

PH0365823

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

MAY 31 1977

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NOV 11 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Merrill's Wharf Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Merrill's Wharf Historic District

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Waterfront side of MacArthur Drive

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New Bedford

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

12th Massachusetts

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY

Bristol

CODE

005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☒ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

New Bedford Redevelopment Authority

STREET & NUMBER

21 South Sixth Street

CITY, TOWN

New Bedford

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 02740

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bristol County Southern District Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

25 North Sixth Street

CITY, TOWN

New Bedford

STATE

Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT ☒ DETERIORATED
☐ GOOD ☐ RUINS
☐ FAIR ☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Merrill's Wharf Historic District consist of just under one acre on the New Bedford Waterfront and contains the Steamship Authority Pier, the Coal Pocket Pier, the unaltered portion of Merrill's Wharf, and the Merrill's Wharf Building. The Wharf Building is also known as the Bourne Counting House, and the Durant Sail Loft. The waterfront areas to the north and south contain numerous wharfs and structures substantially altered or of more recent construction. To the west of the historic district, is the South Terminal Urban Renewal area which includes open land and new construction.

The three piers retain their original wooden pilings and wooden plank surfacing. The Coal Pocket Pier (#1) was built in the 1850's as a whaling pier for Captain Merrill's operations. The Steamship Authority Pier (#2) was built in 1838.

The Merrill's Wharf Building (#3) is a three story, rectangular loft structure. The masonry walls are random ashlar granite from a Fall River quarry. The roof is a slight angled ridge roof with box cornice and a slight gable on the facade. The facade is five bays wide. The center bay has doubled sash at the second floor and a door for hoist loading at the third. Entrances on the ground floor are located in the central bay and the first northern bay. The few remaining sash are fragments of 6/6. The side elevations are divided into four sections, each three bays wide. The second and third sections are divided by a blind bay with a entry on the ground floor. The ground floor of each section is composed of an entry in the middle bay, flanked by windows in the side bays. The second floor of the first and fourth sections are composed of windows in each bay. The third floor of these sections is relieved by a single window opening in the middle bay. The second floor of the second and third sections has a large opening in the central bay for hoist loading flanked by window openings in the side bays. This is repeated at the third floor of these sections. The large opening of the third section second floor has been replaced by a three sided oriel. There are six interior brick chimneys.

The Merrill's Wharf Building was built in 1847-48 and originally stood 3½ stories with a ridge roof with cupola and full gables with loading doors on the facade and rear elevation. This attic loft floor was removed after a fire in 1926. During reconstruction a new 12" square hard pine beam was installed and several floor joists damaged by fire were replaced. Original fenestration was 6/6.

The structure was damaged by fire in 1974 with attendant damage to the interior and roof. Most of the window sashes were also destroyed. The first floor has been secured, but the upper floors are exposed to the elements.

The property is presently owned by the New Bedford Redevelopment Authority. The Authority hopes to sell the property to a developer who will restore the attic loft floor.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

☐ PREHISTORIC
☐ 1400-1499
☐ 1500-1599
☐ 1600-1699
☐ 1700-1799
☒ 1800-1899
☐ 1900-

☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
☐ AGRICULTURE
☒ ARCHITECTURE
☐ ART
☒ COMMERCE
☐ COMMUNICATIONS

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING
☐ CONSERVATION
☐ ECONOMICS
☒ EDUCATION
☒ ENGINEERING
☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
☐ INDUSTRY
☐ INVENTION

☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
☐ LAW
☐ LITERATURE
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSIC
☐ PHILOSOPHY
☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

☐ RELIGION
☐ SCIENCE
☐ SCULPTURE
☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ THEATER
☒ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES

1837

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Captain Edward Merrill

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Merrill's Wharf Historic District is significant as the only remaining unaltered portion of New Bedford's waterfront. The structures were all built during the first half of the 19th century during New Bedford's prosperity as a whaling center.

The property was originally owned by the Rotch family, who sold it to Captain Edward Merrill in 1837. He built the counting house (3) and two of the piers for his own whaling business. The Merrill family owned the property until 1905. In 1848, Edward Bourne established his whaling business here. Bourne eventually owned more whaling ships than any other ship owner in New England. His counting house office interior was left intact for thirty-six years, according to his family's wishes, and after surviving the fire of 1926 was moved to the Whaling Museum.

In 1925, Gilkey, Durant and Company started their sail making business here where it remained until 1968.

