. Blake ran the successor foundry, William Blake & Co., from 1869 to 1890. Under the Blakes, the foundry produced a number of chimes for Massachusetts churches, including those for Trinity Episcopal

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⁵⁰ Vital Records of Massachusetts to 1910, accessed through the website of NEHGS. Look identifies as a housewright in 1851, when only 23. Both Look and Gibbs listed their marriage as their second.

⁵¹ Vital Records of Massachusetts to 1910, accessed through the website of NEHGS. An image of Look's death certificate is available online.

⁵² H. Look House, 588 Walnut Plain Road. Form B-Building Survey, ROC.104, Rochester, MA (Massachusetts Historical Commission Files).

⁵³ "Index to Carillons and Chimes by Hooper/Blake," website of The Guild of Carillonneurs in North America (<http://www.gcna.org/data/IXfoundryHooperBlake.html>).

⁵⁴ "Index to Carillons and Chimes by Hooper/Blake," website of The Guild of Carillonneurs in North America (<http://www.gcna.org/data/IXfoundryHooperBlake.html>).

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Church in Haverhill (1869), Stearns Steeple at Amherst College (1871), Grace Episcopal Church in Netwon (1873), Grace Episcopal Church in Medford (1873), St. Mary/Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Lawrence (1874), and Channing Memorial Church in Newport, RI (1881). William Blake & Co. produced simple bells for a number of churches, including first Parish Church in Fitchburg, Massachusetts (1878), the Massasoit Engine Company (now the Firehouse Gallery) in Damariscotta, Maine (1898), and the bell at Story Chapel at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts.⁵⁵ MACRIS lists three commissions for William Blake: the Civil War Monument in Fitchburg (ca. 1874; MHC#900); the Minot's Ledge Lighthouse Fog Bell in Cohasset (ca. 1878; MHC#900); and the North Village Bell in Webster (1884; MHC#910). William S. Blake continued the company from 1890 until at least 1898 as Blake Bell Co., producing a bell for City Hall in New York City which was rated in 1891 as the largest in the United States.⁵⁶ MACRIS lists one commission for Blake Bell Company, the Cohasset Old Central Fire Station Fire Bell (1890; MHC#972).

Archaeological Significance

While several ancient sites have been recorded in the town of Rochester, only small areas of the town have been systematically surveyed, thus limiting the local and regional value of these archaeological recoveries. Most sites in the town have been identified on the basis of limited collections and the recollections of collectors. Little reliable information relating to site type and function is known on a site-specific basis, and any town-wide patterns or models are, at best, fragmentary. Given this information, any sites located in the district or in the town could be significant. Any artifact or feature recoveries from sites within the district may contribute important information relating to the site's function and type. That information might in turn enable that site to be integrated into a systematic community wide study of prehistoric subsistence and settlement patterns for the town. Ancient Native American sites in the district may contain information that helps understand the growth of Contact Period core areas in this region and their relationship to other important core areas within the Taunton River drainage. Lithic materials and other archaeological resources at sites in the district might also contain information that helps understand patterns of development in the area including the growth of the Small Stemmed Point Tradition as an *in situ* development for the southeastern Massachusetts region.

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the evolution of the district and its role as the symbolic public center for a linear rural neighborhood. Archaeological resources may also contribute information related to the social, cultural, and economic lives of various segments of the East Rochester community.

Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing may locate unmarked graves that can help document the origins of the cemetery. Graves may exist prior to the earliest known burial in 1828 that can help to accurately determine the temporal origins of the cemetery and its early use as a neighborhood cemetery. The information presented above may help document ownership of the cemetery prior to its acquisition by the town as a public cemetery in 1971. Unmarked graves may also contribute important information related to the neighborhood and town's treatment of the poor, homeless, and other unfortunate members of the community. The latter members of the community were

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⁵⁵ "Index to Carillons and Chimes by Hooper/Blake," website of The Guild of Carillonneurs in North America (<http://www.gcna.org/data/IXfoundryHooperBlake.html>).

⁵⁶ E. H. Gross, "Bells," *New England Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly* New Series 3.5 (January 1891): 547-570; 566. Accessed via Cornell University's Making of America website (<http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/moa.cgi?notisid=AFJ3026-0009-83>).

