



United States Department of the Interior


NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

December 27, 2010

Notice to file:

This property has been automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This is due to the fact that the publication of our Federal Register Notice: "National Register of Historic Places: Pending Nominations and Other Actions" was delayed beyond our control to the point where the mandated 15 day public comment period ended after our required 45 day time frame to act on the nomination. If the 45th day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the property will be automatically listed the next business day. The nomination is technically adequate and meets the National Register criteria for evaluation, and thus, automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Edson Beall 
Historian
National Register of Historic Places
Phone: 202-354-2255
E-mail: Edson_Beall@nps.gov
Web: www.nps.gov/history/nr

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1086



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Shedd-Porter Memorial Library

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3 Main Street

not for publication

city or town Alstead

vicinity

state New Hampshire code NH county Cheshire code 005 zip code 03602-0209

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Elizabeth H. Muzzey
Signature of certifying official/Title

10/28/10
Date

NH SHPO / NH DHR
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

Joe Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

12-27-10
Date of Action

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Name of Property

Cheshire NH
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
One		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
One		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION Library

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS
Beaux Arts

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE--Granite
walls: STONE--Granite

roof: METAL--Copper
other: _____

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Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Shedd-Porter Library is a neoclassical building of granite that stands on a spacious, level lot adjacent to the south bank of Cold River in Alstead Village, near a highway bridge spanning the river. The building is a small but imposing structure marked by a detailed classical style that combines the principles of Renaissance symmetry and proportioning with a Greek architectural vocabulary. The building conforms to a standard floor plan that was widely recommended and used for small public libraries in the early twentieth century, yet is marked by unusually sophisticated detailing, fine workmanship, and choice materials that combine to make the structure one of the most impressive library buildings in New Hampshire. The building has been little altered from its original design, and has been maintained in excellent condition.

Narrative Description

The Shedd-Porter Memorial Library in Alstead stands on a triangular lot of land bordered by the Cold River on the north, High Street and Main Street on the east, and Library Avenue on the south. The site of the library was chosen by the donor for its central location near the intersection of several highways. Two dwelling houses were purchased and moved to other lots to provide this strategic location for the library. A new street, Library Avenue, was laid out south of the library site to accommodate these buildings after they were moved.¹

The library lot is nearly level except where it abuts the banks of the Cold River and drops precipitously at the edge of the stream. The library is surrounded by a broad lawn with several ornamental trees planted in front of the building and with a margin of tall, mixed native hardwood trees lining the river bank to the north. Among the ornamentals is a spruce tree standing southeast of the library and two young American elms planted in front of the building to begin to restore the street trees that shaded this area in the early twentieth century.

The library is by far the most sophisticated and substantial building in Alstead Village. The majority of buildings in the village are framed structures, and the predominant architectural style is the Greek Revival, a reminder of the fact that the village first attained dominance among other population centers in the township as a site of paper manufacturing during the Greek Revival period. The first paper mill was established on the Cold River in the 1790s and continued in operation, with increasing production, until 1880. Other industries also used the power of Cold River, but most vestiges of active manufacturing have disappeared, leaving the village largely domestic in nature. The oldest of the more prominent buildings near the library is a brick store on the west side of Main Street, displaying the federal style despite its relatively late date of 1833. Other buildings along Main Street are wood and are strongly Grecian in style, a number of them having fully developed front Doric porticoes and closed pediments that express the temple form. Two church buildings are visible from the library, on the northern side of the Cold River: the Third Congregational Church (1842) and the Universalist Church (1844). A large wooden building, the former Alstead Hotel (1880) stands diagonally across from the library at the corner of Main and Mechanic Streets, and is one of relatively few Victorian buildings in the neighborhood. The modern Alstead Town Hall (1980) stands some distance east of the library on Mechanic Street.²

The exterior of the library is strongly classical in its architectural vocabulary. In keeping with many other neoclassical buildings of the early twentieth century, the library combines Renaissance forms and principles with ornamentation that

¹ Helen H. Frink, *Alstead Through the Years: 1763-1990* (Alstead, N. H.: Alstead Historical Society, 1992), pp. 456-8; Bruce Bellows, "A Brief History of Library's in Alstead" [2010] (manuscript at Alstead Historical Society).

² For a detailed survey of Alstead Village, see Lisa Mausolf, *Alstead Village Historic District Area Form* (2007), on file at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (SHPO), Concord, N. H.

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is largely Greek in derivation, creating an eclectic architectural character that was regarded as symbolic of knowledge and learning.

The building is roughly rectangular in overall plan, but is characterized by projecting pavilions at both front and rear that interrupt a strictly rectilinear outline. The building is approximately 57 feet in maximum width and 53 feet in depth, not including the depth of the 18-foot-wide flight of nine granite steps that ascend to the front doorway from a semicircular sidewalk that approaches the building from Main Street.

The building has an exterior of granite, applied over brick backing, with some interior partitions constructed of structural clay tile. Designed to be fireproof, the structure utilizes steel construction where needed, with plaster applied either to the structural tiles or to expanded metal lath.

The building is a single tall story in height above an elevated basement story (see photograph). The stone for the walls and details, quarried at North Jay, Maine, is fine-grained white granite.³ The surfacing of the ashlar blocks and moldings of the library varies in fineness, ranging between six-cut and ten-cut hammering, depending upon the location on the building's exterior. This treatment produced a smooth but unpolished texture when viewed from a distance of more than a few feet. The carving of architectural details, and the enrichment of moldings, is skillfully executed.

Rising from a low platform or plinth of granite that extends several feet beyond the wall planes, the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library is characterized by the massive solidity of its walls, punctuated at intervals by large windows that provide ample natural light to the interiors. The building's plinth provides an architectural basement for the building and echoes the three-part composition of a classical pedestal. The base of the plinth is formed from a square-edged footing that supports a tall, Grecian ogee capped by a small fillet and shallow ovolo. The top of this base is a granite table some two feet in depth. Rising from this table is the die of the plinth. This takes the form of a low, battered wall with an out-curving base that rises from a fillet resting on the table. The cornice of the pedestal is a granite ovolo similar to the bed moldings of the main cornice at the top of the building, surmounted by a solid granite corona with a battered face, which serves as a water table for the building.

The walls are composed of ashlar blocks of even depth, rising fourteen courses from a low inverted cove to support a full granite entablature. The entablature is composed of an architrave with three fasciae, a plain frieze, and a cornice with heavy ovolo bed and crown moldings. On the façade and the side elevations of the reading rooms, the bed moldings are enriched with egg-and-dart, which is omitted on the cornices of the rearmost sections of the building. Above the cornice rises a granite parapet with a granite base, a wall or die one block in height, and a molded granite cornice. Above the granite cornice is a copper screen (not original; see below) embellished with anthemion in alternating larger and smaller sizes. Outer corners of the walls, except those of a projection at the rear of the book stack section, are marked by three-foot-long granite quoins, smoothly hammered and uniform in length, but with wide horizontal joints to provide pronounced shadows.

The façade (east elevation) of the building has three openings: a central entrance door flanked by wide windows that light the front reading rooms of the library. The entrance is centered in a pavilion that projects forward some 6'-7" from the façade, repeating the entablature and quoins of the latter. The doorway is sheltered beneath a pedimented aedicule in the Ionic order. The entablature of the aedicule is supported by two outer pilasters of uniform width from bottom to top, capped with simple capitals consisting of fillets and an echinus represented by a slightly enriched Grecian ovolo. The pilasters flank two fully developed monolithic granite Ionic columns that display visible entasis. Their capitals are of the Grecian form, with parallel volutes above an echinus that is enriched with egg-and-dart. The entablature of the aedicule continues that of the walls of the main building and the front pavilion. It is composed of an architrave having three fasciae and an upper ogee band molding enriched with leaf-and-dart, a plain frieze with the incised words, "SHEDD-

³ For a description of the North Jay granite quarries and granite industry, see Benjamin F. Lawrence, *History of Jay, Franklin County, Maine* (Boston: Griffith-Stillings Press, 1912), pp. 19-21.

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PORTER MEMORIAL," and a cornice. The cornice has an ovolo bed molding enriched with egg-and-dart, above which are a plain corona and a large ovolo crown molding.

The triangular pediment of the aedicule is surmounted by three granite anthemias having palmettes of honeysuckle supported by Grecian scrolls. The tympanum of the pediment is filled with a symmetrical carved granite ornament that is centered on a round boss with a convex picked face, flanked by acanthus leaves and branching scrolls.

The doorway of the building is composed of a tall opening framed in granite and filled with double-leaf mahogany doors with a glazed transom sash above. The granite architrave that surrounds the wooden elements has a profile consisting of two fasciae and a backband molding composed of a shallow Grecian ovolo and fillet; it is slightly battered from bottom to top. Flanking the two upper corners of the architrave are elaborately carved granite ancones or consoles with delicate side volutes embracing honeysuckle petals, and with a dense cluster of acanthus leaves at the bottoms. These consoles support a flat granite shelf that is surmounted by three carved anthemias similar to those on the pediment of the aedicule. These anthemias are connected by elongated C-scrolls that support the higher central ornament and gently descend to buttress the two terminal anthemias.

The double-leaf doors are fashioned from varnished mahogany and have identical profiles on their exterior and interior faces. Their stiles and rails hold bolection moldings enclosing raised panels that fill most of the area of the doors, with small, square lights above. These glazed openings are subdivided by horizontal, vertical, and diagonal muntins; this composition was recognized as Grecian in character in designs of the early twentieth century. Above the doors is a transom sash composed of polished plate glass overlaid with soldered metal screens laid out in a fish scale pattern with a Greek key border.

The window openings of the building form a hierarchy, with the largest and most elaborate being on the façade, and with openings of progressively lesser ornamentation on the sides of the two reading rooms and on the side and rear elevations of the book stack area at the rear of the building. The two windows of the façade rise from deeply projecting granite shelves that are supported by two plain granite brackets extending from the water table of the building's basement. The edges of the shelves are square, but have an inverted cove molding to define the transition from the sides to the flat tops of the shelves. Rising from the shelves are granite window casings that share the profile of the architraves of the front doorway. Like the latter, these architraves exhibit a slight batter on their outer edges. Flanking the two upper corners of the architraves are elaborately carved granite ancones or consoles with delicate side volutes embracing honeysuckle petals, and with a dense cluster of acanthus leaves at the bottoms, identical with those at the front entrance. These support flat granite shelves above each window, each shelf resting on a Grecian ogee bed molding and having a crown molding composed of a large cavetto above a small Grecian ogee. The sashes within the front window openings are three-part units separated by mullions, surmounted by three-part transom sashes. All these sashes are filled with polished plate glass and all are fixed except for the large central sashes, which are hinged on one side to open as a casement. The exteriors of the mullions are flat, with fillets at each edge to define a sunken panel at the center of each member, a profile that had long been recognized as Grecian in style. The mullions are stained and varnished on the interior.

The two windows in the north side of the northern reading room and the south side of the southern reading room have square-edged projecting sills with small projecting fillets at their tops. Rising from these sills are battered architraves that share the profile of architraves on the front of the building. These support caps that match those of the front windows. No ancones are employed on these side windows. The sashes are double-hung, single-light sashes filled with plate glass, with a fixed transom sash above.

The front and side basement windows beneath the two reading rooms are placed directly below the main windows above. Their openings interrupt the ogee molding at the base of the building's plinth and penetrate the die of the building's architectural basement. Each window opening is capped with a label molding with downturned corners and with the same filleted profile seen on the front window mullions. The sashes in these openings are three-part units filled with plate glass. The two narrow side lights are fixed, and the central sash was hinged at the bottom and restrained by chains

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to open as a hopper. These movable sashes have since been sealed with applied wooden moldings at their tops on the interior.

The windows lighting the rear corner rooms behind the reading rooms and the book stacks are treated in a subordinate style on the exterior (see photograph). Their openings are defined on each side by unornamented arrises in the ashlar blocks of the walls. Each window has a lintel and a sill composed of an ashlar block that extends beyond the sides of the opening to provide lugs. Each of these stones projects slightly beyond the plane of the wall to offer a thin but precise shadow line. These window openings are filled with three-part units as described above, with double-hung sashes surmounted by fixed transoms. The window openings in the rear (western) wall of the book stack area each have two such units, separated by mullions.

The building is surmounted by a copper-clad dome supported by a granite drum that is centered on an axis running north and south through the midpoint of the two reading rooms. The base of the drum is partly obscured under a non-original roof system (see below), but is composed of curved ashlar blocks with eight window openings, now hidden beneath the current roof. Above the covered windows and the surface of the current roof, the drum is encircled by a frieze of granite blocks bearing flat circular bosses at their centers. Above the frieze is a deeply projecting denticulated cornice of granite. Above the crown molding of the cornice rises a segmental dome with a smooth covering of green copper, topped by a finial in the form of a classical urn.

The interior of the library reflects a symmetrical floor plan that had become a standard for smaller public library buildings, especially those designed in a classical style, by the late nineteenth century (see photograph).

Independent of the stylistic vocabulary they displayed, most library buildings of this era followed a T-shaped floor plan. Behind the entrance vestibule is a rotunda or "delivery room," often with a permanent librarian's desk at its side or far end. On each side of the entrance hall or rotunda is a large, well-lighted room, frequently fitted with bookshelves, filled with sturdy and comfortable furniture, and warmed by a fireplace. Originally, one of these rooms was often designated as a reading room, while the other was set aside as an art room or a memorial to the donor or the person in whose honor the building was named. Behind the rotunda is the "book room" or stacks.⁴

The Shedd-Porter library follows this plan, but has additional subordinate rooms on each side of the book stack wing behind the main block, connecting to the front reading rooms through sliding pocket doors. As described below, the library also has a small auditorium, now used as a children's room, in the basement of the main block. While the Shedd-Porter Library follows a standardized plan that is typical of its period of construction, the building is as extraordinary for the quality and finish of its interior spaces as it is for its exterior of granite.

The center of the rotunda of the library is denoted by a Siena marble circle in the floor, surrounded by white mosaic tiles interrupted at intervals by concentric polychrome mosaic borders. The marble circle lies beneath a shallow plastered dome in the ceiling above, in the oculus of which is a stained glass laylight of a predominantly yellow hue that reflects the color of the marble on the floor below it. Originally illuminated in the daytime by the eight windows in the granite drum of the dome above, this stained glass feature is now lighted by electricity. Both the laylight and the lower margin of the dome are decorated with elaborate polychrome stenciling, and the curved surface of the dome is covered with gold leaf. The ring at the base of the dome bears raised Greek key ornament, and is lighted at intervals by exposed incandescent electric bulbs in a fashion characteristic of electric illumination used for architectural effect in the early twentieth century. The bulbs directly over the librarian's desk light words inscribed in gold leaf on the wall below the base of the dome, taken from a favorite poem of John Graves Shedd:

⁴ "Architecture: A Search for Style," in Shirley Gray Adamovich, ed., *The Road Taken: The New Hampshire Library Association, 1889-1999* (West Kennebunk, Maine: for the Association by Phoenix Publishing, 1989).

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HAIL: OLD NEW HAMPSHIRE'S HILLS
MY THOUGHTS TURN BACK TO THEE
TO ROAM AMING THY VERDANT RILLS
WITH HURRIED STEPS THEY FLEE.⁵

The curved plaster walls below the base of the dome create a transition from the circle above to a square entablature below. The corners of the curved wall above the entablature take the form of pendentives that are defined by cross-hatching, intended to resemble the tesserae of a mosaic surface, applied over the gold leaf. Below the four pendentives rise curved and tapered plaster ribs that spring from the entablature below and intersect the ring at the base of the dome. The soffits of these ribs are decorated with a complex guilloche.

The corners of the entablature are supported by clusters of columns and pilasters that enclose steel supports for the granite drum that rises from the roof of the building. The columns are of the Greek Ionic order, regarded as symbolic of wisdom. Their shafts, and those of the pilasters they embrace, are executed in scagliola, colored and veined to resemble Siena marble.⁶ Both the columns and the pilasters bear elaborated capitals, those of the columns bearing a close resemblance to the granite Ionic capitals that frame the front entrance. These capitals display tighter volutes than surviving ancient Greek prototypes, and the upper rims of their echinuses, above the egg-and-dart moldings, are enriched with carved braids or guilloches. The pilasters have complex capitals composed of a base band of egg-and dart surmounted by two identical bands of leaf-and-tongue, with a molded abacus at the top.

The entablatures that surmount these columns in both the rotunda and the two reading rooms are equally elaborated. The frieze is painted in a complex Greek key fret executed in brown and blue. The bed molding of the cornice is enriched with egg-and-dart. The cornice within the rotunda is further elaborated by heavy modillions above the egg-and-dart.

The center of the rotunda wall opposite the front door is occupied by the circulation desk, beyond which is the main stack room, lighted by three large windows in its rear (west) wall. The circulation desk has a strongly curved front of mahogany panels, set above a baseboard of variegated green Vermont marble. The stacks are double-sided bookcases of mahogany having paneled ends and full entablatures at their tops.

The two front reading rooms are finished in almost identical fashion, with mahogany door and window casings having eared architraves in the Greek style, mahogany bookcases around much of the perimeter of each room with details that match those of the larger bookcases in the stacks, and mahogany wainscoting with baseboards of variegated green Vermont marble in areas where no bookcases stand. The doors that connect the front rooms with the smaller rooms behind them are sliding pocket doors.

The plastered walls of the reading rooms are subdivided into rectangular panels by double architraves with backband moldings. The enclosed panels are decorated by stenciled borders.

The focal point of each reading room is a fireplace that is centered on its end (north or south) wall. The two fireplaces have variegated green marble jambs and lintels, and identical mahogany mantelpieces. Each chimneypiece has a full mahogany entablature supported by mahogany Ionic columns with pronounced entasis. The entablatures are interrupted at each end by a carved console that rises from the capital of each column to support a thick mantelshelf with faces bearing sunken panels that match detailing of the faces of the bookcases throughout the building.

Above each fireplace is a panel enclosing an inscription. The panel in the south reading room surrounds a bronze tablet with a bound laurel and oak leaf border, bearing the words:

⁵ This poem, written in 1846 in nearby Walpole, New Hampshire, is given in full in *Souvenir, Old Home Day, August 25, 1910, Alstead, N. H., and Dedication, Shedd-Porter Memorial Library*.

⁶ For a description of scagliola and an allied technique called mazzocco, see Pamela H. Simpson, *Cheap, Quick, & Easy: Imitative Architectural Materials, 1870-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), pp. 122-4.

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SHEDD-PORTER
MEMORIAL LIBRARY
ERECTED A.D. 1909
BY MR. AND MRS. JOHN C. SHEDD
AS A MEMORIAL TO THEIR PARENTS
WILLIAM AND ABIGAIL WALLACE SHEDD
WINSLOW B. AND LAURA M. B. PORTER
LONG TIME RESIDENTS OF ALSTEAD
AND LANGDON

W. S.	A. W. S.
1801	1810
1875	1894

W. B. P.	L. M. B. P.
1823	1820
1891	1898

The panel above the northern fireplace bears an inscription in gilt:

BOOKS ARE MEN
OF HIGHER STATURE
AND THE ONLY MEN THAT
SPEAK ALOUD FOR
FUTURE TIME TO HEAR

The basement auditorium, now the children's room, occupies the area beneath the first-floor rotunda and reading rooms. It is reached by two matched winding staircases of terrazzo that descend from each side of the foyer inside the front door to a lower foyer screened from the auditorium by glazed double doors with transoms and sidelights. The auditorium is a single room more than fifty feet in length with a fireplace at the center of its north and south walls and with a small stage or recessed dais centered on the western wall, directly opposite the auditorium entrance. The room is lighted by the front and side basement windows, originally hinged at the bottom as hoppers, described above.

The auditorium repeats the classical vocabulary seen on the main floor, but in a subdued manner. The room has a terrazzo floor and a beamed ceiling. The structural members that support the main floor are expressed as lateral beams articulated with moldings that transform each beam into an entablature. The principal structural beams below the perimeter of the rotunda are deeper than the rest, and their ends are supported by consoles; one of these beams serves as the proscenium for the stage. The stage has a curved front edge. Its rear wall follows a reverse curve, articulated with molded panels on its plaster walls and pierced by two stage doors. As noted below, the curved rear wall of the stage was originally covered by a painted mural.

The fireplaces at the north and south ends of the auditorium are constructed of buff colored brick with flat brick arches above the fireplace openings. The mantelpieces are simpler than those in the reading rooms above, consisting of wide pilasters supporting an entablature in a style that suggests Greek Revival chimneypieces of the mid-nineteenth century. The pilasters have Doric capitals and faces with sunken panels decorated with fillets that trace a Greek key design at top and bottom. The entablatures are composed of a three-part architrave, a flat frieze, and a cornice with a bed molding of egg-and-dart in high relief. Above each pilaster, a single, carved patera is placed halfway between the capital and the cornice, overlapping parts of the architrave and frieze. As in the mantelpieces in the reading rooms, thick mantelshelves have faces bearing sunken panels that match detailing on the faces of the bookcases throughout the building.

Light fixtures throughout the library take advantage of the fact that the village had had access to electricity since 1897.⁷ The architects employed electricity both for general illumination and for architectural effect, as in the halo of incandescent bulbs that illuminate the soffit of the base of the rotunda dome. Light fixtures are mostly bronze, selected

⁷ Helen H. Frink, *Alstead Through the Years: 1763-1990* (Alstead, N. H.: Alstead Historical Society, 1992), p. 274.

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or custom designed with design elements that enhance the Grecian style of the interior. The two electroliers in each of the two reading rooms hang from chains and bear six incandescent bulbs with milk glass shades supported by arms that branch from a large central hemisphere. The hemisphere is marked by an upper rim decorated with laurel leaves, and each arm springs from a bronze anthemion ornament. The sconces that light the area of the circulation desk are attached to the scagliola columns. They have square base shells with short arms that project to support cross-arms decorated with laurel leaves. These, in turn, support two vertical lampholders decorated with cast water leaves and bearing frosted glass shades. Similarly, hanging lamps in the rear rooms of the main floor have sockets decorated with water leaf ornamentation in two styles. In the auditorium below, sconces that light the stage or dais have round wall shells that support projecting replicas of oil lamps with hemispherical fonts decorated with laurel leaves and cast anthemion. The lamps have a bronze flame, symbolic of knowledge, rising from their centers. The cast flame is flanked on both sides by vertical lampholders that are fitted with ribbed holophane shades. Ceiling fixtures in the auditorium are circular bosses holding a cluster of five frosted globes, but each lampholder is again decorated with cast bronze water leaves.

The thoughtful design of the interior electrical fixtures of the building is echoed on the exterior, where the eighteen-foot-wide granite staircase that ascends to the front door is flanked by wide granite plinths that extend from the water table at the front of the building. Each plinth bears a tall bronze lamp lighting the entrance of the building and illuminating the façade at night. Each lamp is an Ionic column that repeats the employment of this order, symbolizing wisdom, throughout the building. The capital of each column bears a circular spray of water leaves, which supports a large frosted light globe.⁸ Four smaller post lamps of recent date light the curved sidewalk that approaches the entrance staircase from north and south.

Original appearance: The interior of the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library has changed little in appearance since its dedication in 1910.⁹ The exterior, too, remains unchanged with one exception. The building originally had a flat roof, slightly sloped toward roof drains at the rear of the building, enclosed within its perimeter parapet walls. This roof remains intact, but has been covered with a second, upper roof. The original roof, composed of structural clay tiles held by a system of steel angles, began to develop leakage problems in the 1920s. In 1926, William H. McLean, surviving partner in the partnership that had designed the building (the McLean & Wright architectural firm in Boston) was consulted about the leakage, and designed a new, pitched roof system to cover the original.¹⁰

The upper roof system is based on two steel trusses that span the depth of the building from east to west, providing pitched roof surfaces in all four compass directions and, on the level upper chords of the trusses, a flat roof deck behind (to the west of) the drum and dome. This new raised system covered the lower drum of the dome, including the window openings that had flooded the whitewashed interior of the drum with natural light that illuminated the stained glass laylight in the ceiling of the rotunda below. The window openings, now empty, were originally filled with sashes that are stored in the attic and display the same muntin pattern, composed of horizontal, vertical, and diagonal bars, that is seen in the small windows of the building's front doors.

The new, upper roof is composed of structural clay tile supported by steel angles that are attached to the steel roof trusses. The membrane of structural clay tile is covered by sheets of standing-seam copper. The outer edge of the copper roof is masked by an uninterrupted screen of copper antefixes composed of alternating honeysuckle ornaments of large and smaller sizes.

⁸ Tafi [Kathryn] Brown, "The Story of Two Globe Lights" (typescript, n.d., circa 2009).

⁹ For photographs of the building when new, see *Souvenir, Old Home Day, August 25, 1910, Alstead, N. H., and Dedication, Shedd-Porter Memorial Library*.

¹⁰ Bruce Bellows, "A Brief History of Library's in Alstead." [2010].

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The interior of the building has changed little except for periodic re-painting of plaster surfaces. Photographs of the interior taken when the building was new indicate that much of the painted ornamentation of the interior, particularly the Greek key and palmette friezes that decorate the principal rooms, has been carefully preserved or restored. Early photographs show that the curved rear wall of the stage in the basement auditorium was originally decorated with a mural, no longer visible, that depicted a pastoral scene with a distant temple, pool, and fountain, framed by Ionic columns. The basement was thoroughly refinished in 1941 under the direction of architect H. Seabury of Boston due to condensation and moisture damage to the plaster.¹¹ It appears that much painted decoration in the auditorium, including the mural, was removed or over-painted at that time.

Strathmore
WRITING 25% COTTON

¹¹ Ibid.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Period of Significance (justification)

Under Criterion A, the period of significance extends from the date of the library's dedication and opening to the arbitrary National Register fifty-year cut-off date.

Under Criterion C, the period of significance is the date of the building's dedication and opening.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

CRITERION A: 1910-1960

CRITERION C: 1910

Significant Dates

1910

1926

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

McLean, William H.; Wright, Albert Hayden

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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

The Shedd-Porter Memorial Library is significant under National Register Criterion A, in the category of education, as a public library building. The library was donated to the town of Alstead by private philanthropists, a method of library construction that was typical of the evolving public library movement in New England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The building is also significant under National Register Criterion C, in the category of architecture, as one of the most fully developed neoclassical buildings in New Hampshire and as the design of the Boston architectural firm of McLean and Wright, one of the most prolific and skilful designers of library buildings in New England in the early twentieth century. The library is significant at the statewide level of significance. The period of significance under Criterion A extends from 1910, the date of the library's dedication, to 1960, the arbitrary fifty-year cut-off date for the National Register of Historic Places. Under Criterion C, the period of significance is 1910, the date of completion and dedication. The Shedd-Porter library retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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

Criterion A, Education: The Shedd-Porter Memorial Library represents an important chapter in the maturation of a library movement that began in the late 1700s and gave New Hampshire special distinction in the history of library development in the United States.¹² As elsewhere in New England, the first New Hampshire libraries were not public libraries. They were collections of books that were purchased by organizations or corporations of private individuals, and then shared among the members of the group, usually being kept in the home of the individual who served as librarian. These corporations were called "social libraries." The first in New Hampshire was the Portsmouth Social Library, established in 1750 by a group of the town's wealthiest merchants, who ordered their collection of books from London and elsewhere.¹³ Relatively few other New Hampshire towns were large or wealthy enough to establish social libraries until well after the Revolution, but by the 1790s, the social library movement was powerful and beneficial force throughout New Hampshire. Writing in 1791, the New Hampshire historian Jeremy Belknap penned his description of the ideal town, which, among other institutions, ought to contain "a social library, annually increasing, and under good regulation."¹⁴ By 1820, some 180 such libraries had been organized in New Hampshire.¹⁵ Alstead had one, incorporated in 1798.¹⁶ East Alstead had its own separate social library, incorporated in 1804.¹⁷

Though it was a wonderful source for education and literacy, the social library had one serious defect when measured by more modern standards: its books could only be borrowed by its shareholders or proprietors. The social library was in no sense a public library; the idea of a truly public collection of books had yet to be conceived. Today, because of a

¹² Louise Fitz, "The Library Movement in New Hampshire," *Granite Monthly* 15 (1893):349-55.

¹³ Jim Piecuch, "'Of Great Importance Both to Civil & Religious Welfare': The Portsmouth Social Library, 1750-1786," *Historical New Hampshire* 57 (Fall-Winter 2002):66-84.

¹⁴ G. T. Lord, ed., *Belknap's New Hampshire: An Account of the State in 1792* (Hampton, N. H.: Peter E. Randall, 1973), p. 251.

¹⁵ *Index to the Laws of New Hampshire Recorded in the Office of the Secretary of State, 1679-1883* (Manchester, N. H.: John B. Clarke, 1886), pp. 286-90.

¹⁶ *Laws of New Hampshire, Volume 6, Second Constitutional Period, 1792-1801* (Concord, N. H.: Evans Printing Co., 1917), pp. 501-2.

¹⁷ *Laws of New Hampshire, Volume 7, Second Constitutional Period, 1801-1811* (Concord, N. H.: Evans Printing Co., 1918), pp. 312-13.

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revolutionary change that began in New Hampshire in the nineteenth century, few such private library collections, owned by a group of proprietors, remain in existence. The Athenaeums in Boston and Portsmouth, founded in 1807 and 1817 respectively, are among the few survivors of the social library movement.

The movement that swept away the social library had its origins in New Hampshire. At a town meeting on April 9, 1833, the voters of the town of Peterborough agreed to do something that had never been done before: to tax themselves to establish a library that would be open to every citizen of the town. Peterborough claims thereby to have established the "oldest free public library in the world supported by taxation."¹⁸

Peterborough voters acted strictly on local impulse in 1833. It took some years for this momentous idea to be sanctioned at the state level. But in 1849, the New Hampshire General Court passed a law—the first of its kind in the nation—that officially sanctioned the Peterborough precedent by authorizing any New Hampshire town to spend tax dollars to establish public libraries. The same law authorized towns to receive gifts for the support of such libraries and to purchase land and erect library buildings.¹⁹

This ground-breaking legislation began an ever-increasing statewide commitment to the establishment of free public libraries. The provisions of the law that authorized the purchase of land and the erection of buildings were to have far-reaching effects at the end of the nineteenth century, when two further laws ensured that the public library would become a fixture in nearly every New Hampshire community.

In 1891, the legislature passed an innovative law that obligated the state to assist towns that took advantage of the statute of 1849. This legislation required the state to offer books worth \$100 to any town that began a library by voting to appropriate an annual sum based on the value of taxable property in the community. The law of 1891 also created a state board of library commissioners whose duties included the provision of professional guidance in librarianship to any such town.²⁰ A hundred dollars worth of books in 1891 created the nucleus of a substantial library for any community that committed itself to establishing such an institution.

Finally, in 1895 New Hampshire moved to the final stage of state oversight of local public libraries. In that year, the legislature passed a ground-breaking law—again, the first of its kind in the nation—that *required* each town in the state to appropriate funds for the establishment of a free public library and to appoint a local board of library trustees, unless the electorate voted each year not to do so.²¹ After passage of this statute, no New Hampshire town could avoid establishing a public library unless it voted each year to fend off the creation of such an institution. The effect of this law is demonstrated by the fact that many New Hampshire public libraries trace their establishment to 1896 or 1897. The result of this statute was an almost universal presence of public libraries in New Hampshire by the first decades of the twentieth century. By 1914, Governor Samuel D. Felker could report that there were only thirteen New Hampshire towns without a public library, and that of those thirteen, six were accumulating funds for the establishment of a library.

But even when New Hampshire communities appropriated sufficient funds to secure the \$100 worth of books from the state or, following the statute of 1895, set aside an annual appropriation for a public library, such an institution was by no means secure. It was relatively easy to create a public library as an institution with a small collection of books; it was much more difficult to erect a library building of an appropriate design and capacity to house those books and make them easily available to the public. The late 1800s was an age of farm abandonment, rural decline, and shrinking tax bases in

¹⁸ James Francis Brennan, "History of [the] Peterborough Public Library," New Hampshire Library Commission. *Bulletin*, n.s. 1 (1900):5-9; Brennan, "Peterborough Town Library: The Pioneer Public Library," *Granite Monthly* 28 (1900):281-91; New Hampshire Library Association, *The Centenary of the Establishment of Public Libraries and the Forty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Library Association . . .* (Peterborough, N.H.: Peterborough Transcript, 1933).

¹⁹ Chapter 861, New Hampshire Laws of 1849.

²⁰ Chapter 62, New Hampshire Laws of 1891.

²¹ Chapter 118, New Hampshire Laws of 1895.

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most New Hampshire towns. New Hampshire town histories abound with tales of book collections housed in out-of-the-way rooms above or behind stores, crowded into chambers not much bigger than closets, locked away and stifled through lack of a librarian's care, and often little more accessible to the general public than had been the collections of the earlier private social libraries. Poor New Hampshire communities could seldom afford to erect an appropriate building for a library. Most New Hampshire public libraries languished until some private individual stepped forward to endow the construction of a proper library building. Of the 110 library buildings constructed in New Hampshire before 1930, only about ten appear to have been erected wholly by community funds.²²

Under the circumstances of the period, private initiative and philanthropy frequently compensated for inadequate local revenues. The period from 1890 to 1915 became an age of notable—sometimes astonishing—philanthropy in New Hampshire's library history. Local citizens or summer visitors, grown wealthy through inheritance, business enterprise, or careful frugality, often stepped forward to do what the local community could not do for itself. Some donors welcomed the opportunity to present their gifts publicly, sometimes delivering lengthy addresses or publishing commemorative booklets to mark the occasion. Others sought anonymity. Many were not wealthy enough to give such gifts during their lifetimes, but chose to devote a large portion of their estates to the fulfillment of their purpose, their intentions unsuspected by the community until their wills were read.

It also became a tradition of this kind of philanthropy for a donor to commemorate a spouse or a parent by naming the building as a memorial to that person. Honoring this tradition, John Graves Shedd and his wife, Mary Roenna Porter Shedd, presented this building as a memorial to their parents, William and Abigail Wallace Shedd and Dr. Winslow B. and Laura M. B. Porter.²³

The powerful philanthropic desire to endow a community with a substantial building to house its public library was strongly related in the early twentieth century to a desire to improve public education. The crucial connection between the library and education had been noted by the New Hampshire Library Association when it held its first meeting in 1890. A report of that meeting chronicled the contrast between the embryonic town library, housed in a seldom-opened room, and the ideal library with reading and reference space as well as ample collections:

With unabashed economy the arrangement and management of the [early] library confirmed to the earliest Puritanical practice, and rooms set apart for reading and reference were deemed criminally extravagant. The diffusion of knowledge was accompanied by everything tending to its suppression, yet to the public libraries the common school owes its greatest debt. The stern and narrow policy, made necessary by the former conditions of our society, has been gradually changing, 'til now the town and city libraries are regarded as much a part of our domestic system as the school and the church.²⁴

Albert E. Pillsbury reiterated the strong link between the public library and public education. Pillsbury was a Milford native who spent much of his career as attorney general of Massachusetts, yet donated what is now Pillsbury State Park in Washington, New Hampshire, and was a founder of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Pillsbury was a speaker at the dedication of several public library buildings in New Hampshire. At the dedication of a new library building in Windham, New Hampshire, in 1899, Pillsbury defined the essential role of the public library in continuing the work of the public school:

²² "Architecture: A Search for Style," in Shirley Gray Adamovich, ed., *The Road Taken: The New Hampshire Library Association, 1889-1999* (West Kennebunk, Maine: for the Association by Phoenix Publishing, 1989), p. 62.

²³ For biographical information on the Shedd's, see *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White and Co., 1921), s.v. "Shedd"; *Souvenir, Old Home Day and Dedication Shedd-Porter Memorial Library, Alstead, N. H., August 25, 1910*; *Time Magazine* November 1, 1926 (obituary).

²⁴ Shirley Gray Adamovich, ed., *The Road Taken: The New Hampshire Library Association, 1889-1999* (West Kennebunk, Maine: for the Association by Phoenix Publishing, 1989), p. 9.

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[The public library] is a permanent free school, not limited to youth or to three terms a year. Every man, woman, and child, of whatever age, situation, or circumstances, can attend it. It brings to the service of every inhabitant of the town the best thought which the best minds have contributed to all forms of literature. It puts in every hand a key to the history of nations, the mysteries of science, the story of great lives, the theories of the economist, the speculations of the philosopher. Upon its wings you may follow the traveler through foreign lands, the explorer to the African jungle or the frozen Arctic, the poet and novelist to the land of romance and of dreams, the astronomer to the stars. . . . More than this. One of the highest and most valuable uses of the free library is yet to be developed, in making it an adjunct or a part of the public school system.²⁵

Donation of the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library had the nourishing effect on the availability of books in Alstead and Langdon that library proponents of the period had predicted. In 1896, when trustees of the Alstead Public Library were first appointed under the statute of 1895, the library possessed 516 books. The collection grew slowly through donations and bequests. Upon dedication of the new building in 1910, John Graves Shedd immediately purchased 2,000 new books to begin to fill the capacious shelves of the library. A century later, having been directed by fourteen librarians since 1910, the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library contained 14,500 volumes.²⁶

Criterion C, Architecture: The ideal design of the rural public library building had become well established when John and Mary Shedd donated the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library. The Shedd-Porter Library might be regarded as a paradigm of the small library of the early twentieth century. Typically, such buildings are symmetrical in plan, and often classical in architectural vocabulary. Independent of the stylistic vocabulary they displayed, most library buildings of this era followed a T-shaped floor plan. Behind an entrance vestibule is a rotunda or “delivery room,” often with a permanent librarian’s desk or alcove at its side or far end. On each side of the rotunda or entrance hall is a large, well-lighted room, frequently fitted with bookshelves, filled with sturdy and comfortable furniture, and warmed by a fireplace. Originally, one of these rooms was often designated as a reading room (sometimes with a separate reference room adjoining), while the other was set aside as an art room or a memorial to the donor or the person in whose honor the building was named. Behind the rotunda is the “book room” or stacks. Many such libraries had a small lecture hall on a second floor or (as in the Shedd-Porter Memorial) in the basement.²⁷

Most such buildings, even if only one story in height, have very high walls with large windows set well above the floor in both the front and end walls of the reading rooms, sometimes with seats or bookcases below the windows. One reason for this careful provision of ample natural illumination was that many New Hampshire towns had not yet been provided with electricity when their library buildings were erected, so the architects had to be careful to provide natural means of lighting and ventilating the buildings, designing windows large and high enough to throw light to the far walls of the reading rooms. This was not the case with Alstead, where electricity had been available in the village by 1897. Unlike many small-town library buildings of the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Shedd-Porter Memorial was therefore able to take advantage of electricity to offer both general illumination of the rooms and striking architectural effects, as in the halo of incandescent bulbs around the base of the rotunda dome.

The Shedd-Porter Memorial is not only a paradigm of the small library building; it is also a design of one of the most experienced and prolific firms of library designers in the early twentieth century: the architectural partnership of McLean

²⁵ Leonard Allison Morrison, *Dedication Exercises of Armstrong Building for Nesmith Library, Windham, New Hampshire, January 4, 1899* (Boston: George W. Armstrong, 1899), pp. 20-21.

²⁶ Bruce Bellows, “A Brief History of Library’s in Alstead” [2010] (manuscript at Alstead Historical Society).

²⁷ For a contextual summary of small public library buildings in New Hampshire at the period of the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library, see “Architecture: A Search for Style,” in Shirley Gray Adamovich, ed., *The Road Taken: The New Hampshire Library Association, 1889-1999*, pp. 51-66.

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and Wright of Boston. The firm was active under that name from about 1902 to 1911.²⁸ It was a partnership of William H. McLean and Albert Hayden Wright, both of whom had practiced individually before 1902 and would continue to practice after 1911 under other firm names.²⁹ McLean and Wright specialized in designing public buildings, especially libraries. In New Hampshire, the partnership was responsible for more public library buildings than any other single firm or architect—eight in all: Alstead, Bow, Franconia, Franklin, Greenfield, Lancaster, Lebanon, and Wilton. Two of the McLean and Wright libraries in New Hampshire—Franklin and Lebanon—were built with funding supplied by Andrew Carnegie; the remainder were built by philanthropists with local connections. All these McLean and Wright buildings are thoughtfully designed; and several display opulent materials and detailing.³⁰ But only the Shedd-Porter Memorial is built of granite (the others are brick and limestone), and only the Shedd-Porter Memorial has a dome to surmount and light its rotunda.

The academic training that was offered to architects in the late nineteenth century both in Europe and the United States included rigorous instruction both in the layout of elements of several architectural vocabularies and in the symbolic meaning of certain architectural features.³¹ When budgets allowed such expression, architects of the period consciously employed architectural elements that symbolized attributes deemed appropriate to the purpose of a building. This deliberate use of architectural symbolism seems to have been especially common in library buildings. Edward L. Tilton, architect of New Hampshire's largest library building, the Carpenter Memorial Library in Manchester, explained at the building's dedication that its architectural details represented "learning," "strength," "truth," and "light"—qualities expected from libraries; and "rectitude," "assiduity," and "persistence"—characteristics to be hoped for in library users.³²

Symbols associated with Athena or Minerva, goddess of wisdom as well as other attributes, were regarded as especially proper for libraries. Both the Carpenter Library and the library of the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, designed by Boston architect Guy Lowell with a sculptural doorway group designed by Daniel Chester French, included a carved owl, associated with Athena or Minerva and with erudition or wisdom, above the front door.³³

The Ionic order, which is employed within and at the doorway of the Shedd-Porter Memorial, was also associated with Athena and was widely recognized as the architectural order that represented wisdom. The most highly developed surviving Athenian example of the Ionic order was regarded as that of the three-temple Erechtheum on the Acropolis, especially the order used on the Temple of Athena Polias.³⁴ Being one of the most sophisticated ancient Greek examples of the order, this prototype inspired most modern Greek Ionic variations, apparently including the one employed in the Shedd-Porter Memorial. The association of the Ionic order with learning was given enhanced recognition and familiarity

²⁸ Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records [MassCOPAR], *Directory of Boston Architects, 1846-1970* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1984).

²⁹ For a brief biography of McLean, see Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1970), p. 413.

³⁰ For a description of another New Hampshire public library by McLean and Wright that displays especially impressive materials and workmanship, see Harland Savage, Jr., National Register nomination, Wilton Public and Gregg Free Library (copy at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources), June 10, 1981.

³¹ An example of the thorough instruction classical architecture that was offered to architectural students in the early twentieth century is seen in Frank Chouteau Brown, Frank A. Bourne, Herman V. von Holst, and J. R. Coolidge, Jr., *Study of the Orders: A Comprehensive Treatise on the Five Classic Orders of Architecture . . .* (Chicago: American Technical Society, 1922).

³² "The Architecture of the Carpenter Memorial Library," *The Carpenter Memorial Library Dedication Exercises, November 18, 1914* (Concord, N. H.: Rumford Press, 1916), pp. 51-2. See also, Lisa B. Mausolf with Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, *Edward Lippincott Tilton: A Monograph on His Architectural Practice* (Manchester, N. H.: The Currier Museum of Art, 2007).

³³ Architect Tilton explained his use of the owl: "The marble key-block over this entrance represents an owl which, as Athena's bird, symbolizes Learning[;] and since collateral branches of the classic bird's family are denizens of New Hampshire it unites the classic past to the living present. Within its claws are branches of native oak and pine which may be interpreted as "Strength" and "Truth" grasped by "Learning," a fitting key-block for the arch and [a] good key to open the treasures within the building."

³⁴ Herbert Langford Warren, *The Foundations of Classic Architecture* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919), pp. 341-9; Brown, Bourne, von Holst and Coolidge, *Study of the Orders*, pp. 113-31.

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by symbolic Freemasonry, which equates the Ionic order with wisdom and designates the Ionic as the order pertaining to the master of the Masonic lodge.³⁵

Because the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library is based on Renaissance principles of design clothed in the style of ancient Greece, the building displays a sophisticated proportioning scheme. The proportioning of all classical architecture is based on a module represented by the diameter of the base of the column that is employed in a given order. In the Ionic order, the length of the shaft of the column is nine times the base diameter. In the Shedd-Porter Library, the façade is carefully proportioned according to multiples of the basic module (the column base diameter), or according to the larger module, the length of the column shaft, which is a multiple of the basic module. The distance from the base of the building to the top of the pediment, for example, is two column lengths. The height of the walls from the water table to the architrave is one column length. The length or breadth of the façade is four column lengths. The depth of the building (not including the projecting aedicule) is three column lengths. The diameter of the base of the rotunda dome is one column length. Analysis of these and other proportioning systems in the building reveal why “the Shedd-Porter is a superb example of a well proportioned, classically inspired building, and closely follows the principles of Renaissance classicism.”³⁶

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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³⁵ Albert H. Mackey, *An Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences* (New York: The Masonic History Company, 1913), s. v. “Corinthian Order,” “Doric Order,” “Ionic Order,” “Lesser Lights.” The Masonic linkage of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders as symbolic, respectively, of strength, wisdom, and beauty is widely known and mentioned in texts that are unconnected with Freemasonry.

³⁶ Dan Bartlett, AIA, “Renaissance Influences on the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library,” unpublished paper, Boston Architectural Center, November 29, 1993 (copies at the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library and the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources).

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- , with Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, *Edward Lippincott Tilton: A Monograph on His Architectural Practice* (Manchester, N. H.: The Currier Museum of Art, 2007).
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.5 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 714505 4780528
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

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

The library lot is recorded in the current Alstead tax maps as Lot 22 on Map 11. The bounds begin at the southwest corner of the High Street Bridge (Bridge No. 060/159) over Cold River; thence running southerly in a curved arc approximately 240 feet along the western side of High Street (N. H. Route 123) and Main Street to the intersection of Main Street with Library Avenue; thence running approximately 290 feet westerly along the northern side of Library Avenue and following the southern boundary of land formerly owned by John F. Dickey, to Cold River; thence running

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approximately 330 feet northeasterly along the southern bank of Cold River to the point begun at, containing half an acre more or less.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the Shedd-Porter Library are the boundaries that have been associated with the property since the time of construction of the library and its donation to the Town of Alstead. The library lot was assembled in 1907-8 from three former land parcels that were purchased for the site of the proposed library by John Graves Shedd. These parcels are recorded in the Cheshire County Registry of Deeds as 1. Henry C. Rawson to John G. Shedd, 30 March 1907, Volume 356, Page 187; 2. Fred L. Prentiss to John G. Shedd, 28 January 1908, Volume 346, Page 592; and 3. John C. Dickey to John G. Shedd, 20 August 1908, Volume 350, Page 64. Conveyance of the assembled land parcels as a single property is recorded in John G. Shedd and Mary R. Shedd to the Town of Alstead, 19 August 1910, Volume 357, Page 299.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James L. Garvin, State Architectural Historian
organization New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources date September 19, 2010
street & number 19 Pillsbury Street telephone 603-271-6436
city or town Concord state NH zip code 03301
e-mail James.garvin@dcr.nh.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs:

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

Name of Property: Shedd-Porter Memorial Library

City or Vicinity: Alstead

County: Cheshire State: NH

Photographer: Peter Michaud

Shedd-Porter Memorial Library
Name of Property

Cheshire NH
County and State

Date Photographed: October 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 4. Library Front Façade and east side elevation, looking south-west.
- 2 of 4. Library west side elevation and back elevation, looking north-east.
- 3 of 4. Library interior showing north reading room, rotunda, and south reading room, looking south.
- 4 of 4. Library interior showing detail of north-west corner of the rotunda, looking north-west

Property Owner:

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

name Town of Alstead
street & number 15 Mechanic Street telephone 603-835-2986
city or town Alstead state NH zip code 03602

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Shedd--Porter Memorial Library
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW HAMPSHIRE, Cheshire

DATE RECEIVED: 11/11/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/13/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/28/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/27/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10001086

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 12.27.10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