The Coal Pocket Pier (#1) was originally built in the 1850's as a whaling pier for Captain Merrill's business. It was later known as the Lumber Wharf and the School Street Wharf. When it was later used as an unloading site for coal for the utility company, it came to be known by its present name. It is now used by the city's lobster boats.

The Steamship Authority Pier (#2) was built in 1838 and was the debarking point for boats to the island for well over a hundred years. In the 1950's the Steamship Authority moved to Woods Hole. The pier is presently used by lobstermen.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baker, Benjamin B.; Reports, Agent for Capt. Edward Merrill, New Bedford Whaling Museum
New Bedford Standard Times: May. 1, 1927, Aug. 7, 1929, Feb. 21, 1936, May 3, 1964.
New Bedford City Maps: 1850, 1881, 1911.
Bristol County Atlases: 1871, 1895.
Bristol County Southern District Registry of Deeds

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .9 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 340000 4610600
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Tenney Lantz

New Bedford, Office of Historic

Joseph R. Orfant, National Register Editor & Preservation

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Massachusetts Historical Commission

May 19, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

294 Washington Street

617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Boston

Massachusetts

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Elizabeth Reed Amador

TITLE Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

5/23/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles A. [Signature]

DATE

DATE

11/11/77
11.10.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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MAY 31 1977

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NOV 11 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

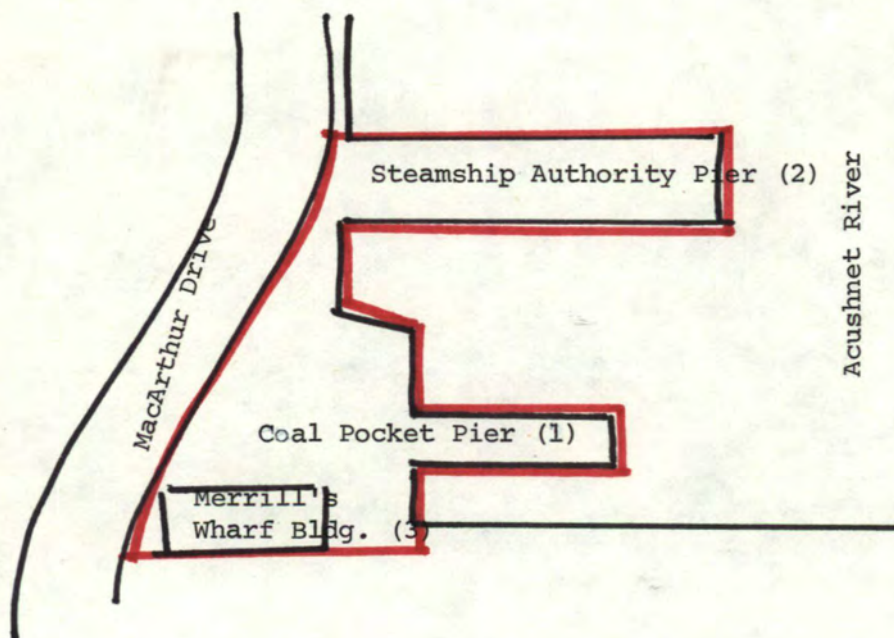
ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

New Bedford: Merrill's Wharf
Historic District

District Sketch Map
not to scale

24



Property Merrill's Wharf Historic District

State Mass.

Working Number 5.31.77.892

Bristol

TECHNICAL

Photos 4

Maps 1

CONTROL

pl
OK 6.2.77

HISTORIAN

Accept:
Franklin
11.9.77

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Accept
LeBrite
9/16/77
11/9/77

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
LeBovick
11/10/77

BRANCH CHIEF

Since owned by redevelopment
authority trying to seek for
redemption - this should be
accepted. Stone walls look ok.

Henry
11.10.77

KEEPER

Wm
11/14/77

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered NOV 11 1977

Federal Register Entry 2.7.78

Re-submit _____

INT:2106-74



Bristol County

Merrill's Wharf Historic District
New Bedford, MA.

1976

Ben Watkins

Office of Historic Preservation

133 William St., New Bedford, MA.

MAY 31 1977

Photo #1 *B4*

Looking northeast towards the south side

of the Merrill's Wharf Building

NOV 11 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Bristol Co.
Merrill's Wharf Historic District
New Bedford, MA.
Ben Watkins, 1976
Office of Historic Preservation
133 William Street, New Bedford, MA.