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commonly buried in unmarked graves in peripheral areas of the cemetery, and/or with markers that have since deteriorated. Osteological study of skeletal remains from marked and unmarked graves may contribute important information related to the physical characteristics of the East Rochester population and the general health and pathologies that affected that group. Unmarked graves may contribute important information related to the internal configuration of graves within the cemetery. Cemetery records and extant gravestones indicate a minimum of 30 unmarked graves organized in a diverse pattern of rows, family plots, and random placement. The location of unmarked graves may help define this confusing burial pattern within the cemetery accurately.

Archaeological resources may also contribute important information related to the evolution of the church structure, its facilities, and the community members that comprised its congregation. Archaeological evidence from construction features and structural evidence from renovations may contribute important evidence related to methods of church construction, and the physical evolution of the structure over time. Additional historical research combined with archaeological survey and testing may locate barns, carriage sheds, outbuildings, and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) associated with the activities conducted at the church and cemetery. Archaeological information may exist that enables researchers to verify the existence of structures, such as horse and carriage sheds, indicated in documentary sources, but never verified as built. Archaeological resources may also identify evidence that documents patterns of reuse, with structures such as the ca. 1900 privy that may have been built over a pre-existing structure.

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East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Name of Property

Plymouth, MA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.25 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19 352280 4627180
Zone Easting Northing

2.
Zone Easting Northing

3.
Zone Easting Northing

4.
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Beaulieu & Timothy T. Orwig, National Register Editor, with Betsy Friedberg, MHC, NR Director

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date November 2007

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Rochester Historical Society, Inc. (church)/Town of Rochester (cemetery)

street & number P.O. Box 171/One Constitution Way telephone 508-763-2724 (RHS)/508-763-5421(town)

city or town Rochester state MA zip code 02770 (both)

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10

Page 1

**East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth) , Massachusetts**

10. Boundary Description

The National Register boundary for this property corresponds to the legal boundary of the two lots, known as Lots 12 & 13 on the Town of Rochester Assessor's Map 19. This 1.25-acre parcel contains two buildings—the East Rochester Church and its privy (Lot 12)—and the East Rochester or Woodside Cemetery (Lot 13). Together, these two lots form a rectangle that fronts 150 ft. on County Road and extends 280 ft. west along the north and south boundaries. Along the western boundary, the lot has a two-part rear boundary that extends from the southwest corner 40 ft. to the northwest and then 125 ft. to the northeast.

Lot 12, addressed as 355 County Road, Rochester, Massachusetts, was set off as the site of the East Rochester meeting house in 1857. The lot has been legally distinct since that time, when the premises were conveyed to George Washington Pierce by deed of Benjamin W. Morton and Mary Swift, as recorded at the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds in Book 282, Page 266. The property was granted by Pierce to the East Rochester church on a long-term lease, although ownership apparently was never legally transferred. In 2003, upon dissolution of the East Rochester Congregational Church, the lot and buildings legally became the property of the Rochester Historical Society through a quitclaim deed from the church. This deed was recorded 14 July 2003 at the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds in Book 25755, Page 326.

Lot 13 also has a complicated legal history. Although it served as a neighborhood cemetery since 1828, its ownership legally never was established clearly. On 17 February 1971, the property was acquired by the Town of Rochester by eminent domain, to become a public cemetery ("Rochester, Town of—Woodside Cemetery—Acquisition," 1971 Regular Session Chapter 23 pg. 12). This act established a legal description for the lot. The cemetery was then formally surveyed, with a survey published in 1973.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes all of both parcels associated with the East Rochester Church and Cemetery.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

