

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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JUL 25 1995

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete only one nomination box or by entering the information requested. If an 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.

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

historic name Church Street School

other names/site number Nutley Museum

2. Location

street & number 65 Church Street

NA  not for publication

city or town Nutley Township

vicinity

state New Jersey code 034 county Essex

code 013 zip code 07110

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  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO

State of 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 the 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

Edson H. Beall

Entered in the National Register

Date of Action

8-25-95

Church Street School

Essex Co., NJ

Name of Property

County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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)

EDUCATION/school

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION and CULTURE/museum

SOCIAL/meeting hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof slate

other brownstone

**Narrative Description**

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



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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Period of Significance

1875 - 1926

Significant Dates

1875

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

- Criteria for previous documentation on file.

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

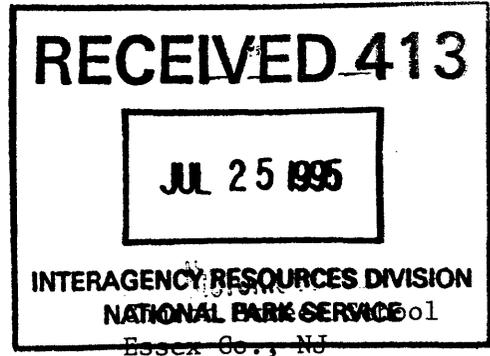
Name of repository:

Nutley Museum

United States Department of the Interior  
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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### SECTION 7 DESCRIPTION

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#### GENERAL

MAY 21 1995

The Church Street School (now the Nutley Museum) is a two story brick building with partially exposed basement, of rectangular plan, measuring 31'-3" wide by 50'-9" long. The front (shorter side) faces Church Street. (Photos #1,#2,#3)

This building is constructed of red brick, in common bond with yellow or buff brick used as decorative accent. The water table and window sills are of brownstone. Two interior end brick chimneys are located in the rear wall of the building. The roofing material is grey slate. (Photo #4)

This is a restrained example of italianate style where the designer used ornamentation sparingly in order to create a visual identification. The result has been elegant, simple, and well proportioned with an inviting appearance. The interior spaces have a clear and straightforward organization. (Photos #13 and #14)

Even though the building has had interior work done as repairs or updating, the spatial elements (organization) and details still remain unchanged. Examples of this "visible" updating are the fiberboard ceiling in the second floor, updating of plumbing (kitchen area), and new piping runs related to the installation of radiators. (Photo #14)

The building is in generally fair condition as a result of adequate maintenance over the years. Some problem spots have developed due to the natural aging process of the building materials. The main areas of concern are those related to thermal and moisture protection. The slate roof has exceeded its useful life expectancy. The deterioration and cracking of the slates has lead to water penetration and the resultant interior damage.

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Church Street School  
Essex Co., NJ

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STYLE, ELEMENTS

Stylistically, this building is associated with the Italianate style. The symmetrical composition and the formal balance is accentuated by the treatment of the eaves, windows and entrance.

The windows of the first and second floor are tall and narrow, sash type, nine over nine glazing with stone sills and topped in a segmental brick arch. The hooded crown is achieved through two courses of rowlock yellow brick at the top with ten courses each side. (Photos #5 and #11)

The entrance opening is also defined by a segmental arch but, in this case, the hood alternates the use of yellow and red brick, these protruding as dentils, and a third row arranged to create an edge (full headers). (Photo #10)

The front facade is symmetrically defined by full height brick piers that blend with the stepped brickwork below the trim in the gable.

The attic ventilation opening is a louvered window with a hooded full arch and stone sill. The cornice at the gable end is returned with a pair of brackets at each end. (Photo #3)

ENTRANCE

The entrance to the building is elevated, featuring a platform landing seven steps high. Judging from period photographs, this platform apparently replaced a smaller platform with wood railing sometime after 1945. The entrance is composed of a single four panel door with glass double pane transom. (Photo #9)

A photograph from the twenties shows an enclosed entrance (steps and platform) that shows clearly to have been an addition dictated by the educational activities carried in the building.

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TOWER

The tower is a dominant element in the composition of the building, is square in plan with a hipped roof. The eaves at all four sides are gable ended with brackets at the corners. Each side of the tower has two narrow paired windows with arched tops. (Photos #7 and #8)

EAVES, SIDE FACADE

The overhanging eaves are supported by paired brackets at the end of each pier. The stepped brickwork at the front under the cornice is continued at the side facades.

Below the water table the basement windows also feature segmented arches, without hoods, with one course of full headers.

REAR FACADE

The rear facade is partially obscured by the addition of the annex in 1922. (Photo #6)

STRUCTURE

Structurally the building is composed of exterior load bearing walls, resting upon stone foundations walls, with a central row of columns in the north-south axis (long side) supporting the floor structure of the second floor. These columns rest on a 8" x 12" wooden girder at basement level atop of a load bearing wall that divides the basement in two. The second floor has no columns. The roof structure spans wall to wall.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

The electrical wiring has been upgraded through time, evidenced by the progression of wiring materials, e.g. knob and tube, fabric

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Church Street School  
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sheathed, metallic sheathed, and modern romex non-metallic sheathed. Although the knob and tube wiring is still in place, it appears to have been taken out of use.

**MECHANICAL SYSTEM**

Original heat distribution appears to have been a gravity convection system evidenced by the existence of supply and return grills on the walls in the first and second floors, with the cavity spaces in the walls acting as plenums for the movement of the air.

An upgrading of the system brought the installation of a steam heating system with radiators, still in use.

**PLUMBING**

Evidence of older galvanized plumbing can still be seen. Apparently, most of the piping has been upgraded to copper.

There are two toilet rooms in the building at the basement level with stalls for water closets and urinals, most likely the location of the original toilet room. It is evident the fixtures have been replaced and a second room may have been added on the second floor.

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Essex Co., NJ

## SECTION 8 SIGNIFICANCE

The Church Street School, built in 1875 and now the home of the Nutley Museum, is a good example of the vernacular Italianate brick masonry that achieved a polychrome effect through the use of buff-colored brick for the exterior trim. This was a popular treatment for small commercial and public buildings from the 1870's until after 1900 in such cities as New Brunswick and Perth Amboy. It reflected an important technological advance in the brickmaking industry, and the Church Street School is one of the earliest dated examples of this practice. Although the school began as a typical rural school, it ended its career as the site of a new experiment in education in Nutley when it housed the Nutley Pre-Vocational School as a means to provide a practical education to the less academically gifted child. The school meets criterion A for its local significance to the evolution of public education, and criterion C for its architectural significance.

This school is the oldest surviving school building in Nutley. Its high visibility due to its relationship with the surroundings has remained virtually unchanged. (The exception is the addition attached to the rear facade in 1921.) While successive schools in town were larger in scale as a response to the rapidly growing community at the turn of the century, this building, with its scale, size, and present presence, is a document, a testimony of the starting point of the expansion of the educational institutions in the area. Its location, style, stately appearance, and contrast with the residential buildings of the street has made it a familiar sight in town, a landmark in the way it is perceived, and the only remaining institutional building of 19th century Nutley.

At the time of construction in 1875 there were only two small wooden school buildings in the Nutley area, each serving one half of the town, then called Franklin. The present structure replaced one of these buildings after it was destroyed by fire the previous year.<sup>1</sup> That same year, 1874, also marked the creation and chartering of Franklin, formed by the separation of the northern part of Belleville.<sup>2</sup> This separation was prompted by a desire of the citizens of North Belleville for a more equitable distribution of tax money and the need to become independent of a governing body in Belleville that was not sympathetic to their needs.<sup>3</sup> This need for independence extended to the educational concerns as evident by the new town's action to immediately erect a prominent structure that would also

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be suitable to serve the needs of an anticipated growth in community and school population. By this single act the new community showed that it could manage its own affairs, raise taxes, assume mortgages, and pay of indebtedness, and that it would single out education as an important priority.

The history of the school has its origins on May 28, 1857 when the land was purchased by the Franklin District of Belleville from Henry Stager for \$220.<sup>4</sup> Since the property was land-locked, the deed provided for a 12-foot access from John Street (now Prospect Street) across Henry Stager's property. The access strip is now expanded into Church Street which accounts for the name Church Street School. The description of the original property as recorded in the 1857 deed remains intact in 1995.

A small frame building was built circa 1857 on the property and destroyed by fire in 1874. The building was replaced in 1875 with a two story Italian Renaissance brick building that remains virtually unchanged today.<sup>5</sup> Mr. William Wilbert became principal upon the reopening of the school, followed by W.S. Applegate in 1879, and Gertrude Broadbent in 1884. A school newspaper was started in 1875 called the Franklin Star.<sup>6</sup>

Little else is known of the early history of this school except for a listing of the school enrollment in 1891 of 113 pupils served by two teachers. The tabulation which follows indicates that by 1891 the school operated as a graded school.

Miss Gertrude Broadbent		Miss Ira J. Alword	
A Primary	24 pupils	B Grammar	40 pupils
B Primary	14 "	Middle	12 "
Junior	23 "		

Since the floor plan of the building consisted of one large room and an office on each floor, apparently each teacher was assigned a floor. Miss Broadbent resided in a home adjacent to the school property at the southeast corner of Prospect and Church Street.<sup>8</sup>

In 1894, according to Frank Speer, town historian, a mortgage in the amount of \$8000 held by Samuel Hopper was paid off, indicating that Franklin was able to raise sufficient taxes to pay off its indebtedness.<sup>9</sup> This is of particular interest since in 1894 a much larger school building (Park School) was completed. This resulted in the closing of the Church Street School and the transferring of the children to the new school

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building.<sup>10</sup> However, the growing school enrollment caused the school to be reopened in September 1895 for a kindergarten class of 42 pupils, Kate C. Lambert, teacher, and a first grade of 48 pupils, Gertrude Broadbent, teacher.<sup>11</sup> The Board of Education debated on adding four rooms in 1900 due to increased overcrowding in the schools<sup>12</sup> but in 1902 a new elementary school (Yantacaw) was constructed instead.<sup>13</sup> The Church Street School continued operation until 1907 when an addition was made to Park School and the kindergarten and first grades were transferred to this building.<sup>14</sup> As the school lay idle it was listed in the 1908 Board of Education report as having a total value of \$6000.<sup>15</sup> By 1910 the growing school enrollment required the building to be reopened with a third grade overflow.<sup>16</sup> In 1911 another new elementary school (Washington) was opened which caused the Church Street School to again be closed.<sup>17</sup> In 1912 the Board debated selling the property, but this action was never carried out.<sup>18</sup>

In 1914 the building took on a new educational and social responsibility by becoming the site of a Pre-Vocational School.<sup>19</sup> In this school boys were enrolled that did not attend the regular school and were provided education and training that emphasized manual arts. The girls' program was housed at another location.

The NJ Vocational School Law, Chapter 294, passed by the 1913 Legislature, allowed for the establishment of separate schools for industrial or manual training and for financial aid from the State.<sup>20</sup> Under this law 38 vocational schools were organized in the state by 1915.<sup>21</sup> The vocational school with a normal entrance age of 14 paralleled the four year high school in point of age.<sup>22</sup> However, Nutley took advantage of the new law by opening a pre-vocational school for boys in the 6th and 7th grades and allowing them to transfer to the Essex County Vocational School to complete their studies. The creation of a pre-vocational school was unique since in 1916 only four towns, Nutley, Perth Amboy, Englewood, and Hoboken supported such an endeavor.<sup>23</sup>

The introduction of this program in Nutley was the response to a question raised in the Annual Report of the Nutley Public Schools which asked: "What shall we provide in the way of profitable employment and wholesome recreation for our boys and girls? The so called bad boy or wayward girl is not so at heart; but has become so through parental and social neglect." The importance of this new school is highlighted by the following comment made in the January 1915 Educational Bulletin of the State Department

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of Public Schools: "The Board of Education has organized under the manual training law two valuable experiments in prevocational work, one for boys and one for girls. The boys work in an old school building which they have remodeled to meet their needs. They are put through a round of experiences which consists of considerable carpentry, brick laying, furniture repairing, electrical wiring, growing of plants, cement work, and a little forging. The boys are also encouraged to do repair work for their neighbors. From the proceeds of the repair and construction work is deducted the cost of material and the balance is retained by the boys who performed the work. The boys are encouraged to deposit their money in the local bank and may not withdraw their savings without the approval of the manual training teacher." During the months of November, December and January, they deposited \$126.24 from their earnings in the bank.24

This program was of such success that on March 6, 1916, a new experiment was inaugurated which opened the school on Saturdays with teachers volunteering their services. Also under consideration was keeping the school open 48 weeks in the year "to direct the efforts and activities of the boys along wholesome and practical lines".

During the years of World War I the boys of the Pre-Vocational School turned out articles of use for the Red Cross and other war purposes demonstrating an active part in doing patriotic work for the war effort.25

In 1920-21 the enrollment of the pre-vocational school was 34 pupils with an additional 240 boys being accommodated on a part-time basis from the sixth grade through high school classes. Once a week the boys from the elementary schools would spend a part of their day being trained in manual arts. Fifteen to twenty woodworking benches were located on each floor; one original bench remains as an important artifact in the museum.26 An expected 50% increase in the enrollment of the pre-vocational school in 1921-22 necessitated the addition of an annex at the rear of the building which was constructed by the boys under the supervision of the teachers. Besides the regular manual training classes, the school provided work on the engine lathe, wood lathe, forge, and sheet metal work. The Nutley Board of Education report states that "the physical side of the boys was not neglected by having their own teams in baseball, football, track, etc., and providing social activities, as these activities seem to be the only social activities the boys have".27 This is

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an indication that the Church Street School did its utmost to meet the complete needs of a group of boys that perhaps did not always fit into the society of the times.

Concern of the boys being crowded out of their own shop by boys from the other schools taking woodworking classes at the Church Street School prompted the need to locate woodworking classes in each of the elementary schools.<sup>28</sup> This then enabled the pre-vocational course to be extended to the 8th year with the issuance of a certificate on the basis of having completed a manual arts course. The name Pre-Vocational School was also dropped at the request of the Board of Education and in the 1926 Nutley directory it is listed as the Nutley Trade School.<sup>29</sup> At the end of the 1926-27 school year the school was closed. The valuation of the property was listed as Land \$3000, Building \$20,000, and Equipment, \$3000.<sup>30</sup>

The property lay idle and subject to the ravages of time until February 1947 when it was leased to the Nutley Historical Society as the site for the Nutley Museum.<sup>31</sup> This organization, which was chartered in March, 1945, took on the responsibility of refurbishing the entire building and converting the annex into a 5 room apartment for the caretakers. It was officially dedicated as the Nutley Museum on September 26, 1954.<sup>32</sup> The first floor is currently used as a meeting hall for the Society and other organizations. The second floor houses the Ann A. Troy Gallery as the display area of the museum, the Alice J. Bickers Memorial Library, and the museum office. The basement is used for storage of museum artifacts not on current display.

In November 1974, the Nutley Planning Board debated a proposal to permit the addition of a 2-1/2 story wing to the building for the relocation of the Nutley Public Library to the museum site.<sup>33</sup> Strong opposition from the Nutley Historical Society and concerned citizens helped to prevent the conversion of the building into a modern library facility, and today it remains virtually unchanged since its construction in 1875.<sup>34</sup> On January 1, 1995, the ownership of the property was transferred from the Nutley Board of Education to the Township of Nutley. The Nutley Historical Society continues maintenance of the building and operation of the museum under lease with the Township of Nutley.

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Footnotes

1. Troy, Ann A., Nutley Yesterday and Today, Nutley, N.J., Nutley Historical Society 1961, pg 75-77
2. Shaw, William H., History of Essex and Hudson County, Everts and Pick, 1884
3. Brown, Elizabeth Stow, The History of Nutley, Nutley, N.J., Nutley Board of Education, 1907, pg 42
4. Essex County Deeds, Book g 10, page 478
5. Annual Report of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J., June 20, 1930
6. Troy, pg 78
7. Report of the Trustees of School District No. 4, Essex County, N.J., 1891
8. Map of Township of Franklin, 1886, George W. Symonds, Civil Engineer and Commissioner of Deeds, Franklin, N.J.
9. Troy, pg 77
10. Report of the Trustees of School District No. 4, Essex County, 1894
11. Report of the Trustees of School District No. 4, Essex County, 1896
12. Report of the Board of Education, Township of Franklin, Essex County, 1900
13. Annual Report of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J. 1929-30-
14. " " " " " " " " 1906-07
15. " " " " " " " " 1907-08
16. " " " " " " " " 1910-11
17. " " " " " " " " 1911-12
18. " " " " " " " " 1911-12

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19. Troy, pg 77
  20. Manual Training booklet, State of NJ Dept. of Public Instruction, June 6, 1914
  21. Annual Report of State Board of Education 1915
  22. " " " " " " " 1916
  23. " " " " " " " 1916
  24. Annual Report of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J. 1914-15
  25. " " " " " " " " 1918-19
  26. Interview: Hon. Harry Chenoweth, 5-28-94
  27. Annual Report of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J. 1920-21
  28. Annual Report of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J. 1921-22
  29. Belleville-Nutley Directory 1926, Price and Lee Co., Newark, N.J.
  30. Annual Report of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J. 1926-27
  31. Nutley Historical Society Bulletin, Vol 2, No. 1, May, 1947
  32. Nutley Sun, Nutley, N.J. Sept 23, 1954, "Museum Open Sunday"
  33. Master Development Plan, Nutley Master Plan Part II, Town of Nutley Planning Board, Nov 1974
  34. Newspaper article: Nutley Sun, Dec 5, 1974

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Books

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Folson, Joseph F., Municipalities of Essex County 1664-1924  
Vol II, New York, N.Y., Lewis Historical Publishing Corp., 1925

Shaw, William H., History of Essex and Hudson County, Everts and  
Peck, 1884

Troy, Ann A., Nutley Yesterday and Today, Nutley, N.J., Nutley  
Historical Society, 1961

Second Edition: Reminiscences of 75 Years of Belleville, Franklin  
and Newark, H. Holmes, undated (circa 1890)

Unpublished Material

Franklin Schools in 1891, Claude J. DeHarte, May 6, 1891, in  
possession of Nutley Historical Society

Nutley Schools, Gertrude Gerds, Nutley High School, January 1942,  
in possession of Nutley Historical Society

Maps and Atlases

Symonds, George W., Township of Franklin, County of Essex, N.J.,  
George W. Symonds Civil Engineer and Commissioner of Deeds,  
Franklin, N.J., 1886

Newspaper Articles

Nutley Sun, Nutley, N.J., September 7, 1951  
September 23, 1954  
December 5, 1974

Public Documents

Essex County N.J., Hall of Records, Newark, N.J., Essex County  
Deed Books

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Annual Reports of the Public Schools, Nutley, N.J., 1902-1926

Reports of the Board of Education, Township of Franklin, 1895-1901

Reports of the Trustee of School District No. 4

Annual Reports of the State Bd of Education, Trenton, NJ 1912-16

Document: Manual Training, State of NJ, Dept of Public  
Instruction, Trenton, June 6, 1914

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SECTION 10

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property is the entire parcel of land obtained by the Franklin District of the Township of Belleville from Henry Stager on May 28, 1857. The parcel has remained intact since its purchase and used exclusively for educational purposes until 1926.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

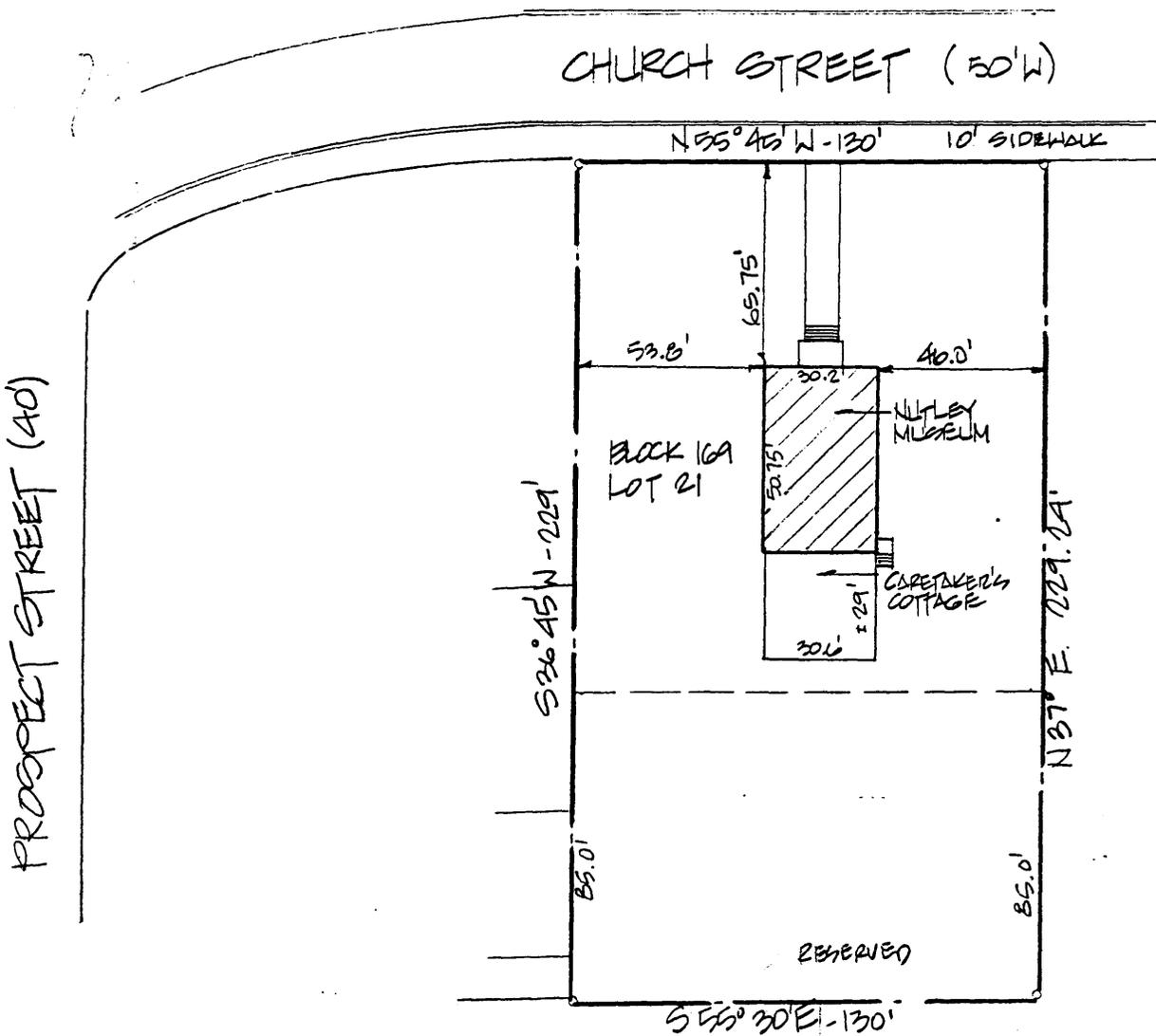
The nominated property known as 65 Church Street, Nutley, Essex County, is designated on the Town of Nutley tax maps as Block 169, Lot 21.

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Church Street School  
Essex, NJ



 **SITE PLAN**  
SCALE 1"=50'

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Essex C., NJ

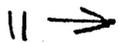
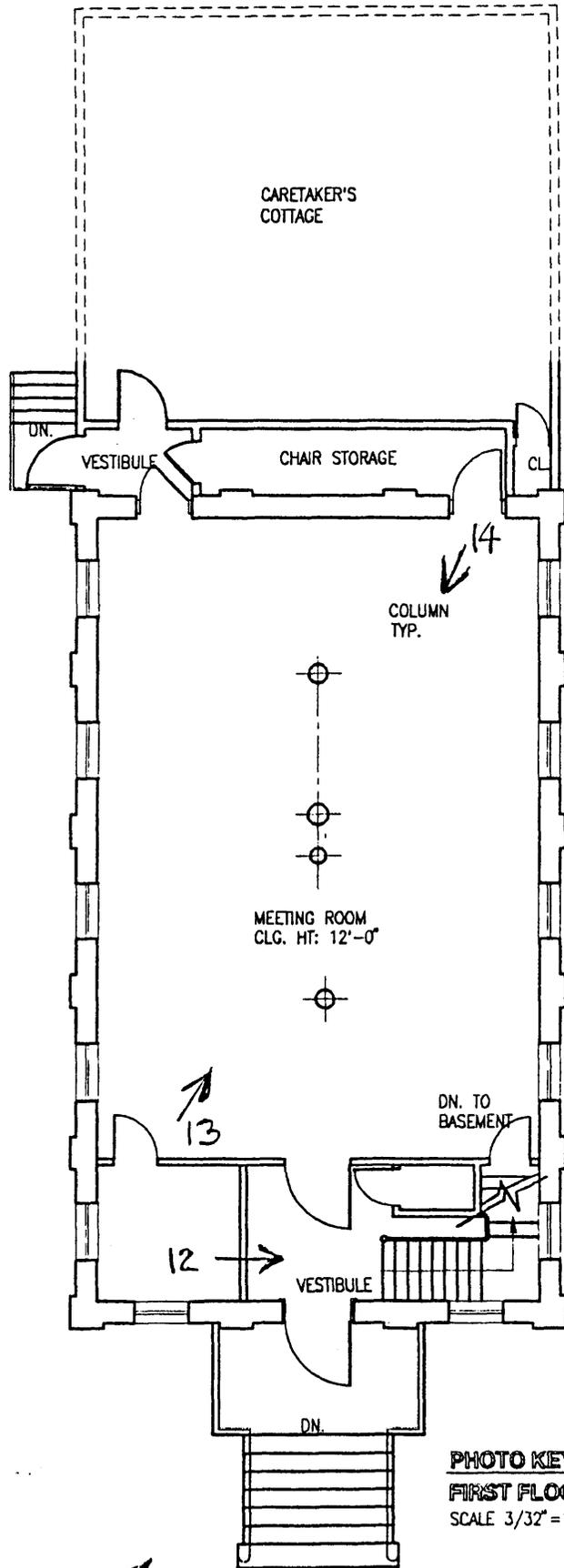
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Date of Photographs: February 24, 1995  
Photographer: Fred Van Steen  
Location of Negatives: Nutley Historical Society

Description of view / Direction of Camera:

- 1) School & environs - SE
- 2) School & environs - SW
- 3) Front elevation
- 4) Front & side elevations - SW
- 5) Side elevation - E
- 6) Rear elevation - N
- 7) Cupola & air vent detail - S
- 8) Cupola detail - SW
- 9) Front door & window detail - S
- 10) Front door detail - S
- 11) Side window detail - W
- 12) Stairway to second floor - W
- 13) First floor - S
- 14) First floor - N
- 15) Second floor - S



MEETING ROOM  
CLG. HT: 12'-0"

COLUMN  
TYP.

DN. TO  
BASEMENT

VESTIBULE

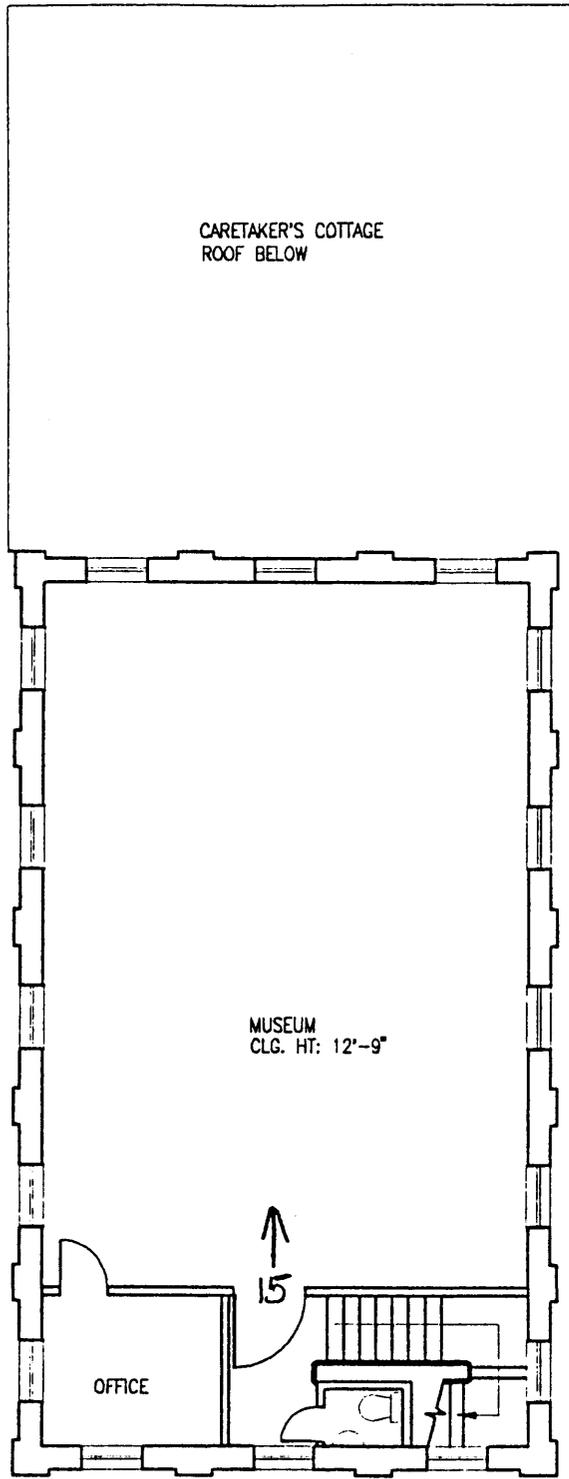
**PHOTO KEY PLAN**  
**FIRST FLOOR**  
SCALE 3/32" = 1'-0"



NUTLEY MUSEUM



NUTLEY, N.J.

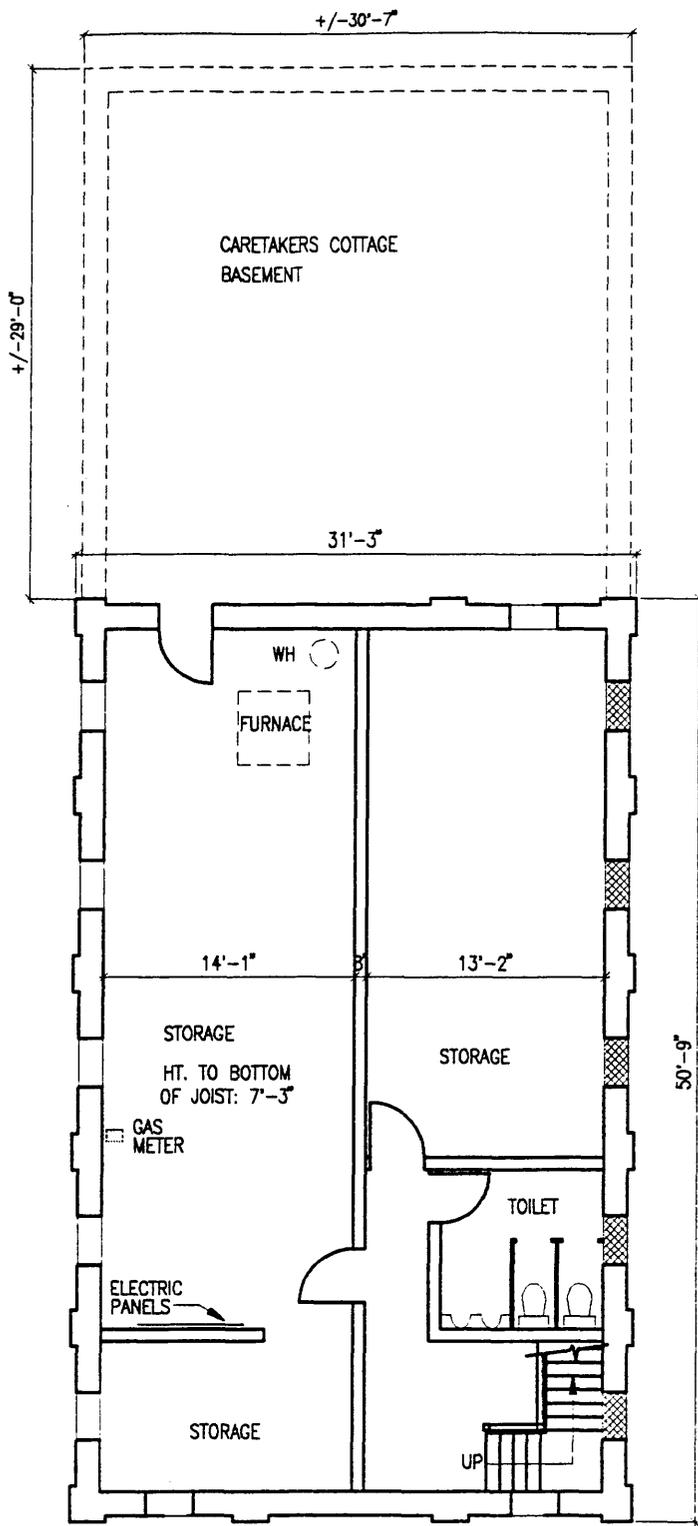


**PHOTO KEY PLAN**  
**SECOND FLOOR**  
SCALE 3/32" = 1'-0"

Church Street School, Nutley Township, Essex County, NJ

NUTLEY MUSEUM

NUTLEY, N.J.



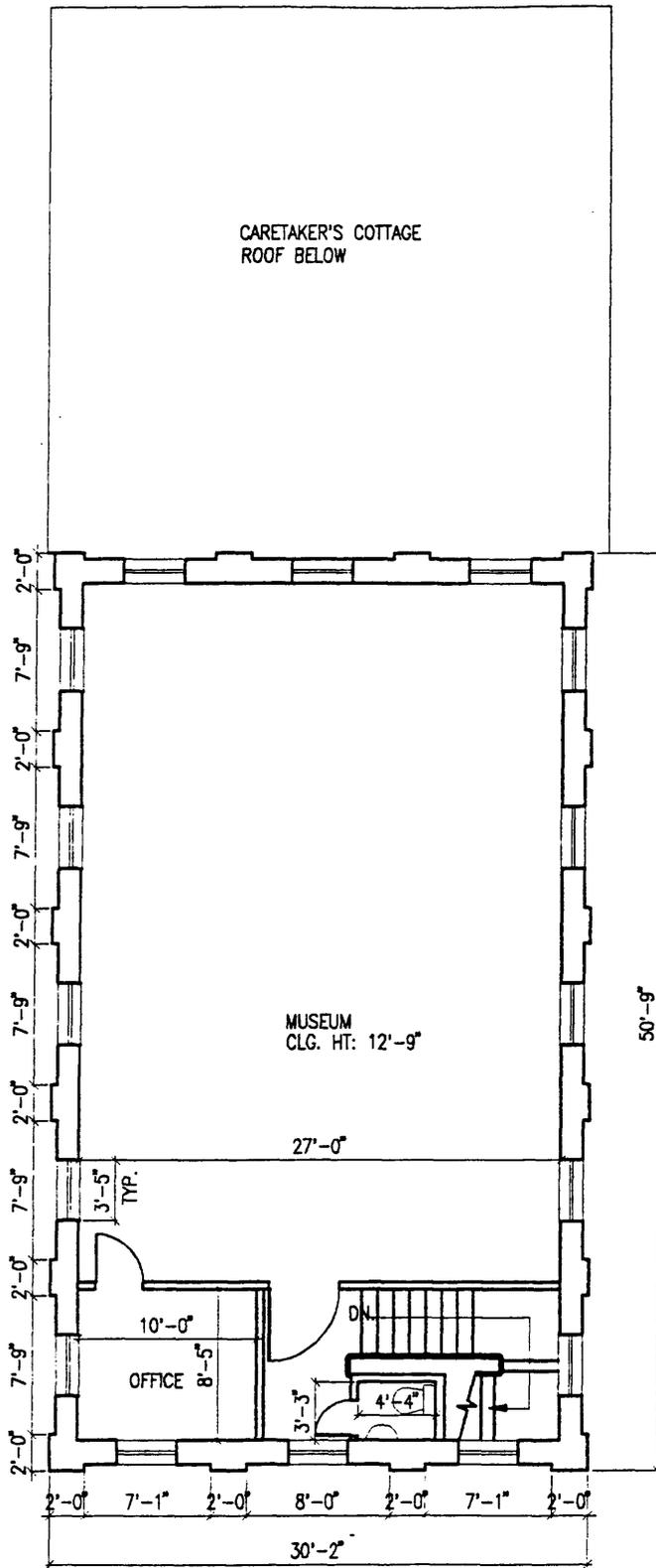
**BASEMENT PLAN**  
 SCALE 3/32" = 1'-0"

Church Street School, Nutley Township, Essex County, NJ

NUTLEY MUSEUM

NUTLEY, N.J.





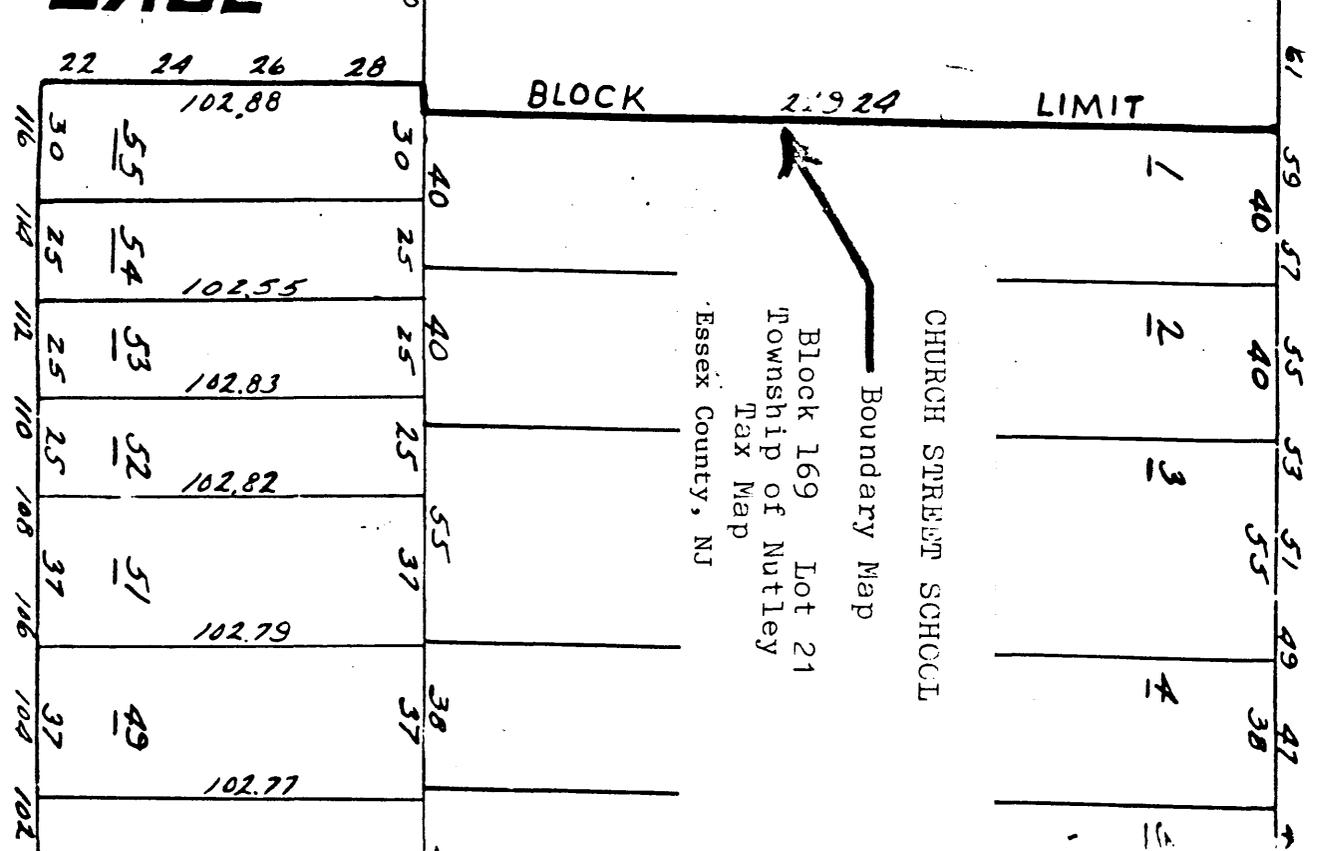
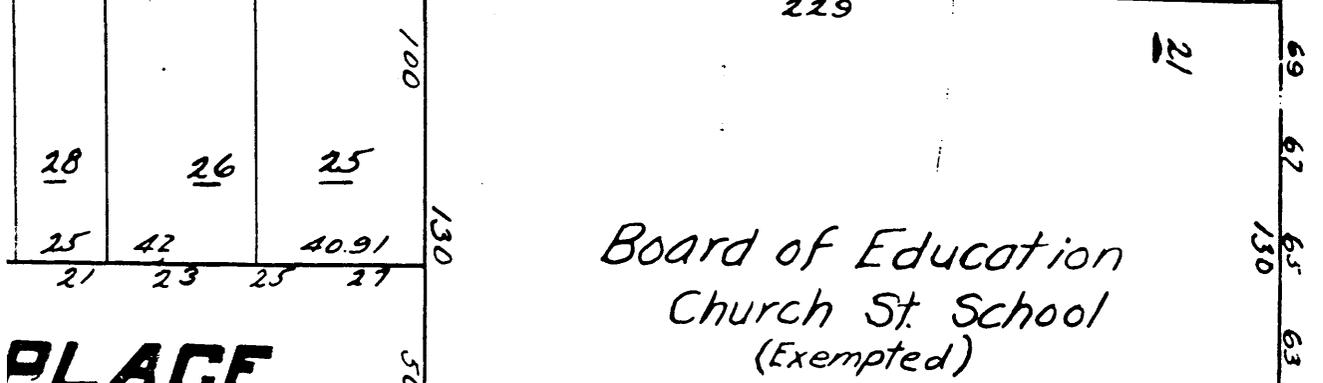
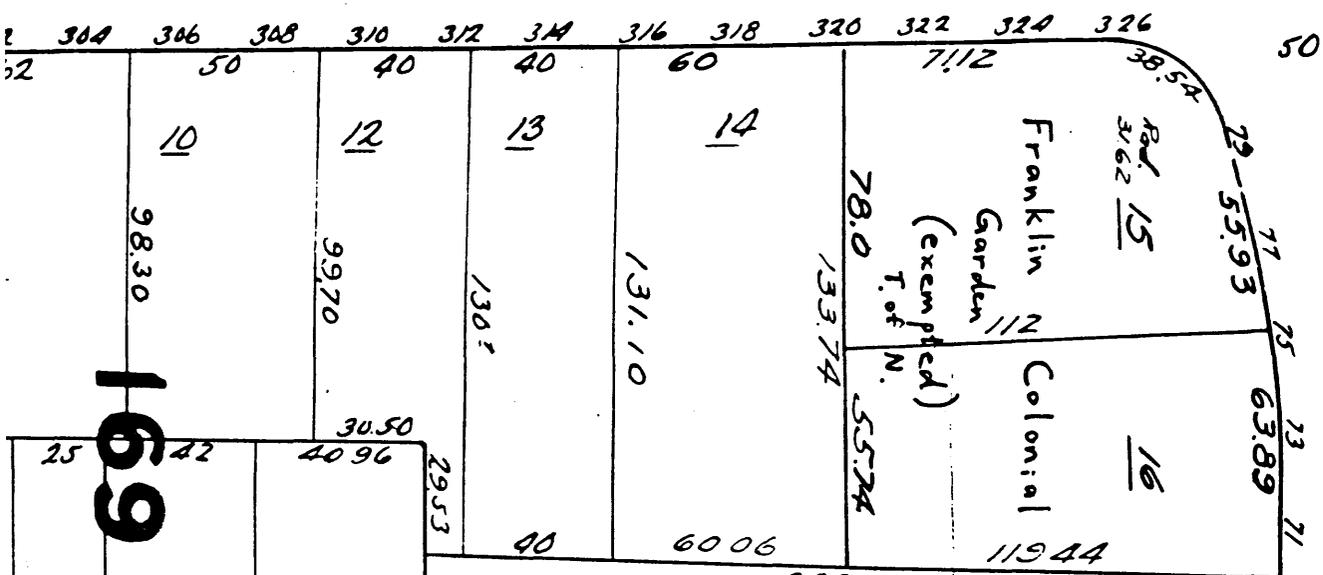
SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 3/32" = 1'-0"

Church Street School, Nutley Township, Essex County, NJ

NUTLEY MUSEUM

NUTLEY, N.J.

# STREET



Board of Education  
Church St. School  
(Exempted)

# CHURCH

CHURCH STREET SCHOOL

Block 169 Lot 21  
Township of Nutley  
Tax Map  
Essex County, NJ

Boundary Map

BLOCK 2924 LIMIT

# PLACE