Photo #2 084
Looking northeast towards the Steamship
Authority Pier

NOV 11 1977

MAY 31 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Bristol County

Merrill's Wharf Historic District
New Bedford, MA.
1976

Ben Watkins

Office of Historic Preservation

133 William St. New Bedford, MA

MAY 31 1977

Photo #3

074
Looking northeast towards the west and south
sides of the Merrill's Wharf Bldg.

NOV 11 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Bristol County

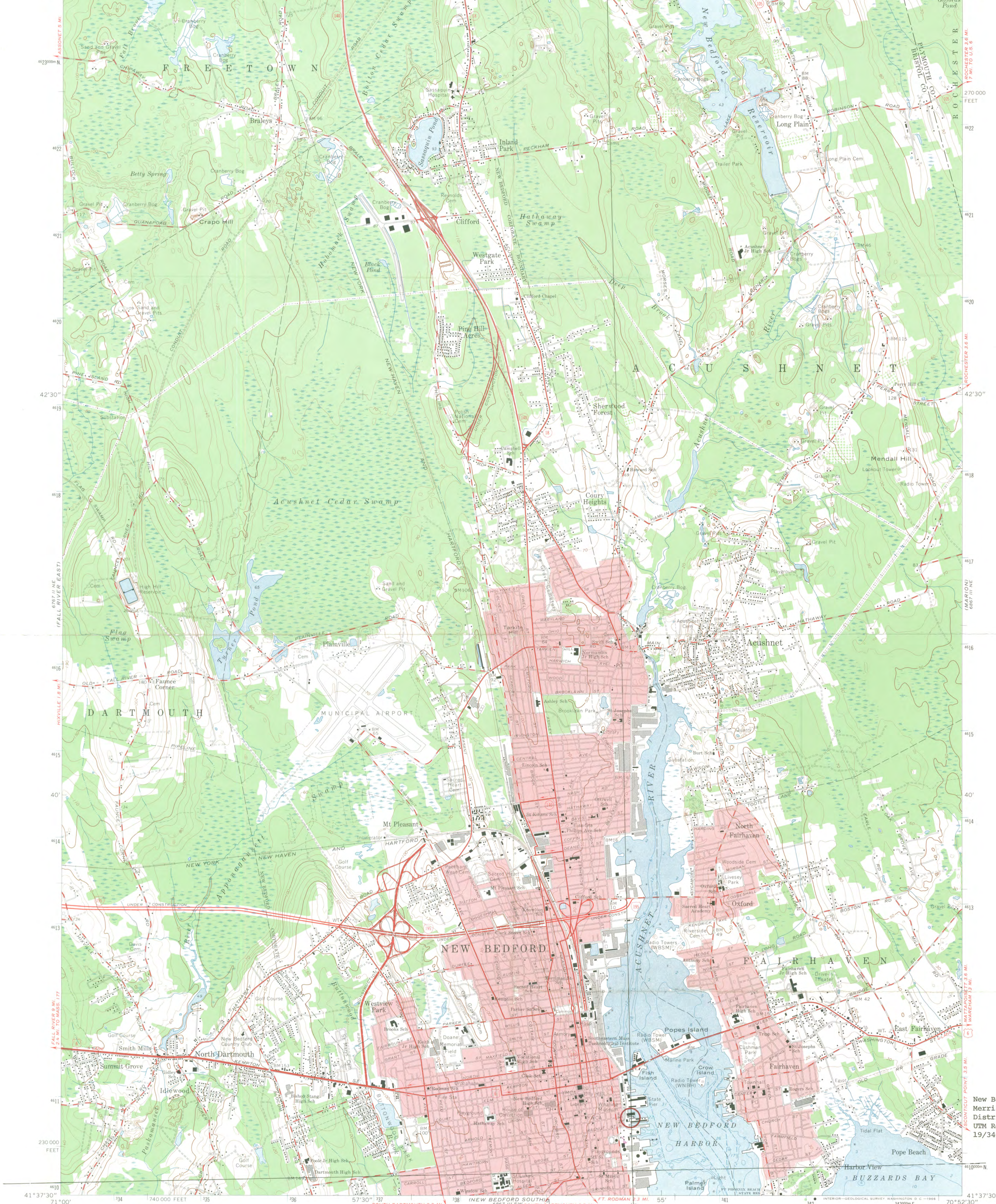
Merrill's Wharf Historic District
New Bedford, MA.
Ben Watkins
Office of Historic Preservation
133 William Street, New Bedford, MA.