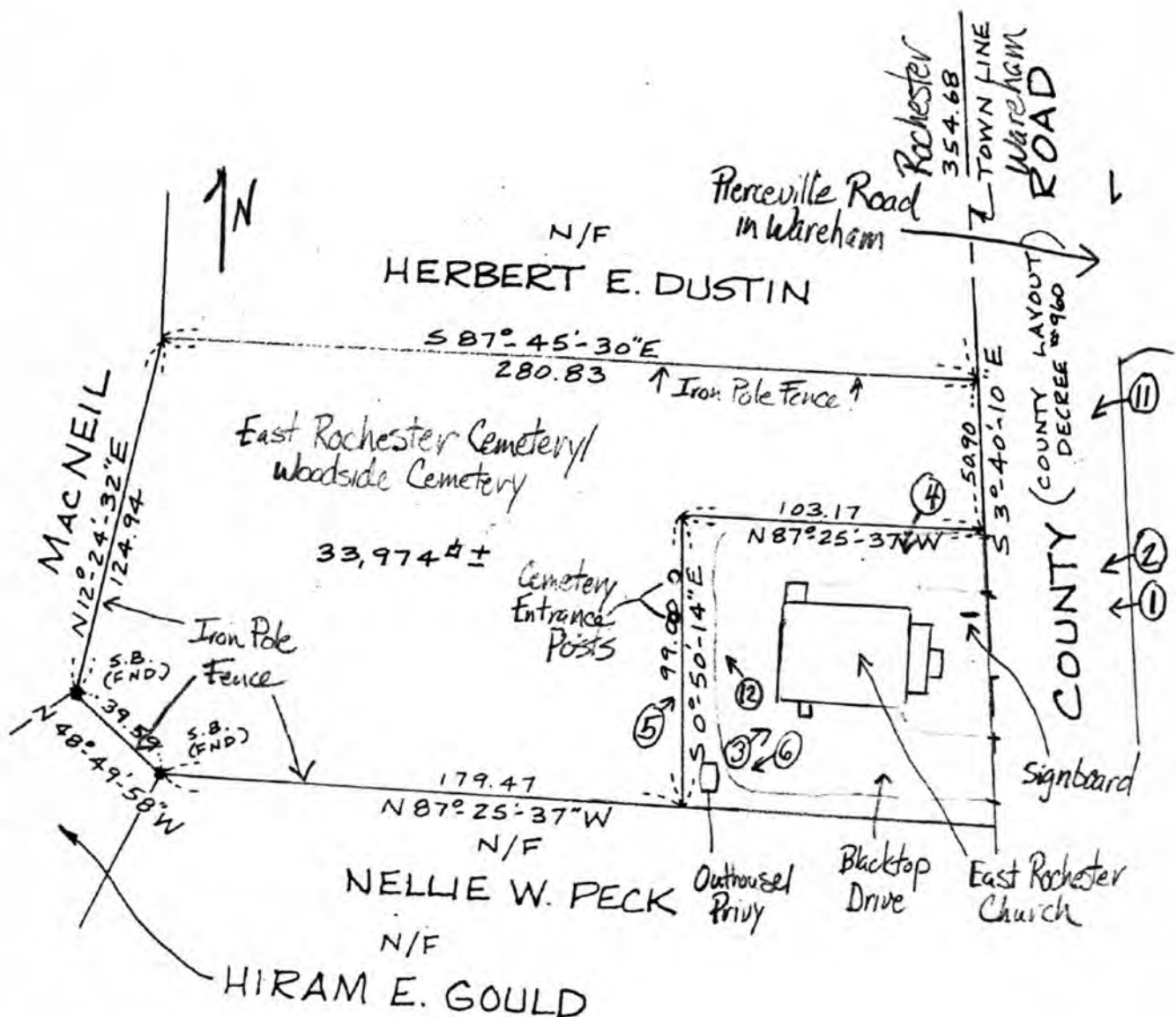
Additional Documentation

Page 1

East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth), Massachusetts

Site Sketch Plan

Plan based on the "Plan of Woodside Cemetery Surveyed for Town of Rochester," January 1973, Arthur C. Thompson, Inc., Engineers and Surveyors, Marion, Mass. Circled numbers with arrows indicate the position of photographer and direction of view in the supporting photographs. This detail map is not to scale.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

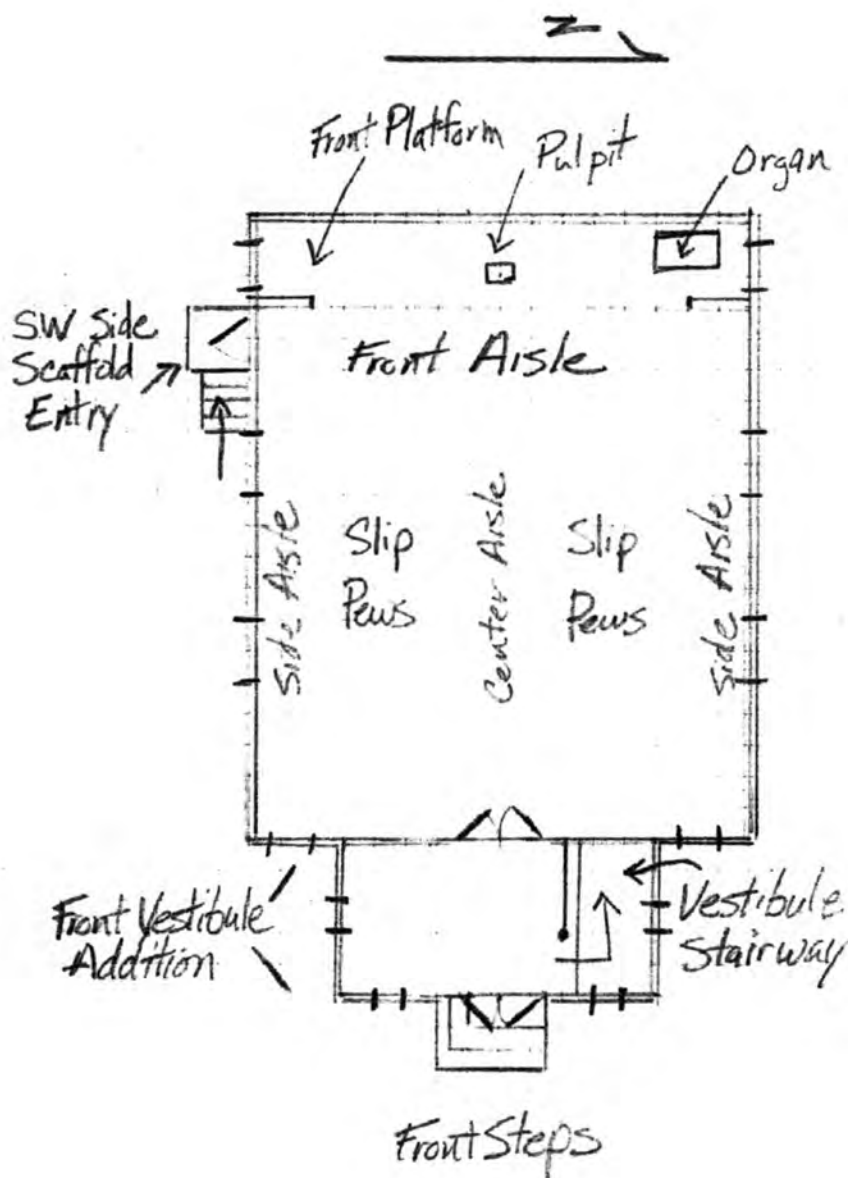
Additional Documentation

Page 2

East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth), Massachusetts

Ground Floor Plan

Drawn by Timothy Orwig. This floor plan is not to scale.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation

Page 3

**East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD
Rochester (Plymouth) , Massachusetts**

Photographs

Timothy Orwig was the photographer for all the photographs, which were taken on 8 December 2006. All of the photographs show the East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District, Rochester, Plymouth County, Massachusetts.

1. East Rochester Church looking west, showing east façade and signboard.
2. East Rochester Church looking southwest, showing east and north façades and signboard.
3. East Rochester Church looking northeast, showing the south façade and scaffold entrance.
4. East Rochester Church looking southwest, showing the north façade and entrance shed.
5. East Rochester Church looking northeast, showing the west façade and rear door.
6. East Rochester Church: outhouse/privy, looking southwest, showing the north and east façades.
7. East Rochester Church Interior: Main hall, looking at southeast corner, showing slip pews and (l. to r.) double doors, southern east wall window, main chandelier, eastern south window.
8. East Rochester Church Interior: Main hall, looking at northwest corner, showing slip pews and (l. to r.) vocalion organ, main chandelier, western north wall window.
9. East Rochester Church Interior: Main hall, looking at northern wall corner, showing display case holding communion set, western north wall window with internal shutters, and front pew.
10. East Rochester Church Interior Detail: One of four secondary chandeliers.
11. East Rochester Cemetery (Woodside Cemetery) from across County Road, with East Rochester Church to the left. Looking west.
12. East Rochester Cemetery front gates from near southwest corner of East Rochester Church, looking northwest. The monument with the marble orb on top (between the gates) is the 1898 stone of John Morse.

Site Data Sheet
East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District
Rochester, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

Building/Landscape/ Feature	Date of Construction	Type of Resource	Contributing or Not (NC)	Assessor's Lot #	MHC Numbers	Architect or Designer
East Rochester Church	1857	Building	Contributing	19/12	ROC.48 ROC Area L	Jacob Look (church) William Blake & Co. (bell)
Outhouse/Privy	ca. 1900	Building	Contributing	19/12		
Signboard	ca. 2003	Object	NC	19/12		
East Rochester Cemetery	1828 (oldest burial)	Site	Contributing	19/13	ROC.805 ROC Area L	
Cemetery Entrance Posts	ca. 1890	Object	Contributing	19/13		
Iron Rail Fence	ca. 1890	Structure	Contributing	19/13		
Benjamin Gurney stone	1828	Object	Contributing			
Morse Family monument	ca. 1883	Object	Contributing			
John Q.A. Morse monument	1898	Object	Contributing			
Ann J. Briggs stone	1830	Object	Contributing			

Stones and monuments cited in data sheet are representative of a far larger number of funerary items within the cemetery.

2 contributing buildings, 1 contributing site, 1 contributing structure, 5 contributing objects, and 1 non-contributing object = 10 (total) resources

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY East Rochester Church and Cemetery Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Plymouth

DATE RECEIVED: 11/26/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/17/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/01/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/09/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001361

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 1.9.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

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.



1. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - ERochesterChurchCeml.tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



2. East Rochester Plymouth Church & Cemetery HD
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - ERochesterChurchCem 2. tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



3. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem 3. tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2005



4. East Rochester Church & Cemetery H.D
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem 4. Hg

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



5. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem S..tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



6. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD [outhouse E+N facade]
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem b. fig

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



7. East Rochester Church & Cemetery^{HD} [INT: hall looking toward
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA SE]
MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem 7. f/f

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



8. East Rochester Church & Cemetery #1D [INT: central
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA chandelier]
MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem 8..tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



9. East Rochester Church & Cemetery tld [INT: detail window]
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem 9. tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



10. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD

Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem 10. tif

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



11. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD

Rochester, Plymouth Co. MA

MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - E Rochester Church Cem. 11. fig

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006



12. East Rochester Church & Cemetery HD [cemetery]
Rochester, Plymouth Co., MA
MA - Rochester (Plymouth Co) - East Rochester Church Cem 12. f/

Photographer: Timothy Orwig
2006

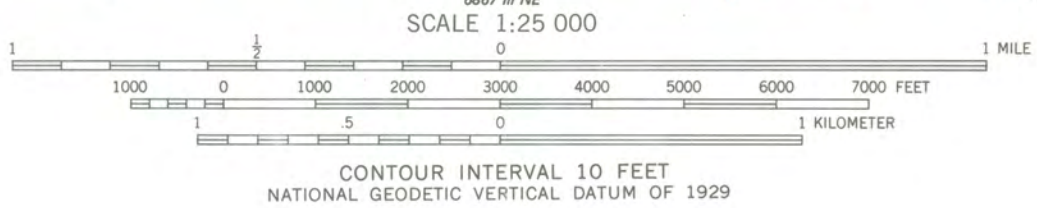
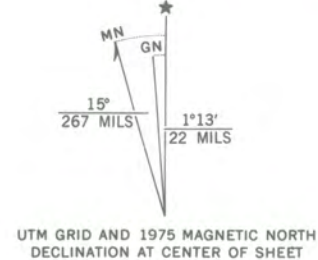


CONVERSION SCALES

Feet	Meters
15000	4500
14000	4267
13000	4000
12000	3703
11000	3413
10000	3048
9000	2743
8000	2438
7000	2134
6000	1829
5000	1524
4000	1219
3000	914
2000	609
1000	305
0	0

To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Topography by planimetric surveys 1937-1938. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1974. Field checked 1975
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19



- ROAD CLASSIFICATION
- Primary highway, hard surface
 - Secondary highway, hard surface
 - Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
 - Unimproved road
 - Interstate Route
 - U. S. Route
 - State Route

SNIPAUTIT POND, MASS.
N4145-W7045/7.5
1977
AMS 6867 IV SE-SERIES V914

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

East Rochester Church & Cemetery Hist. Dist.
Rochester, MA
Zone 19, Easting 352280, Northing 4627180



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

November 20, 2007

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

East Rochester Church and Cemetery HD, Rochester (Plymouth), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Timothy Orwig, consultant
Betty Beaulieu, Rochester Historical Commission
Rochester Historical Society
Richard Nunes, Chair, Board of Selectmen
Chair, Planning Board
Richard LaCamera, Town Administrator