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



NH - Cheshire County - Shedd-Porter Memorial Library - 0001

8143210, NH_Cheshire County_Shedd Porter

Michaud, 10/20/10



Fujicolor Crystal Archive
Paper

Michaud, 10/20/10

8143210, NH-Cheshire County-Shedd-Porter

NH - Cheshire County - Shedd - Porter Memorial Library - 0002



NH - Cheshire County - Shedd-Porter Memorial Library - 0003

8143210, NH_Cheshire County_Shedd Porter

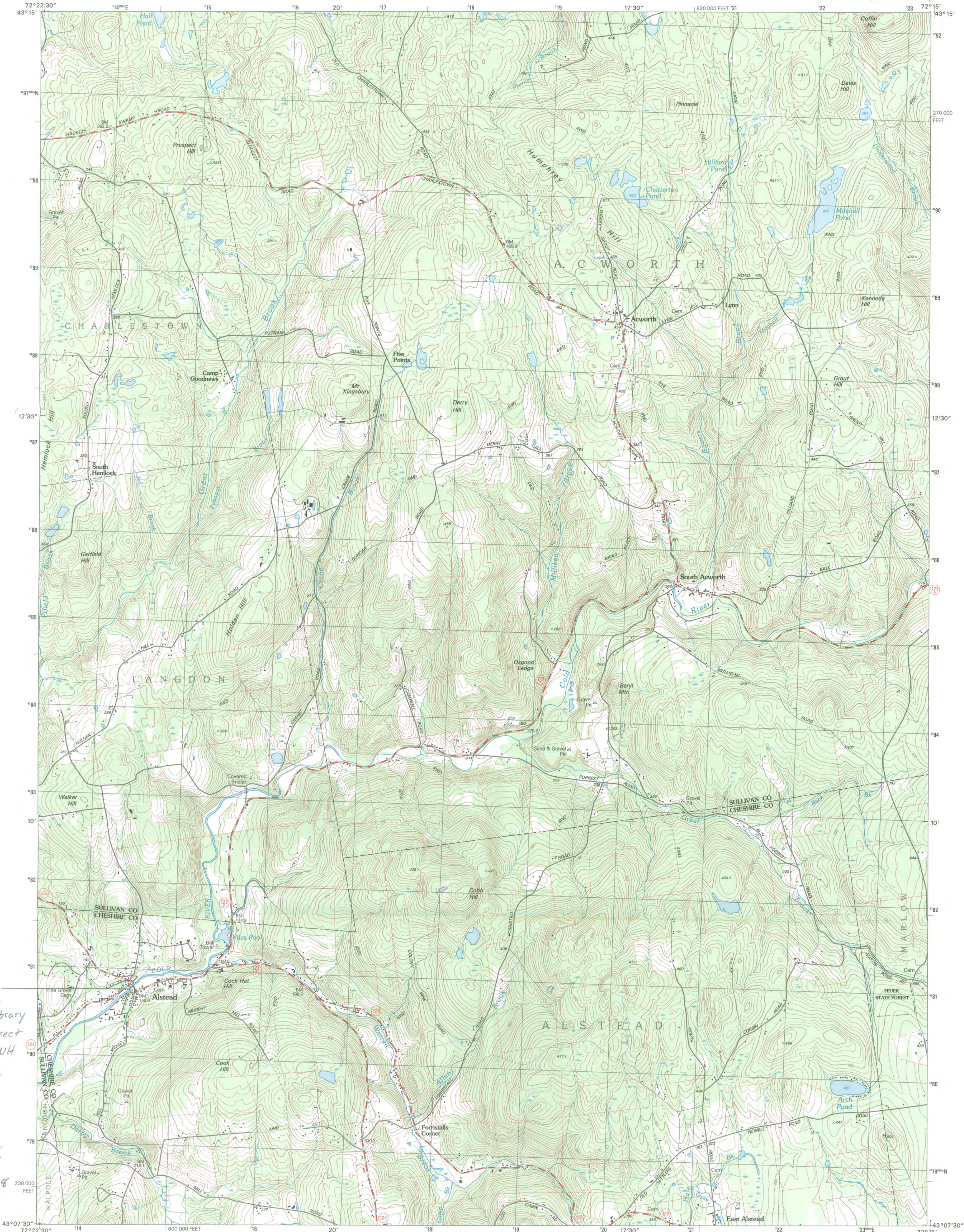
Michaud, 10/20/10



8143210, NH_Chesthire County_Sheldd Porter

Michaud, 10/20/10

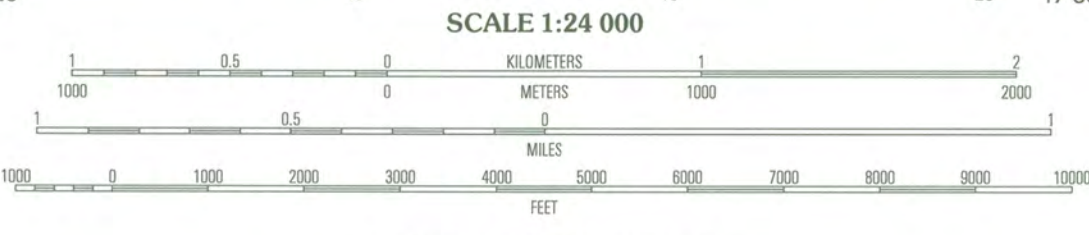
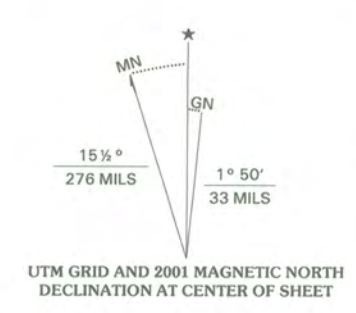
NH - Chesthire County - Shedd-Porter Memorial Library - 0004



Shedd-Porter Memorial Library
3 Main Street
Alstead, NH
03602

UTM
Zone: 18
E: 714505
N: 4780528

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Topography compiled 1998. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1998 and other sources. Survey control current as of 1980. Boundaries current as of 2001.
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1000-foot ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 18 1000-foot ticks: New Hampshire Coordinate System of 1983
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.
There may be private holdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.
Houses of worship, schools, and other labeled buildings verified 1980.



SCALE 1:24 000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 6 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM METERS TO FEET, MULTIPLY BY 3.2808



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

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLES

1	2	3	1 Springfield
			2 Claremont South
			3 Newport
4		5	4 Bellows Falls
			5 East Lempster
			6 Walpole
6	7	8	7 Gilsum
			8 Marlow

ALSTEAD, NH
1998
NIMA 6570 III NE-SERIES V812

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST





NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

MEMORANDUM

To: Lisa Deline, National Park Service

From: Peter Michaud

Subject: Alstead's Shedd Porter Library National Register Nomination Form

Date: October 28, 2010

Dear Lisa,

I hope you are enjoying the cooler fall weather. I am pleased to submit the nomination for the Shedd-Porter Memorial Library in Alstead, NH. The building is one of the best small libraries in New Hampshire and this nomination completes the intent of the community to list the property that began in the 1980's.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Peter Michaud

National Register, Preservation Tax Incentives,
& Easements Coordinator

19 Pillsbury Street

Concord, NH 03301

(603) 271 3583 *fax* (603) 271 3433

Peter.michaud@dcr.nh.gov