Photo #4 of 4
Looking northeast towards Coal Pocket Pier
and the Steamship Authority Pier

NOV 11 1977

MAY 31 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

*Secretary of the
Commonwealth*

294 Washington Street Boston Massachusetts 02108

27 May 1977



Mr. Charles Herrington, Chief
Registration Branch
National Register of Historic Places
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Charles:

Enclosed please find nomination forms for the following properties:

1. New Bedford: Merrill's Wharf Historic District
2. Pittsfield: Old Central Fire Station
3. Taunton: Church Green Historic District

These properties have all been voted and reviewed by the State Review Board and signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer, Elizabeth Reed Amadon.

Sincerely Yours,

Patricia L. Weslowski
Patricia L. Weslowski
Survey Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

encs.
PLW/jro

11/9/77

TELEPHONE REPORT

TIME OF CALL

4:00

AM
PM

1. CALL ☐ TO: ☒ FROM (Name)

Joseph Infant

2. ADDRESS (Tel. No. if needed)

Mass. Preservation Office

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

Merrill's Wharf H. D.

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

the wharf, plans call for purchase by a
mass. developer and convert the bldg. into
housing units.

the ".9 acre" figure is accurate; it includes
only the land portions of the wharf

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL

Britt

TITLE

Pub. Dist.

OFFICE

Reg.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered

NOV 11 1977

Name

Location

Cuming, Dr. John, House

Concord vicinity
Middlesex County

Smith, Samuel, Tavern Site

Wellfleet vicinity
Barnstable County

Fowle, Edmund, House

Watertown
Middlesex County

Merrill's Wharf Historic District

New Bedford
Bristol County

11/16/77

Mott/js

880

Also Notified

Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Paul Tsongas
Hon. Gerry E. Studds
Hon. Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.
Mr. David F. Hales, Deputy Assistant
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks
Mr. F. Ross Holland, Chief, Cultural
Resource Management

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

1 NAME as it appears on federal register: Merrill's Wharf Historic District				2 OTHER NAMES:		3 date of entry: NOV 11 1977		4 county code: 05	
5 LOCATION street & number MacArthur Dr.		city / town New Bedford		vicinity of		state MA		county Bristol	
7 OWNER ☐ PRIVATE ☐ STATE ☒ MUNICIPAL ☐ COUNTY ☐ MULTIPLE ☐ FEDERAL (agency name)						8 ADMINISTRATOR:			
9 EXISTING SURVEYS ☐ HABS ☐ HAER ☐ NHL		10 FUNDED? ☐ YES ☐ NO		11 CONGRESS. DISTRICT 12th		12 SOURCE of NOMINATION ☒ STATE ☐ FEDERAL		if state, who prepared form?	
13 WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ YES, NAME ☐ NO		14 WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? ☐ YES, NAME ☐ NO		15 ACREAGE		☐ LOCAL ☐ PRIVATE ORGANIZATION			
16 CONDITION ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated ☐ good ☐ ruins ☐ altered ☐ fair ☐ unexposed ☐ unexcavated ☐ unexcavated ☐ excavated				17 features: ☐ original site ☐ moved ☐ unknown ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-4 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-7 ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-5 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-8 ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-6 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-9					
18 ACCESS ☐ YES-Restricted ☐ YES-Unrestricted ☐ No Access ☐ Unknown				19 ADAPTIVE USE ☐ YES ☐ NO		20 SAVED? ☐ YES		IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ yes ☐ no	
21 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ☐ ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2 ☐ ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1 ☐ AGRICULTURE-3 ☐ ARCHITECTURE-4 ☐ ART-5 ☐ COMMERCE-6 ☐ COMMUNICATIONS-7 ☐ CONSERVATION-8 ☐ ECONOMICS-9 ☐ EDUCATION-10 ☐ ENGINEERING-11 ☐ ENTERTAINMENT-26 ☐ EXPLORATION-12 ☐ HEALTH-27 ☐ INDUSTRY-13 ☐ INVENTION-14 ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 ☐ LAW-16 ☐ LITERATURE-17 ☐ MILITARY-18 ☐ MUSIC-19 ☐ PHILOSOPHY-20 ☐ POLITICS / GOVT.-21 ☐ RELIGION-22 ☐ SCIENCE-23 ☐ SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN-24 ☐ SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30 ☐ TRANSPORTATION-25 ☐ RECREATION-28 ☐ SETTLEMENT-29 ☐ URBAN PLANNING-31 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)				22 CLAIMS: explain 'first' ☐ 'oldest' ☐ 'only' ☐					
23 functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:				24 dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:				25 ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION	
26 architectural style(s):				27 architect:		28 master builder:		29 engineer:	
30 landscape architect / garden designer:		31 interior decorator:		32 artist:		33 artisan:		34 builder / contractor:	
35 NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL:									
36 NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP									