

3588

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Mt. Merici Historic District
Other names/site number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)



2. Location

Street & number: 152 Western Ave. and 99 St. Angela Way
City or town: Waterville State: Maine County: Kennebec
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

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

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<u>Kirk F. Mohrney, SHPO</u>	<u>2/11/2019</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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:)

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

3/28/19
Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
<u>2</u>	_____	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- EDUCATION/School
- DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing
- FUNERARY/cemetery
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/work of art
- _____
- _____
- _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- EDUCATION/School
- DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing
- FUNERARY/cemetery
- Vacant
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/work of art
- _____

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Modernist

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundations: CONCRETE; Walls: BRICK, GLASS, ALUMINUM, VINYL; Roofs: ASPHALT SHINGLE and SYNTHETIC RUBBER.

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The fourteen-acre Mt. Merici Historic District in Waterville, a mid-sized city in central Maine, is focused on the historically functionally related academy and convent buildings, constructed in 1955 and 1967, respectively. The Modernist-style buildings are set in a designed landscape with driveways, walkways, statuary, and a cemetery that predate the significant buildings, having first served an earlier combined convent and academy building on the property (demolished after completion of the existing convent in 1967). The one-story brick academy and three-story brick convent building are representative examples of institutional architecture of the Post-World War II period. Much of the property is open lawn, bounded by Chase Avenue and Western Avenue to the east and north, an open field to the south, and woods to the west. Mature trees are located at various points in the relatively flat landscape, including an allée lining the roadway to the cemetery. Two modern buildings, a wood-framed garage and a one-story wood-framed retirement care facility are located on the periphery of the property and do not interfere with the relationships between the historic buildings and landscape features. The district possesses a significant linkage as an educational campus of religious origin united historically by physical development.

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Narrative Description

The fourteen-acre site of the Mt. Merici Historic District is relatively flat, sloping gently to the east at the east side of the property, which is bounded by Chase and Western avenues. The south side of the property is bounded by an open field toward the southeast and woods toward the southwest. Woods also bound the west and much of the north side. The most visible components are the academy and convent which align roughly east to west down the center of the property with the cemetery further west along the same general axis. The academy building is located at the east side of the property, with driveways off both Chase and Western avenues. The convent is located to the west of the academy on a slight rise of land. The Ursuline Sisters Retirement Care Facility is a short distance to the northwest of the convent and the cemetery is further to the west, set back in the woods. A driveway off Western Avenue, St. Angela's Way, serves the convent and Ursuline Sisters Retirement Care Facility. (See Figures 2 and 3 for an aerial image and site map). St. Angela's Way drive and the walkways northeast of the convent date from the earlier convent and school on the site (demolished in 1967) and were reused for the 1966-67 convent. The school driveways date from the construction of that building in 1954-55. A former driveway southwest of the convent is still discernible on the ground and in aerial images. A 1967 sign composed of a brick pier with arched top with inset granite panel that has "URSULINE SISTERS, MOUNT MERICI" carved in it is located adjacent to the entry drive to the convent near Western Avenue. It is set in a flower bed. Suburban housing from the 1960's occupies the north side of Western Avenue and Elizabeth Ann Seton Hospital (NR # 16000437) is located on the east side of Chase Avenue, both on property once owned by the Ursuline Sisters.

Academy, 1954, Contributing building:

The Mt. Merici Academy is a one-story Modern Movement style school building built in 1954 and located on the south side of Western Avenue in Waterville, Kennebec County, Maine. The school building faces north onto Western Avenue in a residential neighborhood. The school has a L-plan, with the entrance lobby at the corner of the L, the northwest corner of the building. The gymnasium is located in the short leg of the L and is taller than the remainder of the building. It has a wide gabled roof while the rest of the building is flat roofed.

Exterior:

The building is clad in red brick laid in common bond with an exposed concrete foundation. The use of brick continues with projecting and angled header course sills spanning all window openings. A painted wood fascia below a deep soffit extends around the building at the top of the brick walls. Aluminum framed windows in offices and other secondary spaces have brick header course lintels. Classroom windows and the large window at the east end of the gymnasium have painted wood lintels that abut the wood fascia. Classroom windows have large areas of textured glass block above a band of aluminum framed windows. The large five-part window in the gymnasium gable end is also textured glass block, with a cross inset in smooth glass block.

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The front (north) façade of the school sits well back from the street with a paved parking area in the front and is seven bays wide. A set of concrete stairs leads to the primary entry porch, accessing a pair of brown aluminum framed doors set in a recess in the wall. At the front entry, the brick wall is taller, interrupting the fascia and soffit, extending several feet above the roof line as a parapet with "MOUNT MERICI ACADEMY" spelled out in applied stainless steel letters. A taller projecting brick pier at the left side of the entry has a tall cast concrete cross inset in the brick. The front entry has a projecting flat canopy over the doors with a triple-mulled set of four light windows on the left side.

To the east of the entry porch are three bays of windows. The first and third bays have four sets of three two-light aluminum framed hopper windows set below a continuous panel of fiber cement clapboard – covering or replacing the original glass block. The second bay has an identical treatment but is narrower with only two sets of three hopper windows. This is the only portion of the building that has the glass block altered. To the west of the entry porch, there are two bays of triple-mulled four light windows like that just to the left of the entry doors on the porch.

The west elevation is ten bays wide. At the northwest corner, the first four bays project forward one bay from the remainder of the elevation. Bays one and four contain triple-mulled four light windows like those on the north elevation. The second bay contains a small three-light window serving a restroom. The third bay contains a recessed entrance with two brown aluminum framed one-light doors. The south-facing single bay return of this projection contains another triple-mulled four-light window. The remaining six bays have classroom windows. Each bay is divided into three identical sections with glass block (fourteen units wide, seven units tall) over three sets of aluminum ribbon sash. In each bay, the southernmost two-light hopper window has been replaced with a vinyl framed casement window for egress. The brick gable end of the gymnasium is visible above the west elevation, although set back approximately thirty feet. It has a rectangular louvered vent at the peak and no fenestration.

The narrow south elevation of the long leg of the L-plan has areas of unrelieved brick wall flanking a center bay with recessed doors. The brown aluminum framed single-light doors are set between narrow matching side lights with a frosted glass transom above the doors and sidelights.

The east elevation of the long leg of the L-plan contains three bays of classroom windows like those on the west elevation, one bay with three two-light hopper windows set high in the wall and one bay with a pair of entry doors like those elsewhere on the building. The doors are located at a recess in the corner where the two legs of the L-plan meet.

The south elevation of the gymnasium (the short leg of the L-plan) is the most varied elevation of the building, stepping out in two stages from west to east. The first bay contains a single solid metal door. Bays two and three contain two two-light hopper windows. These three bays are set back below a projecting canopy that also covers the double door on the east elevation of the long leg of the L-plan. The fourth bay steps forward to the depth of the canopy and contains a single two-light hopper window. The remaining five bays step forward a short

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distance from the fourth bay. The first and fifth bays each contain a single two-light hopper window and the middle three bays contain two two-light hopper windows. The second hopper in the second bay has been replaced with an air conditioner with plywood infill on either side. Above all of these bays, the upper portion of the south elevation of the gymnasium is set back above the flat roof. It has a tall brick chimney to the left of five bays of triple-mulled two-light hopper windows. The gymnasium roof is covered in standing seam metal roofing.

The symmetrical east elevation of the short leg of the L-plan serves as a second "primary" façade, facing a triangular point of land created by the convergence of Western and Chase Avenues. A driveway connects Chase Avenue to Western Avenue, passing in front of this elevation. At the center, the broad gabled end of the gymnasium has five panels of glass block above pairs of two-light hopper windows. The glass block rises into the gable and is angled at the top. The center panel uses smooth surface glass block set in the textured glass block to create a large cross. In the single-story flanking portions of the elevation, canopied entrances supported on round steel posts abut the gabled gymnasium wall and have doors and sidelights like those on the south end of the long leg of the L-plan. Here, the transoms are above the canopies and have clear glass. Each entrance has a set of concrete steps and a porch. The outer bays of these one-story portions of the elevation contain triple-mulled two-light hopper windows set high in the wall.

Interior:

The primary entrance to the school opens into the main lobby. The lobby is flanked by offices on the west and south. A reception desk is located just inside the doors on the right. At the southeast corner of the lobby, the two primary corridors of the building extend to the east and to the south. A short corridor from the lobby to the west leads to the doors opening onto the paved path to the convent building. In the past, students used this route to the chapel and cafeteria in the convent. The south corridor has four classrooms and a janitor's room on the west side and three classrooms and student restrooms on the east. The east corridor has three classrooms on the north side and the gymnasium on the south. Two sets of double doors at the end of the corridors provide egress. A kitchen and storage room are located on the south side of the gymnasium, which now doubles as a cafeteria. (See Figure 4 for a sketch floor plan).

The corridors of the school have carpet tile flooring. Walls are painted concrete block or plaster. Metal lockers line portions of the corridor walls. Drop ceilings have been installed in the corridors and classrooms. In general, classrooms have vinyl tile flooring and painted concrete block, brick, or plaster walls. Wood baseboards line the walls and built-in wood bookcases are installed under many classroom windows. Wood trim is present around classroom and closet doors. Celotex tiles remain exposed on the ceilings of some secondary spaces.

The school retains most of its original wood slab doors. Classroom doors have single wire glass panels, while closet doors have no glazing. Double wood doors at the ends of the corridors each have a single light and are set between single-light side lights with multi-light transoms. The gymnasium has tile flooring and painted concrete block walls. The ceilings

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feature exposed steel beams. The stage is constructed of wood with brick pilasters on either end.

The building retains a high degree of integrity to the period of significance. Two changes being the replacement of the exterior sets of historic aluminum framed doors and transoms with modern aluminum framed doors and transoms and the covering of the interior surface of the glass block wall above the classroom windows. The historic wood doors and transoms remain inside the entry vestibules. The exterior appearance of the glass block remains unaltered except on three north-facing windows, where it has been replaced with cementitious siding. The interior of the glass block has been insulated and covered with painted gypsum board.

Convent, 1967, Contributing building:

The 1967 Modern Movement Style Mt. Merici Convent building is set well back from Western Avenue and is composed of a tall rectangular red brick gable roofed chapel attached to a lineal three story flat roofed brick wing to the west and a wing to the south. The west wing extends at right angles to the chapel for approximately one-third of its length and then turns northwesterly at an angle for the remaining two thirds. At the end of the wing, a one-story brick garage has had two additional stories added, with wood clapboard siding. Abutting the south end of the chapel, the three-story flat roofed south wing extends only a short distance.

The gable end of the chapel faces Western Avenue and is three and a half stories tall to the peak. The first story is divided into three bays by concrete piers supporting a wide concrete lintel. Within each seven-foot-tall bay are aluminum framed windows with tall fixed upper sash above short horizontal sliding sash in the two-light lower portion. The first and third bays have three of these window combinations in each and the center bay has two. In the three window bays, the lower sash in the center has been replaced with a solid panel. The two-and-a-half-story brick wall above the concrete lintel is largely unrelieved except for a large Modernist stained-glass window in a cast stone frame set high in the wall, above the location of the alter on the interior. Small rectangular metal ventilation louvers are located near the base of the brick wall on either side. The deep roof overhang on the gable extends further at the peak than at the eaves, creating the effect of a prow.

The first story of the east elevation of the chapel continues the cast concrete post and lintel structure and tripartite window arrangement for three bays back from the north elevation with a fourth bay defined by the concrete but infilled with brick. An area of unrelieved brick separates the last concrete post from a recessed entrance where the chapel wall meets the south wing of the convent. As on the north elevation, the upper wall is brick. It has six tall narrow Modernist stained-glass windows set in cast stone frames.

The upper portion of the west elevation of the chapel is similar to the east elevation, with six stained-glass windows, but is largely covered below the window level with a projecting two story brick stair tower and connecting corridors outside the chapel volume. The three-story west wing intersects the chapel block just south of the sixth stained glass window. The north elevation of the stair tower is set back approximately one foot from the elevation of the chapel.

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It has one two-light horizontal sliding window with a cast stone sill on each floor, located near the chapel. The west elevation of the stair tower has a one-light metal door on the first floor and a window like those on the north elevation on the second, both near the south end of the elevation. At the lower left corner of the elevation, one brick course above the concrete foundation, is a cast stone date block, reading "AD 1967". Set back a short distance from the west stair tower elevation is the elevation of the first story corridor outside the chapel block. It has two of the two-light sliding windows, the left one set lower than the right one, reflecting the two floor heights on the first story within the building. Set back several feet further on the second story, three windows of the same type line another corridor.

The north elevation of the west wing of the convent is three stories tall. Like all the flat roofed portions of the building, there is a shallow soffit with brown metal flashing wrapping over the wood fascia. The horizontal sliding windows on this elevation are like those already described. Due to the stepped back corridors abutting the chapel block, there are four bays on the first floor, five on the second, and six on the third. The northeast elevation of the west wing, after it turns at an angle, has nine bays on the first floor. The first three (from southeast to northwest) are framed with cast concrete posts and lintels, like those on the chapel, with similar tripartite windows in each bay. These windows express the hierarchy of the interior functions, marking two of the primary interior spaces, the students' cafeteria and the Sisters' refractory, or dining room. The refractory windows are vinyl replacement windows that retain the pattern of the original aluminum framed windows. The fourth, fifth, seventh, and eighth bays contain the two-light horizontal sliding windows previously described. The sixth bay contains the main entrance to the building, set in a wide concrete frame with a flat canopy roof supported on concrete posts. The entrance door is a metal door with a small square light in the upper portion and a narrow sidelight on the right. The ninth bay contains a tall vertical ribbon window that starts near the top of the first story and continues through the second and third stories, lighting a stairwell. The upper two stories each have ten bays containing the two-light windows previously described as well as the vertical ribbon window at the northwest end.

Only a narrow portion of the northwest end elevation of the west wing is visible, with the first story brick garage and upper story vinyl sided addition covering most of the elevation. At the base of the visible portion, a single metal door leads into the stairwell at the corner of the building. The garage is set back approximately eight feet from the elevation of the west wing, and has a single two-light horizontal sliding window near the center. The two vinyl clapboarded stories atop the garage each have four bays with a two-light vinyl horizontal sliding window in each bay. The garage addition roof is asymmetrically gabled, with a long shallow slope toward the northwest and a short, more steeply pitched, slope toward the southeast. The northwest elevation of the garage has three garage door bays on the first floor, each with an aluminum clad paneled overhead door with four lights. The upper stories have five bays of windows like those on the northeast elevation. The southwest elevation is nearly identical to the northeast, but has a recessed entry door at the lower right, where it meets the west wing of the convent. Above the projecting first story of the southeast elevation of the convent, the upper two stories of the garage addition each have a single bay with windows matching the others on the addition.

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The long southwest elevation of the west wing has a first floor with a flat roof that projects out approximately ten feet from the upper stories. It is fifteen bays wide, with the same two-light windows seen elsewhere. The upper two stories have twelve bays each, all with the same window type except the tenth bay on the third story, which has a smaller two-light horizontal sliding window. After the turn eastward in the elevation, the projecting first story has five irregularly spaced bays. The first and fourth bays have windows like those previously described. The second and third bays have narrower versions of the same window. The fifth bay contains a recessed pair of one-light metal door with an uncovered concrete porch and steps. The second story has five bays with the typical windows in all but the center, which has a smaller window like that on the third story of the southwest elevation. The third story has seven bays with the typical windows in bays one, two, three, and six; the smaller window in bays four and five, and a narrower window (as on the first floor of this elevation) in bay seven. The wall extends an additional story for the elevator overrun where this elevation turns at an angle and continues northwesterly.

A stair tower is located in the corner where the west wing meets the south wing. The west elevation of the tower has no fenestration. The south elevation of the tower has a one-light metal door in the first story and a vertical ribbon window rising through the upper stories, as in the stairwell on the northeast elevation of the west wing. The south wing extends from the stair tower one bay with a mullied pair of vinyl double hung windows on each story on the west elevation. The south elevation of the south wing has three bays on each story, with the same pairs of windows just described in each bay except the center bay on the first story, which has a recessed entrance framed in concrete. A single one-light metal door is located off center in the recess. The east elevation of the south wing, which meets the east elevation of the chapel, has three bays on each story. The first bay on the first story contains another pair of double-hung windows. The second bay has an aluminum framed horizontal sliding window. The third bay is shared with chapel elevation and contains the recessed entrance described with that elevation. A gabled hood is located over the recess. The two upper stories each have paired double-hung windows in the first two bays and an aluminum sliding window in the third bay. A chimney is located near the intersection of the south wing and the chapel, set back from the edge of the flat roof. The gabled south end of the chapel, visible above the south wing, is unrelieved brick. The roof overhang on the gable has the projecting prow seen on the north elevation.

Interior:

The chapel portion of the building has the students' cafeteria on the first story with the two-and-a-half-story tall chapel above. Behind the chapel, in the south wing, are community rooms for the resident Sisters on the upper stories and laundry room on the first. All three stories in the west wing have a double-loaded corridor running the length of the wing, with stairwells at either end and the elevator at the angle where the wing turns. On the first floor, the kitchen adjoins the cafeteria under the chapel, with the Sisters dining room on the other side of the kitchen, four parlors for the Sisters to meet with outsiders, and the main entrance also line the north side of the corridor. The northern portion of the students' cafeteria has been partitioned off for offices. The kitchen and cafeteria sit at a lower level than the remainder of the first story, giving them taller ceilings. Short staircases connect the levels. The south side of the first-floor

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corridor is taken up by a library, sewing room, guest rooms, bathrooms, storage spaces, and laundry spaces. On the upper two stories of the west wing, the corridors are lined with cells, or bedrooms, for the Sisters, and accompanying bathrooms. A few of the cells have been opened into each other to create larger rooms. The first story of the garage contains a three-bay automobile garage. The upper two stories each contain a single sun room for the Sisters. (See Figures 7, 8 and 9 for floor plans).

The chapel interior is the most highly finished space in the building. It has tan and brown brick with red mortar walls, wood wainscoting, wood paneled balcony front, and laminated arched wood roof trusses. The Modernist stained glass in the windows is a major feature of the chapel interior. To date the designer and manufacturer of the stained glass has not been identified.

Most of the interior of the convent has utilitarian finishes typical of 1960's institutional buildings of Modernist Style, with painted concrete block and drywall walls, vinyl tile floors with vinyl baseboard, and drop ceilings with recessed lighting. The first-floor library has natural finish plywood paneling and built-in bookcases. Some acoustical tile ceilings with recessed lighting are also present. Most windows have black slate interior sills. The kitchen has a quarry tile floor. Interior doors are solid wood veneer slab doors with a natural finish, some with a small light in the upper portion. Built-in cabinetry of natural finish plywood includes wardrobe cabinets in each cell, or bedroom. Staircases are steel with vinyl tile treads. Painted metal radiator covers are located under the windows on the exterior walls in many locations. Bathrooms have ceramic tile floors and tub surrounds. Shower rooms have white marble partitions between showers.

The building retains a high degree of integrity to the period of significance, the only notable changes being the construction of a two-story wood-framed addition above the garage at the west end of the building and installation of vinyl windows in the two parlors at the east end of the building.

Ursuline Sisters Cemetery, ca. 1930, Contributing site:

The Ursuline Sisters Cemetery on the property has the date "1930" on its wrought iron gate. It is located northwest of the convent and is approached along a drive lined with an allée of mature trees. A number of the grave markers indicate death dates prior to 1930, suggesting those sisters may have previously been interred elsewhere. The cemetery is simple and formal in design. There are more than 200 graves in the cemetery set in ranked rows between gravel paths. Early graves have white marble stones, more recent graves have granite stones. One of the earliest death dates on the grave markers is 1893, five years after the Sisters came to Waterville but prior to their 1911 purchase of this property. The overall effect of the simple and regular design blends well with the Modernist Style of the later buildings. The ordered linear layout with low simple stones is similar to a military cemetery giving it an air of efficiency, order and functionalism like the main buildings in the district. Toward the rear of the cemetery, on line with the gate and approached by a grave walkway, is a group of four figural bronze statues depicting the Crucifixion of Christ. A wrought iron fence surrounds the rectangular cemetery.

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Jesus statue, ca. 1912, Contributing object:

The nearly life-size cast iron statue of Jesus is mounted on a square granite base and located at the north end of the property, facing Western Avenue. The figure is painted in gold metallic paint and the base in dark gray or faded black. It appears the statue was centered in front of the original convent/school building on the property (demolished ca. 1912).

Sister and Child statue, ca. 1912, Contributing object:

The off-white marble Sister and Child statue group is located to the east of the academy building, facing the entrance nearest the gymnasium. The child, a girl, is posed with an open book and the sister, who has one hand on the girl's shoulder is gesturing toward the open page while looking down at the book. The carving of the sister's robe and cowl and the child's dress is somewhat minimal and stylized while their faces and hands are rendered more naturalistically. A small planting bed around the base of the statue group is surrounded by pressure treated boards.

Grotto (no longer extant object)

A low fieldstone structure was located in the trees south of the drive connecting the convent and cemetery. The structure contained a grotto for devotional statues until 2017, when it was completely removed from the property.

Ursuline Care Center Retirement Home, 2005, Non-Contributing building:

The Ursuline Care Center retirement home is a one-story wood-framed vinyl sided building with a gabled roof, located to the northwest of the historic convent. The façade is ten bays wide with two cross gables (over bays one and six) projecting forward from the building to cover garage extensions. A covered porch runs the length of the façade, interrupted by the garage extensions. Pedestrian doors are located in bays two, five, and eight. Wide bay windows, each with two one-over-one sash flanked by narrower one-over-one sash on an angle, are located in bays three, four, and nine. Small pent roofs with ventilation louvers in the gable are located over these bay windows on the main roof. A pair of mulled one-over-one windows is located in bay seven and a single one-over-one window is located in bay ten.

The north and south elevations are each two bays wide, with a one-over-one window in bay one and a pair of mulled one-over-one windows in bay two. The west elevation faces a wooded area and has no visibility from the historic buildings and landscape or any public way.

Garage, ca. 2005, Non-Contributing building:

The modern wood-framed gable roofed garage building south of the convent is four bays wide, with a paneled aluminum overhead door in each bay. Dark red vinyl siding covers the walls, with minimal white painted trim on doors, windows, and roof edges. The side gabled roof is clad in gray three-tab asphalt shingles. The east elevation has two bays, with a one-over-one window and a flush metal door, on the first floor and a single one-over-one window centered in

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the gable above. A louvered ventilation panel is located above the window in the gable. The south elevation is covered by unrelieved vinyl siding. The west elevation has one one-over-one window on the first floor and one in the gable.

The district retains a high degree of integrity to the period of significance when the two principal buildings replaced the earlier combined convent and academy building on the site. Since 1967, the site has been composed of driveways, walkways, statuary, and a cemetery that date to the earlier development of the property and the modern buildings that replaced the earlier building. While the academy is now operated by a secular board and the convent is vacant, it is still possible to visualize the Sisters and students moving around the complex daily on the paths and drives that connect the buildings and other site features. The connecting walk from academy to convent is narrow and not highly noticeable but is particularly significant as the daily connector between the two buildings. The most notable addition to the site since the period of significance is the Ursuline Sisters Retirement Care Facility, a one-story building tucked up against the woods on the west side of St. Angela's Way. The size and location of the building are such that it has minimal impact on the integrity of the district. It is located to the corner of the property and away from the dominant east to west movement between the modern buildings. A free-standing wood-framed garage building to the south of the convent is de minimis in scale compared to the other buildings and sited where it has minimal visibility. A significant object present during the period of significance but now missing is a fieldstone grotto structure that contained several religious statues. It was removed in 2017. The grotto was a smaller and less visible component of the district that conveyed the religious associations of the teachers and students. While the grotto if extant would have contributed to the district, the devotional and religious connections are represented by the remaining statues and iconography.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.)

Criterion A: Education

Criterion C: Architecture

Period of Significance

1954-1967

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bunker & Savage Architects (1919-2015), Augusta, ME

Whelan and Westman Architects (1945-1967), Boston, MA

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.) (Refer to photographs)

The Mt. Merici Historic District, which includes the Ursuline Motherhouse Convent, adjoining Mt. Merici Academy, Ursuline Sister's Cemetery, related site features, and two modern buildings is located on the outskirts of Waterville, Kennebec County, Maine. The district is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Education and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance runs from 1954, when the current Mt. Merici Academy building was constructed, to 1967, when the convent was constructed. The two buildings replaced an earlier combined convent and school building on the site. Mt. Merici Academy (old and new buildings) served as a Catholic school for girls from 1912 until 1967, when it became a coeducational day school, while the convent buildings were the principal residence for the Ursuline Sisters stationed in the Diocese of Portland from 1912 to 2005. The site was an important educational, residential, and spiritual center for the Ursuline Sisters for over 93 years. The district is architecturally significant as a cohesively linked educational campus of religious origin united historically by physical development that currently is dominated by Modern buildings but reflects the continuous occupation and development of the campus through time. Further, the convent and academy buildings are architecturally significant as well-preserved examples of Modernist style. The academy represents the Modernist work of Augusta architects Bunker and Savage, one of Maine's preeminent institutional design firms during the long duration of its existence from 1919 until 2015. The convent was designed by the Boston firm of Whelan and Westman, Architects (1945-1967), which did considerable Modernist work for Catholic churches and organizations. As a result of its religious associations, the property meets Criterion Consideration A for National Register listing. The property's significance is due to its historical associations with the local community and for its architectural significance rather than for any religious associations. The cemetery does not need to meet Criterion D because it will be nominated as part of a district but is not the focal point of the district. The buildings, cemetery, shrine, statuary, walkways, and drives are all functionally related parts of the Mt. Merici convent and school campus and existed together during the period of significance. The district possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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

National Register Criterion A – Education

The Mt. Merici Historic District meets Criteria A in the area of Education for its association with the education of primarily Franco-American Catholic children in Waterville by the Ursuline Sisters who resided in the convent on the property before, during, and after the period of significance. The Ursuline Sisters, have a long history as educators. The site is also important as the principal residence for the Ursuline Sisters in the region and for the role the campus

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played in the life of Waterville's Catholic population. From their beginning in Waterville in the 1880's, the Ursuline sisters went on to establish seventeen parochial schools throughout New England with the Mt. Merici Convent serving as Motherhouse to the order in New England.¹ The existing academy and convent were built by the Ursuline Sisters in the mid-twentieth century, replacing an earlier combined school and convent building, at a time when distinctly modern public and private educational facilities were being constructed across the country to better serve expanding student populations in the post-World War II period.

As explained in *The American Catholic Quarterly Review in July 1891*, "The Catholic Church in the United States, finding herself unable to accept as satisfactory the prevailing system of State education, has adopted the policy of instituting and supporting a distinct educational system of her own."² And that "the Catholic schools should, in teaching methods and results come up to the standard of the public schools."³ This policy evolved out of the three Plenary Councils of Baltimore that were held in 1852, 1866 and 1884, whereby every parish was to establish a parish school staffed by "teachers belonging to religious congregations" and "all parents must send their children to such schools."⁴ Reflecting this movement, a speaker at a statewide French convention in Waterville in 1881 promoted the establishment of a Catholic school, stating, "A religious education is of the utmost importance. Closely knitted to this should follow a secular education as required by our present needs."⁵ By 1887, a parochial school had been established and the following year six Ursuline nuns arrived from Canada to run the new school. Several years later, a new building was constructed in downtown Waterville to accommodate the nuns and a girls' boarding school.⁶ This was the first location of the Mt. Merici Academy.

This pattern of development for Catholic educational facilities was not unique to Waterville in Maine, as can be seen at the parish of St. Hyacinth in Westbrook, which constructed their school and convent building (NR # 13000439) in 1894 to meet the directives of the Plenary Councils of Baltimore and in response to the growing number of elementary school aged members of parish families.⁷ In 1912, the Sisters moved the Mt. Merici Academy to its current location, building a combined school and convent building. It was a boarding school for girls from elementary through high school grades. It was approved by the Maine Department of Education as a class A Academy in 1916. In 1933, there were 63 students taught by a staff of

¹ "History of the Ursuline Sisters in Maine," University of Dayton (OH) finding aid for the Ursuline Sisters of Maine papers: http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/view?docId=ead/ODaU0027.xml;chunk.id=bioghist_1;brand=default, accessed December 20, 2018.

² "The Idea of a Parochial School." *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, Volume XVI, No. 63. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Hardy & Mahony, 1891, 449.

³ "The Idea of a Parochial School." *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, Volume XVI, No. 63. 450.

⁴ Fanning, William . "Plenary Councils of Baltimore." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2. New York, New York : Robert Appleton Company, 1907, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02235a.htm>

⁵ Fecteau, Albert C. "The French Canadian Community of Waterville, Maine," unpublished thesis paper, University of Maine, Orono, 1952, np.

⁶ Fecteau, np.

⁷ Cole Ives, Amy. St. Hyacinth School and Convent National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME, 2013.

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twelve Sisters. Mt. Merici was the only Catholic high school in Waterville. Boys had to attend the public Waterville High School.⁸

During the 1950s, the student population in Maine (as well as the rest of the country) was rising as the Baby Boomers began to reach school age, creating a national need for more and larger school plants. Between the end of WWII and 1950, approximately \$15,000,000 was spent on public school facilities in Maine. According to a 1950 article in the *Lewiston Daily Sun*, \$65,000,000 was needed for new school buildings and additions to existing buildings. A survey made by the State School Building Commission showed a need for over 1,000 new elementary school classrooms and nearly 300 high school classrooms in the state.⁹ This massive demand for new schools prompted many building campaigns across the state. Between 1940 and 1950, the grade school-aged population (grades K-8) rose by about two million in the United States, with an additional 3,000 students in Maine. Between 1950 and 1960, the country's population of this age group increased by over 11 million. This was reflected in Maine as an additional 38,000 children between the ages of 5 and 14.¹⁰

It is within the context of this school building campaign in Maine that the original Mt. Merici Academy was replaced with the construction of a new school building on the Mt. Merici site in 1954-55, followed by the new convent in 1967. This happened at a time when the Sisters were transitioning the academy from an elementary-through-high school girls' boarding school to a co-educational elementary day school. Two years before the construction of the new co-educational school building, the school had 175 female students, 50 of them boarding, with a staff of 40 Sisters.¹¹ The successful efforts by the Sisters to develop much of their 100-acre property for new suburban residential development during the same period may have contributed to the decision to construct a new co-educational day school on the property. It would have made the new neighborhood more attractive to Catholic families with children.

The suburban location of the academy may have played a role in creating the need to construct a new building as well. By comparison, the St. Hyacinth School, located in an urban Westbrook setting, was decreasing in enrollment during the same period. As stated in the St. Hyacinth School and Convent National Register nomination, "Shifting demographics following the close of world War II resulting from mixed (Catholic-Protestant) marriages as well as outmigration of the baby boom generation from the parish to the suburbs was the likely cause of declining enrollment through the 1960s and 1970s. By 1974, enrollment at the St. Hyacinth School had retracted to about 200 children. That same year, the Provincial of the Sisters of the Presentation informed the parish of St. Hyacinth that they would no longer be able to staff the parochial school and the school closed."¹² Similar forces were likely responsible for the declining enrollments and ultimate closures of the other Catholic schools in downtown Waterville in the decades following the construction of the new Mount Merici Academy.

⁸ Fecteau, np.

⁹ "\$65,000,000 Maine Schools Needed." *The Lewiston Daily Sun*, Vol. LVIII, September 23, 1950, 1.

¹⁰ Corbett, Matthew. Ella R. Hodgkins School National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME, 2015.

¹¹ Fecteau, np.

¹² Cole Ives, Amy. St. Hyacinth School and Convent National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME, 2013.

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The Ursuline Sisters focused their service primarily on the education of children, unlike some other orders of nuns in Maine. The mid-twentieth century buildings on the site of the early-twentieth century school and convent continued the Ursuline Sisters history of building and adapting facilities to serve the needs of their students, whether in the first parochial school in downtown Waterville in 1888, the boarding school for girls they operated there concurrently with the parochial school, the expansion of the parochial school on the original site, or the relocation of the convent and establishment of the Mt. Merici girls' boarding school on the site in question in 1912. As the site of the order's Motherhouse from 1912 until the early twenty-first century and the site of the order's cemetery since at least 1930, this is arguably the most significant site related to these Sisters and their work in education, where for many decades novices entered service in the field of education and after a lifetime of service were laid to rest.

The Mt. Merici Historic District was developed as an educational institution and evolved over time. Its significance during the period of significance was for providing elementary education to Catholic children in Waterville and as the Motherhouse and final resting place for an order of nuns devoted to providing education to Catholic children at this and sixteen other sites in New England. This district has the most integrity and significance of any remaining building or group of buildings associated with the Ursuline Sisters' educational work in Waterville.

National Register Criterion C – Architecture

The Mt. Merici Historic District is dominated by the two Modernist Movement buildings of the 1950's and 1960's, which redefined the character of the property while continuing its educational mission. The two buildings were thoughtfully located within existing elements on the site. The district is a designed landscape in that the buildings, driveways, walks, cemetery, shrine, and statuary were located with intent in relationship to each other and the natural landscape. While many elements of the planned property date to the period of the earlier buildings on the site, the new buildings that replaced them in the 1950's and 1960's were located within the existing features intentionally. The academy building was located where it could be served by its own driveways while remaining close enough to the existing building for the students to use the chapel and cafeteria in that building daily. The need for separate driveways would have grown out of the shift from a primarily boarding student body to an exclusively "day student" student body. As can be seen in the attached current aerial image with 1912 building footprint overlaid, when the 1912 building was replaced by the new convent and chapel building, it was located so as to continue the functional relationship to the school in the daily use of the cafeteria and chapel by the students. (See Figure 5.) It was also located to make use of the existing drives, allée, and walkways and to maintain the relationships between the convent and the statuary, shrine, and cemetery. The new convent also realigned the primary axis of the property to east and west with the principle focus between a separated educational workspace and residential housing.

In response to the post-World War II "baby boom" and rapid expansion of suburban neighborhoods, new school construction was prolific during the 1950's and 60's. This seems to have been as true for parochial schools as for public schools. Bunker and Savage architects designed both public and parochial schools in Waterville during this period. Both the architectural firms hired to design the academy and the convent were experienced in designing

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institutional buildings in a Modernist vocabulary. Although no documentation was located to explain why the Sisters chose these firms, it seems it was a conscious decision to replace their 1912 Colonial Revival building with clearly modern buildings, based on the previous work of the firms selected.

In 1954-55, a new Mt. Merici Academy school building designed by the Augusta architectural firm of Bunker & Savage was built approximately 250' east of the 1911-12 buildings. The building reflected contemporary standards for educational buildings and was much like Modernist public schools just starting to be built in Maine at the time. It is a good example of a post-war parochial school building that followed recent trends in public school design and construction as described below. It has many similarities of design and materials with the 1958 Ella R. Hodgkins Intermediate School in Augusta (NR #15000417), also by Bunker and Savage, and many other schools of the period. Public and parochial schools and institutions of this period share many common materials and design characteristics. For example, in contrast to the simply massed, block-like schools found in already established neighborhoods, a single-story sprawling form is typical of mid-century modern schools that were built on large lots at the edge of residential developments. Schools of the post-war period featured large rectangular volumes of reinforced concrete or brick with regular placement of windows. It was not uncommon for schools to resemble one-story factories, laboratories, or office parks which employed an ever-increasing number of residents. The advances in technology during the mid-20th century served as an inspiration for design and the construction and finish materials at Mt. Merici Academy reflected these technologies (steel, concrete block, tiled ceilings and walls, laminated beams, glass block, plywood veneer, aluminum framed windows) and helped to establish a pared down aesthetic. As with earlier generations of educational buildings the importance of natural light and proper ventilation were emphasized with large windows and skylights.¹³

In addition to the building, the site was developed to accommodate expanding automobile usage which was critical to a day school. As a 1912 boarding school the earlier building had limited drives and parking lots. The 1954 academy building features a connecting through road to both Western and Chase Avenues and ample parking. The placement of the new school is moved east to the center of the property and focused on access roads while the residential aspect of the district is separated and placed to the rear of the property in a more shielded location. When the 1967 convent is build the separation is maintained with continued easy access to the necessary cafeteria and chapel sections of the residential building. With the initial plan the school is placed forward with the residential space behind and the private cemetery space further west all along an east west axis moving from public to private space.

Mt. Merici Academy became a co-educational day school by the 1960s, eliminating the need for a dormitory for boarding students and the former combined convent and dormitory were replaced by a Modern Movement style convent in 1966-67. The convent also contained a cafeteria and chapel used by the school. While the first-floor cafeteria and kitchen would not have been out of place in a public school of the period, the Modernist chapel is a feature not typical of public educational facilities. It was used by students daily. The card catalog for the Bunker and Savage firm documents a design for an addition to the academy and a new

¹³ Corbett, Matthew. Ella R. Hodgkins School National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME, 2015.

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convent in 1966, but the new convent built the next year was designed by the Boston architectural firm Whelan and Westman. It is not known why the Sisters did not use the Bunker and Savage design. The new convent was built immediately behind and west of the 1912 building, which was demolished upon completion of the new building. Original Whelan and Westman drawings for the convent show a wing connecting it directly to the academy building. This wing appears to have been intended as an expansion of the school but was never constructed.¹⁴ A paved path runs between the buildings where the wing would have been.

The Whelan and Westman firm was in partnership from 1945 to 1967, dissolving shortly before the death of Frederick Westman in 1968. Leo Whelan (1899-1972) was educated at MIT, the Boston Architectural Center and the Harvard Graduate School of Design. He worked as chief architect for the FHA from 1936 to 1945. Westman (1903-1968) received his B.S. and M.A. degrees from MIT in 1925. He worked for Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott from 1928 to 1932 and in the office of Edward T.P. Graham from 1932 to 1936. From 1937 to 1945 he was a planner for the Federal Public Housing Authority. Among the firms principal works are the Cardinal O'Connor Minor Seminary in Boston (1950); St. Josephs School (1950) and Convent (1951) in Belmont, MA; St. Clements Convent (1953) and Marian High School (1956) in Framingham, MA; and the Immaculate Conception Elementary School in Cambridge, MA (1956).¹⁵

The convent is an architectural type in that it has a typical convent floor plan that is composed of small individual sleeping rooms, or cells, for Sisters off double loaded corridors, has a chapel as the most architecturally important space in the building, has communal spaces for eating and socializing among the Sisters, spaces for Sisters to meet with "outside" people, and has administrative office spaces. This type of plan can be seen in the 1907 Renaissance Revival Style Sisters of Mercy Mother House, St. Joseph's Convent on Stevens Avenue in Portland, ME (NR #18000806); the 1921 Gothic Revival St. Hyacinth Convent in Westbrook, ME (NR #13000439); and the convent floor in the 1965 Modernist Elizabeth Ann Seton Hospital in Waterville, ME (NR #16000437), and in hundreds of other convents across the U.S.

English Heritage *Introductions to Heritage Assets: 19th- and 20th-Century Convents and Monasteries*,¹⁶ includes the "Chronology and Development of the Building Type" starting with Early Convent and Monastery Building up through the Post-WWII period. A description of a typical early 19th century convent by noted Gothic Revival architect A.W.N. Pugin defines the type:

Pugin's convents at Mount Vernon in Liverpool (from 1841) and Derby Road, Nottingham (from 1844), provide a precedent in their overall form, size, and components for a large number of similar institutions that were to follow... the major rooms comprised a chapel, a refectory and a community room, and these were boldly expressed externally with, for example, different types of

¹⁴ Boyle, Gerry. "Final Period," *Colby Magazine*, Vol. 89, Issue 2, Waterville, ME, Spring 2000, 64.

¹⁵ Boker, R.R., LLC. *American Architects Directory for 1956*, New York, 1956, pgs. 497, 595, 596.

¹⁶ Brittain-Catlin, Timothy. *Introductions to Heritage Assets: 19th- and 20th-Century Convents and Monasteries*, June 2014, English Heritage website: <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/41743/1/19-20-century-convents-monasteries-ihha.pdf>, accessed August 2, 2016.

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fenestration, in keeping with the principles of gothic revival architecture. Cells were located off a central corridor located on the upper floor, and the planning here allowed those who were ill to attend chapel from a balcony... Finally, the two convents included 'parlours' which were meeting spaces for visiting lay people, located by the front door and constituting an interface between the community and the outside world.

The most modern building of the type illustrated in the document quoted above is the 1940 monastery of Olivetan Benedictines at Cockfosters, on the suburban fringe of London, England. It was designed in the modernist Dutch Expressionist style, distinctly at odds with the earlier (primarily Gothic Revival style) convents and monasteries described and shown in the article.¹⁷ Like the Olivetan monastery in its UK context, the Mt. Merici Convent is a good example of this type of building and is a lineal Modern Movement descendant from the earlier convents in Maine. It is also representative of Modern Movement buildings of the 1960s in its form, materials, and detailing. It is similar to the 1951 St. Joseph's Convent in Belmont, MA, also designed by Whelan and Westman. All three of these clearly Modernist style buildings can be generally summarized by the above description of the type. The only notable change to the building since its construction is a small two-story wood-framed addition above the historic attached garage on the northwest end of the convent. Each floor contains a single room which was used as a sunroom for the Sisters.

Setting:

The introduction of the modern buildings to the site during the period of significance redefined the character of the district and reoriented its organizational axis. St. Angela's Way drive and the walkways northeast of the convent date from the earlier convent and school on the site and were reused for the 1966-67 convent. The school driveways date from the construction of that building in 1954-55. Establishing vehicular access to the school separate from the convent would have been necessary with the change from a boarding school to a day school. A former driveway southwest of the convent is still discernible on the ground and in aerial images. It provided separated access to barns that were on the property when it had an operating farm. The barns were apparently demolished in the mid-twentieth century, likely at the time the Sisters were developing a suburban neighborhood around the site. The former location of the barns is part of a 14.9 acre parcel south of the academy and convent that was sold in 1989 to Mid-Maine Medical Center, owners of Seton Hospital at that time, according to a plan filed with the Registry of Deeds.¹⁸

As mentioned above, the cemetery is the final resting place of many Ursuline Sisters who devoted their lives to the education of children. For nearly a century starting in 1912, young women novices entered service at the Mt. Merici Motherhouse and were trained to teach at the academy or other parochial schools operated by the order throughout New England. After a lifetime of service, these women returned to Mt. Merici to be interred in the Sisters' cemetery

¹⁷ Brittain-Catlin, Timothy. *Introductions to Heritage Assets: 19th- and 20th-Century Convents and Monasteries*, June 2014, English Heritage website: <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/41743/1/19-20-century-convents-monasteries-ih-a.pdf>, accessed December 26, 2018.

¹⁸ Kennebec County Registry of Deeds. Plan Book 1989, page 85, recorded April 5, 1989.

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there. The allée of trees lining the drive from the convent to the cemetery provides a strong sense of connection between these contributing elements of the district.

A distinctive characteristic of the site after construction of the new buildings in the 1950's and 60's when compared to the original buildings, is a reorientation of the primary axis of the complex. Originally, a primary axis extended south from Western Avenue, through the convent and school building to the barns and outbuildings. When the cemetery was added (ca. 1930), a secondary axis appeared, intersecting the first behind the convent/academy building. With the addition of the new academy building in the 1950's and then the convent in the 1960's, along with the removal of the original building and barns, the secondary axis to the cemetery was extended through the two new buildings, with a literal path on the line between the two. The initial convent design included a connecting wing between these buildings that would have further strengthened this axis. With the barns gone, the original drive terminated at the new convent, turning the original primary axis into a secondary axis connecting the convent to Western Avenue. The new primary axis extends to the intersection of Western Avenue and Chase Avenue. Chase Avenue was constructed after World War II on a former trolley line right-of-way (originally purchased from the Ursuline Sisters). It served nearby post-war suburban housing developed in part by the Ursuline Sisters. The rotation of the primary axis of the campus toward the intersection of the existing and new avenues during the post-war period appears to relate the changing character of the surrounding area from rural to suburban residential to the changes taking place on the Mt. Merici campus.

The statue of Jesus is located on a small man-made grass knoll near the historic entrance to the property from Western Avenue. It was located directly in front of the original convent and academy building, on the primary axis of the buildings on the site, facing the street as if to welcome people to the site. It remained in place when the new academy and convent were built and the original building removed. The statue of the Sister and child, standing next to the driveway east of the 1954 academy building also appears to have been intended to convey a message of welcome and is placed on the new primary axis created by the introduction of the modernist buildings and removal of the original buildings on the site.

The district is coherent as a modern development with modern buildings in a campus setting that incorporates some of the earlier site features. The district achieved its existing architectural character during the period of significance and retains it to a large degree. The surrounding post-World War II real estate development by the Sisters as well as the modern Seton Hospital, while not part of a district, reinforce the modern feel of the district. The district as it stands echoes the surrounding suburban post WW II development in its Modernist Style buildings and reconfiguration to an automobile focused campus. At the same time the retained statuary, cemetery and paths reflects the historic development and use of the property.

Criteria Consideration A

While the buildings in the district were constructed for a Catholic organization, they are eligible for National Register listing for their educational association with the local community and for their architectural significance rather than for any religious associations. Mt. Merici Historic District is significant in the area of education for the important role it played in educating

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students and as the principal residence for the Ursuline Sisters in Maine. The buildings in the district are significant as noteworthy examples of the Modernist style of architecture. Mt. Merici Academy and Convent remain largely intact and embody distinctive characteristics of their style.

Contributing Resources:

Mt. Merici Academy, 1954, Bunker and Savage Architects.
Mt. Merici Convent, 1967, Whelan and Westman Architects
Ursuline Sisters Cemetery, ca. 1930
Jesus statue, ca. 1912
Sister and Child statue, ca. 1912

Non-Contributing Resources:

Ursuline Care Center Retirement Home, 2005.
Garage, ca. 2005

Developmental history/additional historic context information (If appropriate.)

Ursuline Sisters Overview and Establishment in Maine

Six Sisters came from Trois Rivieres, Quebec to Waterville in 1888 at the request of Reverend Narcisse Charland, pastor of the St. Francis de Sales church, to educate the children of the French-Canadian mill workers who were moving to the city in increasing numbers after the construction of the Lockwood Mills.¹⁹ The Ursuline order had been founded by Angela Merici in Brescia, Italy in 1535. The Ursulines were the first order of nuns to come to North America, arriving in 1639 and settling in French Canada as the Ursuline Sisters of Three Rivers (Trois Rivieres). The Ursulines in Maine requested independence from the Three Rivers in 1891, in order to be allowed to take in English-speaking postulants. The first school was built in 1888 and a convent of the order was built in 1891, on a lot adjoining the St. Francis de Salle church both in downtown Waterville.²⁰ Seeking to establish a larger convent and boarding school for girls, the Sisters purchased a 100-acre property in 1911, which was expanded with additional acreage acquired in 1942 according to deeds registered with Kennebec County.

The first Catholics to reside in Waterville arrived from Canada in the late 1820's and by 1835 there were approximately 30 Catholic families living there. In 1851, the French Catholic community built a modest chapel on Grove Street. The construction of large textile mills in the 1860's and 1870's resulted in a substantial wave of new French immigrants from Canada and ultimately to the construction of the St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church on Elm Street, dedicated on June 14, 1874.²¹ Rev. Narcisse Charland became priest to the parish in 1880 and asked the Ursuline Sisters to come from Canada to establish a school, opened in 1888.²²

¹⁹ Begni, Ernesto. *The Catholic Church in the United States of America: Volume II, The Religious Communities of Women*, The Catholic Editing Company, New York, 1914, 463

²⁰ Whittemore, Rev. Edwin Carey. *The Centennial History of Waterville, Kennebec County, Maine*, 1902, 250-251.

²¹ Whittemore, 248-250.

²² Whittemore, 250.

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An account of the Sisters coming from Quebec to establish the parochial school in Waterville, published in 1914, says:

The Rev. Narcisse Charland, pastor of St. Francis de Sales Church at Waterville, had been endeavoring to find religious women to teach a parochial school in his parish, and a friend to whom he had confided his difficulties communicated with the Ursulines of Three Rivers. Such work as the teaching of children of both sexes in parochial schools had been considered foreign to the vocation of the order. But the Superior laid this request before the Chapter to see whether any members of the community desired to supply the demand. Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, burning with apostolic zeal, and full of courage, was inspired to face the situation, accompanied by two other Sisters and four of her graduates to help her as lay teachers. Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart was chosen Superior of the new mission, and it was arranged that they should set out for Waterville on the 8th of March 1888. They arrived at Waterville on the 9th of March and began their teaching on the following Monday morning, with 350 pupils. Things prospered under the untiring zeal of these excellent Sisters, but it soon became evident that the teaching staff was insufficient, and others would have to be added. Four Sisters came to their aid towards the end of the same year.²³

The same account continues, stating that the student population rapidly increased and "boarders began to come in, so that it appeared expedient to erect an academy and open a novitiate."²⁴ In 1891, a combined convent and boarding school was constructed on the Elm Street campus.²⁵ Returning to the account quoted above, "In 1902 it was resolved to raise the standard of studies above that of the commercial course, and at the same time to add to the buildings of the academy. Teachers were sent abroad to study and examine the latest and best authors and the improvements in the teaching of art and music. ... Since then everything has prospered wonderfully in the classrooms of the Waterville Academy." In 1911, 670 pupils were in attendance at the parochial schools, 120 at the academy, while the community itself, inclusive of novices, numbered 45 religious.²⁶

The new Mt. Merici Academy was established as a boarding school for Catholic girls by Mother Marie du Sacre Coeur in 1911 and opened in 1912. Located on a 100-acre site on the outskirts of Waterville, the academy was named in honor of the Foundress of the Ursuline Sisters, Saint Angela Merici. The school, dormitory, and convent built in 1912 were attached two and three-story wood-framed Colonial Revival style buildings and became the Motherhouse of the Ursuline community in New England. A fieldstone grotto shrine and cemetery for the Sisters were established on the property by 1930. The Ursulines ran seventeen different parochial schools in New England between 1888 and the present, educating thousands of students. This included the parochial day school at St. Francis de Salle church in downtown Waterville, which the Sisters continued to operate after the establishment of Mt. Merici Academy.

²³ Begni, 463

²⁴ Begni, 463

²⁵ Wittemore, 250

²⁶ Begni, 464

Mt. Merici Historic District

Kennebec County, ME

Name of Property

County and State

Few changes were made to the property between 1967 and 2005, when the Ursuline Sisters Care Center for Ill and Aging Sisters was built northwest of the former Mt. Merici motherhouse. With construction of this facility, the convent was vacated and has remained vacant since. A small wooden garage behind the convent was also added at some point. The Ursuline Sisters in Maine now fall under the jurisdiction of the Northeast Province, based out of Dedham, Massachusetts. Mt. Merici Academy is unique in the Diocese of Portland in that it is governed by a lay Board of Directors under the guidance of the Ursuline Sisters of the Central Province. The school is fully administered and staffed by a lay principal and faculty. The former motherhouse convent is vacant and under contract for redevelopment as senior housing. The gymnasium in the academy building now does double duty as a cafeteria, with a kitchen beside it.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Begni, Ernesto. *The Catholic Church in the United States of America: Volume II, The Religious Communities of Women*, The Catholic Editing Company, New York, 1914

Boker, R.R., LLC. *American Architects Directory for 1956*, New York, 1956.

Boyle, Gerry. "Final Period," *Colby Magazine*, Vol. 89, Issue 2, Waterville, ME, Spring 2000.
Brittain-Catlin, Timothy. *Introductions to Heritage Assets: 19th- and 20th-Century Convents and Monasteries*, June 2014, English Heritage website: <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/41743/1/19-20-century-convents-monasteries-ih.pdf>

Cole Ives, Amy. St. Hyacinth School and Convent National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME, 2013.

Corbett, Matthew. Ella R. Hodgkins School National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME, 2015.

Fanning, William. "Plenary Councils of Baltimore." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2. New York, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907.

Fecteau, Albert C. "The French Canadian Community of Waterville, Maine," unpublished thesis paper, University of Maine, Orono, 1952.

"The Idea of a Parochial School." *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, Volume XVI, No. 63. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Hardy & Mahony, 1891

Kennebec County Registry of Deeds. Books 791, 825, 1219, and 1282.

Kennebec County Registry of Deeds. Plan Book 1989.

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
County and State

Whittemore, Rev. Edwin Carey. *The Centennial History of Waterville, Kennebec County, Maine*, 1902

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: University of Dayton Library, Dayton, OH, repository of the Ursuline Sisters of Maine papers.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 14

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Mt. Merici Historic District
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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 19 | Easting: 447526 | Northing: 4933638 |
| 2. Zone:19 | Easting: 447865 | Northing: 4933727 |
| 3. Zone:19 | Easting: 448117 | Northing: 4933506 |
| 4. Zone:19 | Easting: 448023 | Northing: 4933384 |
| 5. Zone:19 | Easting: 447814 | Northing: 4933392 |

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

The boundary includes all of tax map lot 046-052-000 and the southern three-quarters of tax map lot 046-052-001, as shown on the attached map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes that portion of the historic Mt. Merici property owned by the Ursuline Sisters that includes the academy, convent, and cemetery with immediately adjoining open and wooded areas, but omits other portions of the property historically owned by the Sisters.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Scott Hanson, Architectural Historian
organization: Sutherland Conservation & Consulting
street & number: 295 Water Street, Suite 306
city or town: Augusta state: Maine zip code: 04330
e-mail: scotthanson@sutherlandcc.net
telephone: 207 620-6291
date: December 24, 2018

Form Edited By:

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
County and State

name/title: Michael Goebel-Bain / Architectural Historian
organization: Maine Historic Preservation Commission
street & number: 55 Capitol Street, 65 State House Station
city or town: Augusta state: Maine zip code: 04333
e-mail: michael.w.goebel-bain@maine.gov
telephone: 207 287-5435

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Mt. Merici Historic District

City or Vicinity: Waterville

County: Kennebec State: Maine

Photographer: Scott Hanson

Date Photographed: October 17, 2018

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

All digital images are labeled as follows:

ME_Kennebec County_Mt. Merici Historic District_#.tif

- 0001 View northwest from Western Avenue showing façade of Mt. Merici Academy.
- 0002 View northeast showing the Mt. Merici Convent at left and Academy at right.
- 0003 View east showing west elevation of the Mt. Merici Academy.
0004. View south showing the west elevation of Mt. Merici Academy.
0005. View southeast showing the north elevation and primary entrance of Mt. Merici Academy.
0006. View northwest inside main entrance of Mt. Merici Academy.
0007. View southwest in south wing corridor of Mt. Merici Academy.
0008. View north in typical classroom in Mt. Merici Academy.
0009. View northwest in gymnasium of Mt. Merici Academy.
0010. View southeast in gymnasium of Mt. Merici Academy.
0011. View southwest of Mt. Merici Academy with statue of Jesus at right.
0012. View southwest of St. Angela way from Western Avenue showing Mt. Merici Convent in distance and sign at right. Care Center for Ill and Aged Sisters is partially visible at right.
0013. View north showing the south and east elevations of the Mt. Merici Convent.
0014. View south in the former student's cafeteria in the Mt. Merici Convent.
00015. View northeast in the former chapel of the Mt. Merici Convent.
0016. View northwest in the Sisters' living room on the second floor of the Mt. Merici Convent.

Mt. Merici Historic District
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0017. View north in the first-floor north wing corridor of the Mt. Merici Convent.
0018. View within typical Sisters' sleeping cell in Mt. Merici Convent.
0019. View south in the third-floor north wing stairwell Academy.
0020. View south at the south stairwell in Mt. Merici Academy.
0021. View south in the former library of the Mt. Merici Academy.
0022. View southeast in the former Sisters' dining room in the Mt. Merici Academy.
0023. View northwest in the Mt. Merici Academy kitchen that served both the Sisters' dining room and the students' cafeteria.
0024. View south in the first-floor office of the Mt. Merici Convent.
0025. View southwest showing the Jesus statue facing Western Avenue with Convent in background.
0026. View southeast showing the Sister and Child statue east of the Mt. Merici Academy.
0027. View west along the road and allee of trees from Mt. Merici Convent to the Ursuline Sister Cemetery.
0028. View north of the Ursuline Sisters Cemetery.
0029. View northeast of the Care Center for Ill and Aged Sisters.

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 100 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.

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
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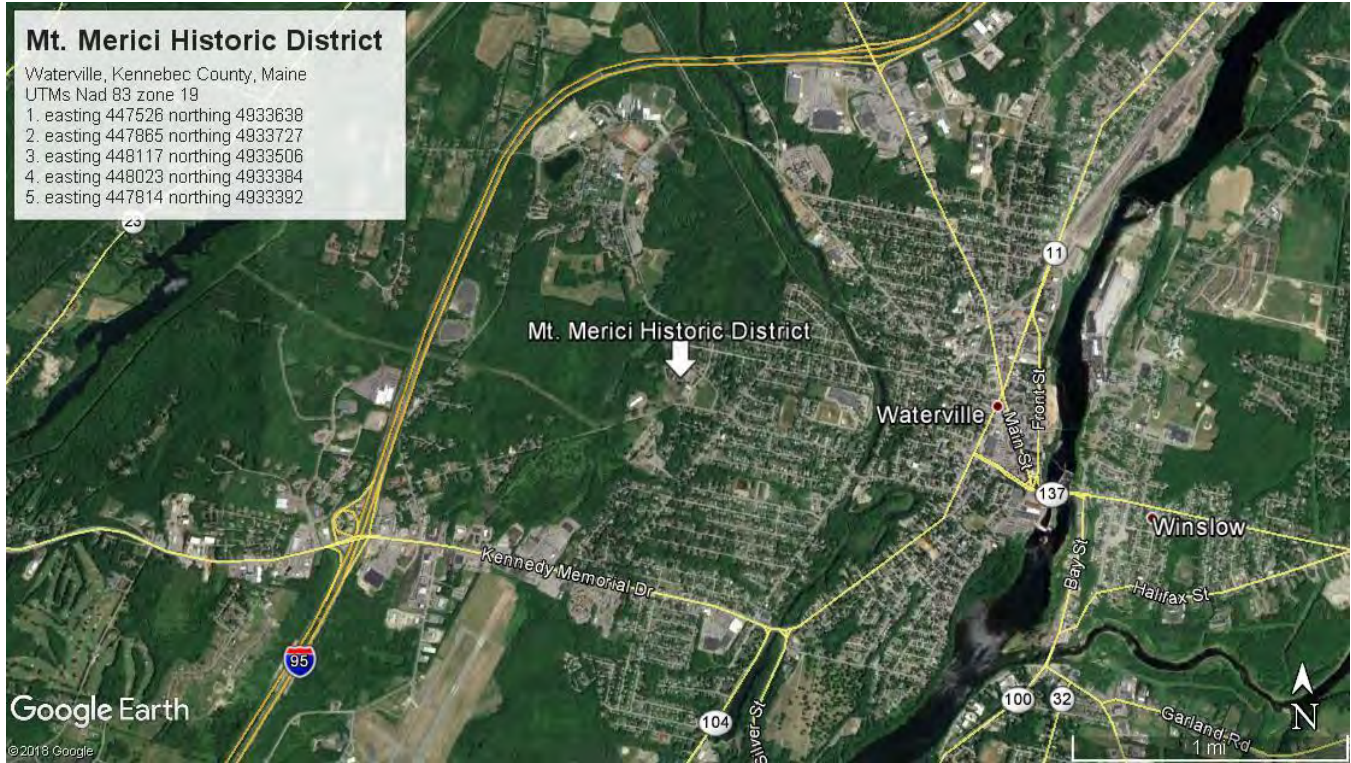


Figure 1

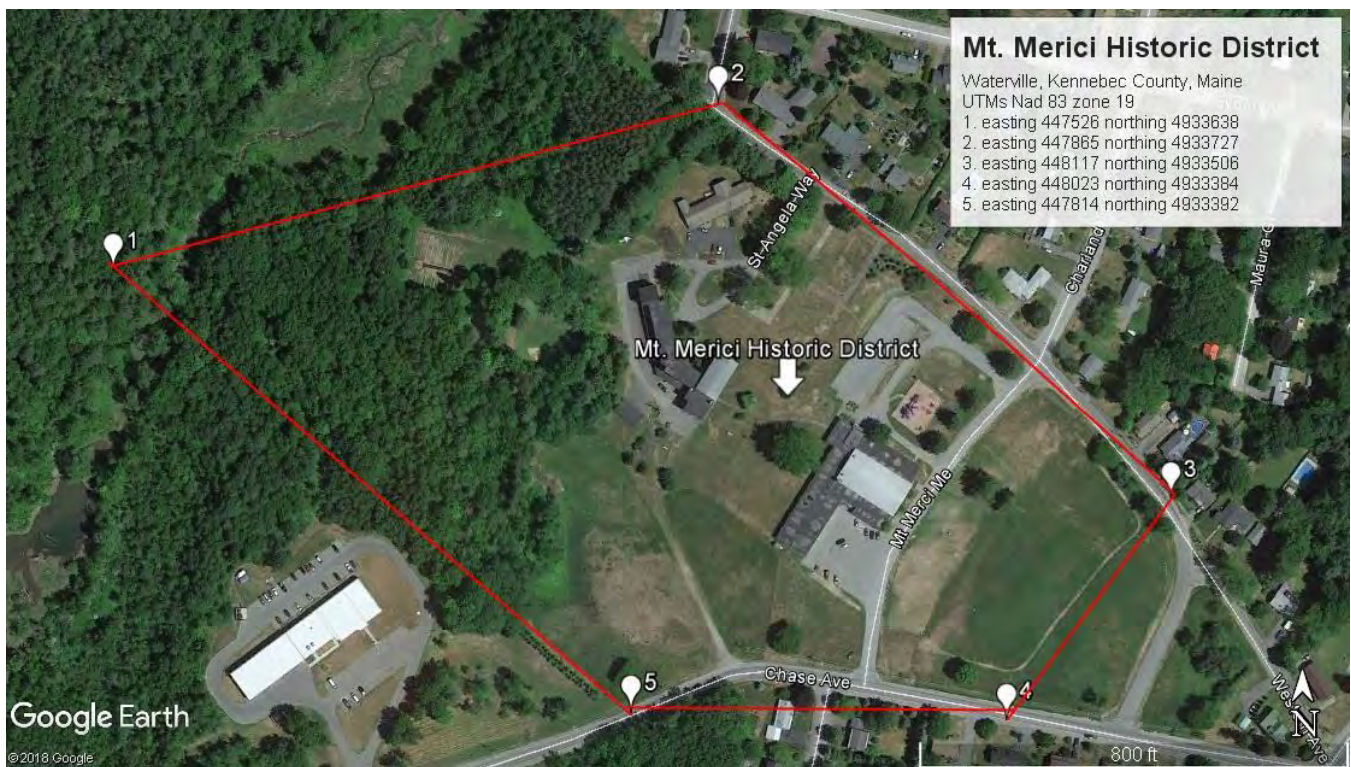


Figure 2

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
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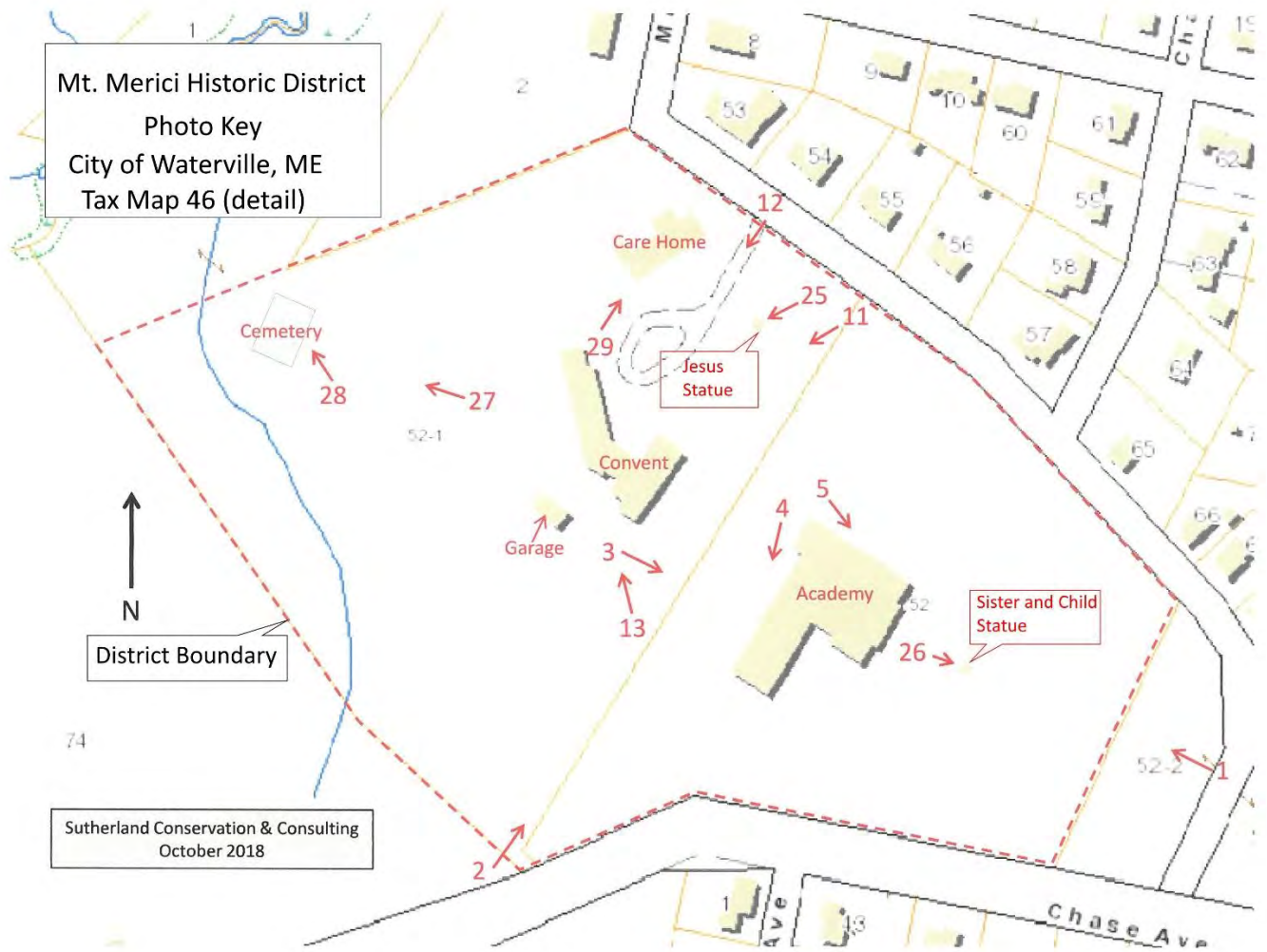


Figure 3

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
County and State

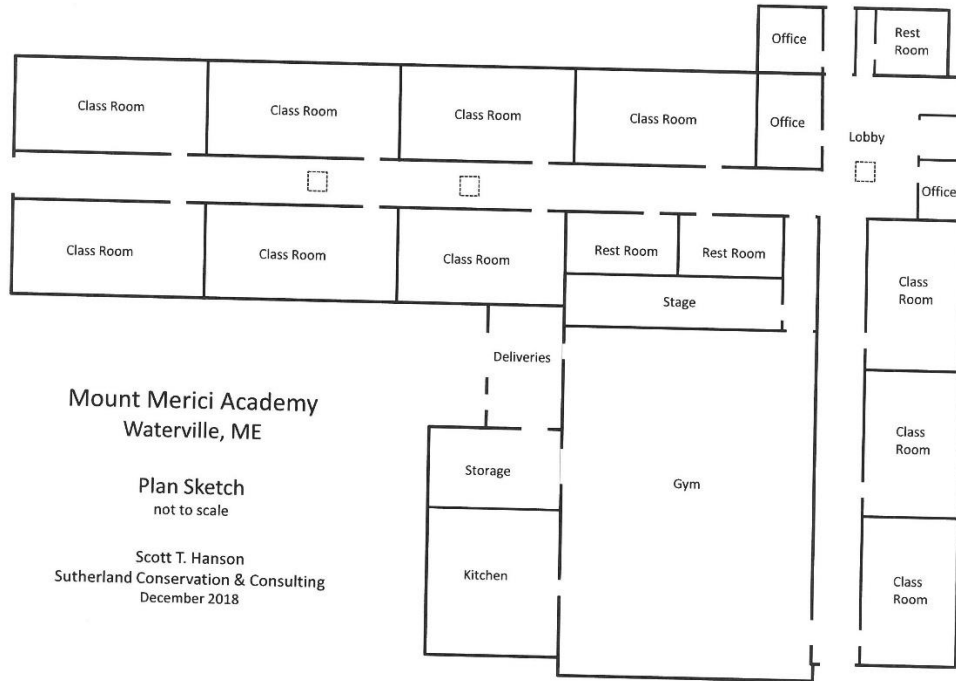


Figure 4



Figure 5

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property _____

Kennebec County, ME
County and State _____

Mount Merici Convent Waterville, ME

Original 1967 Plan by Whalen & Westman, Architects

Showing new convent with wing
connecting to Academy

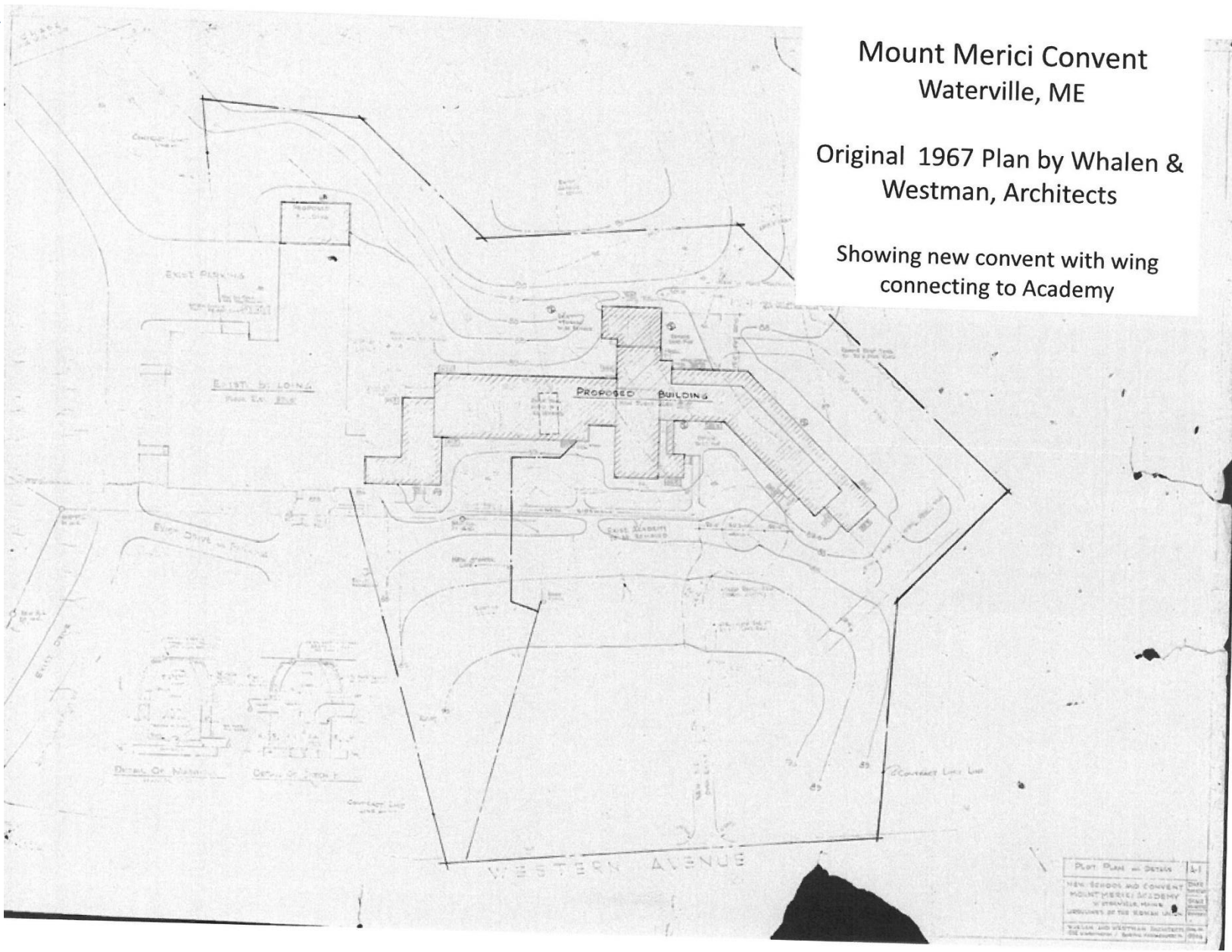


Figure 6

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
County and State

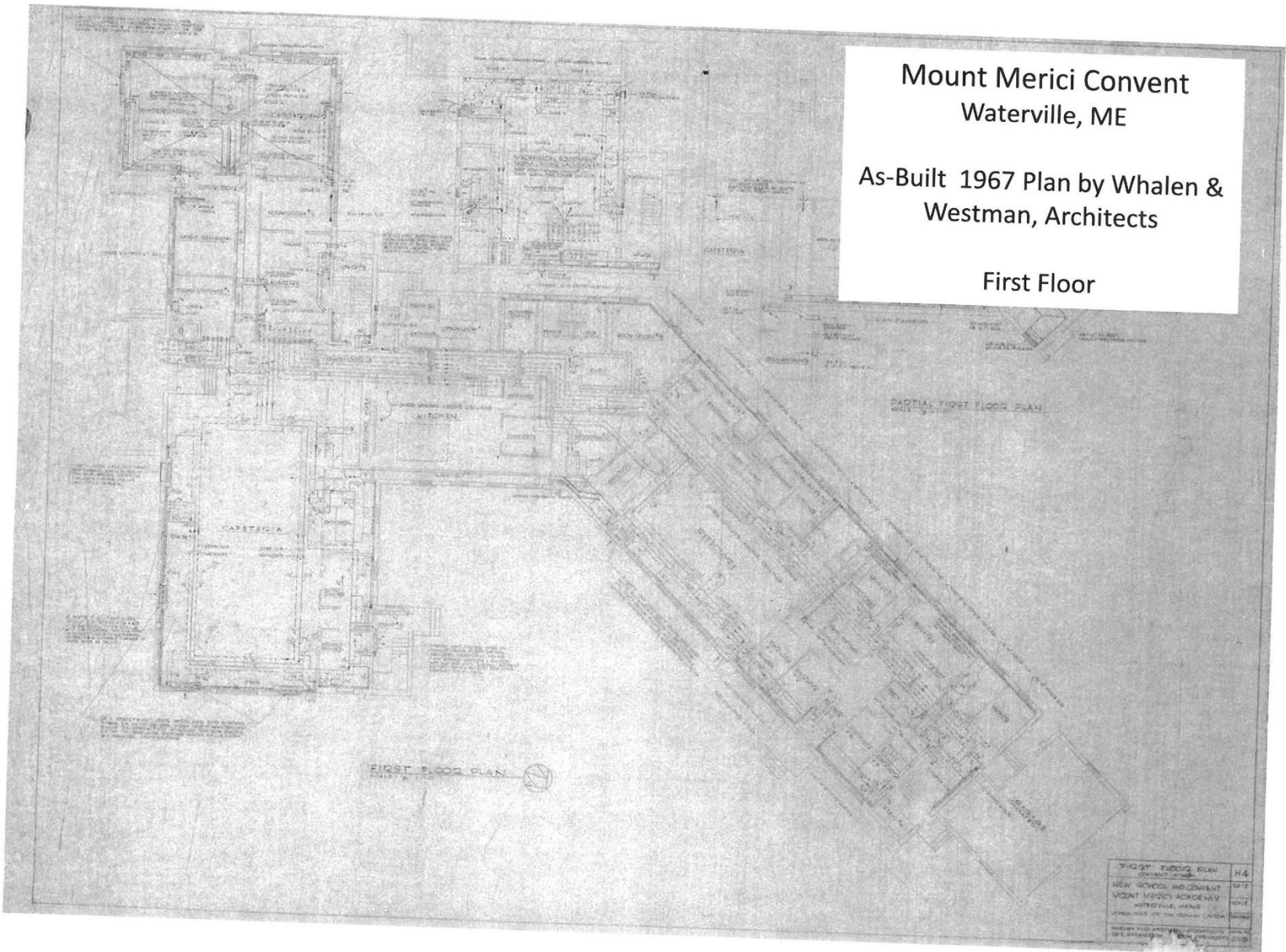


Figure 7

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
County and State

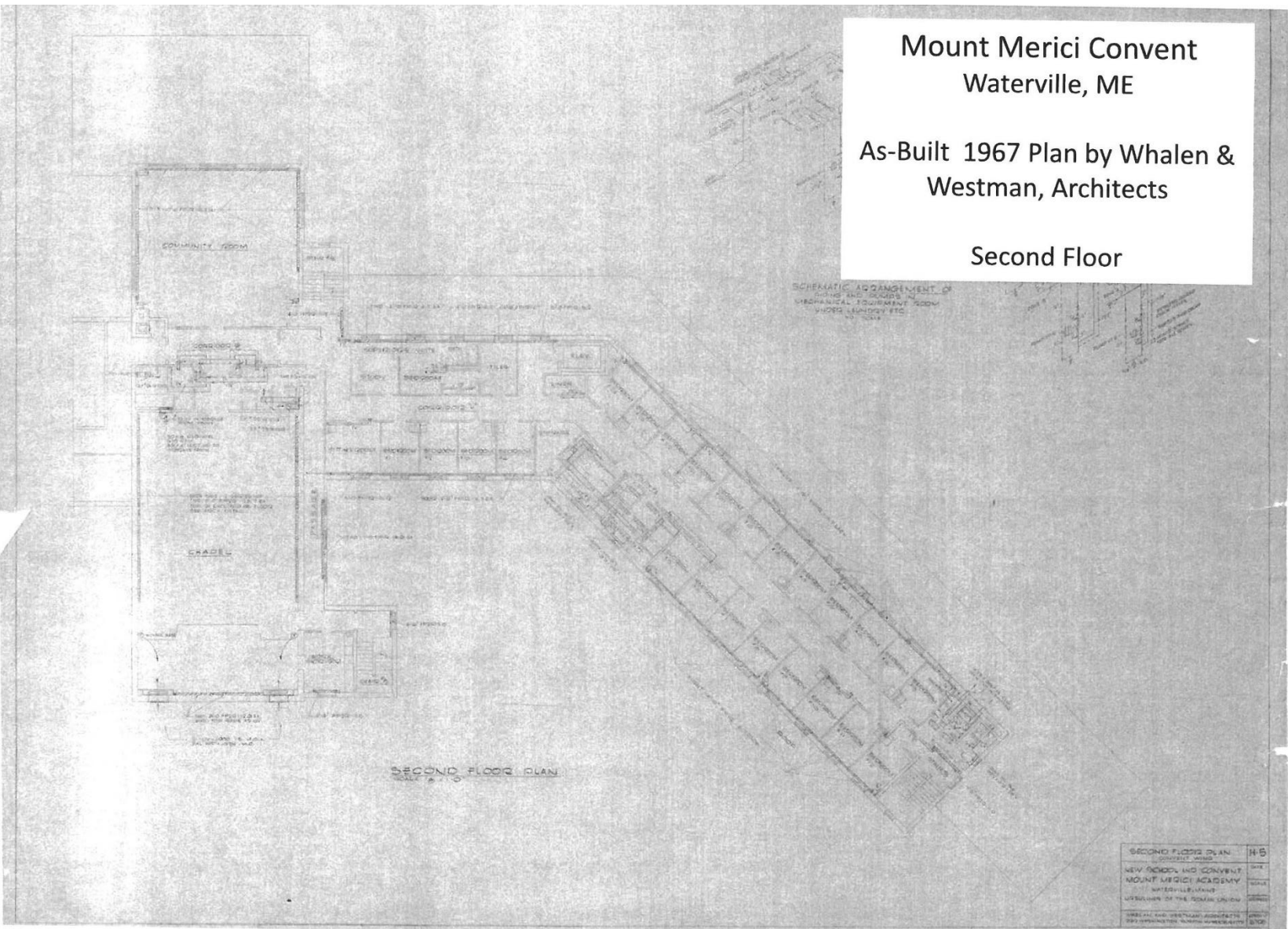


Figure 8

Mt. Merici Historic District
Name of Property

Kennebec County, ME
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Mount Merici Convent
Waterville, ME
As-Built 1967 Plan by Whalen &
Westman, Architects
Third Floor

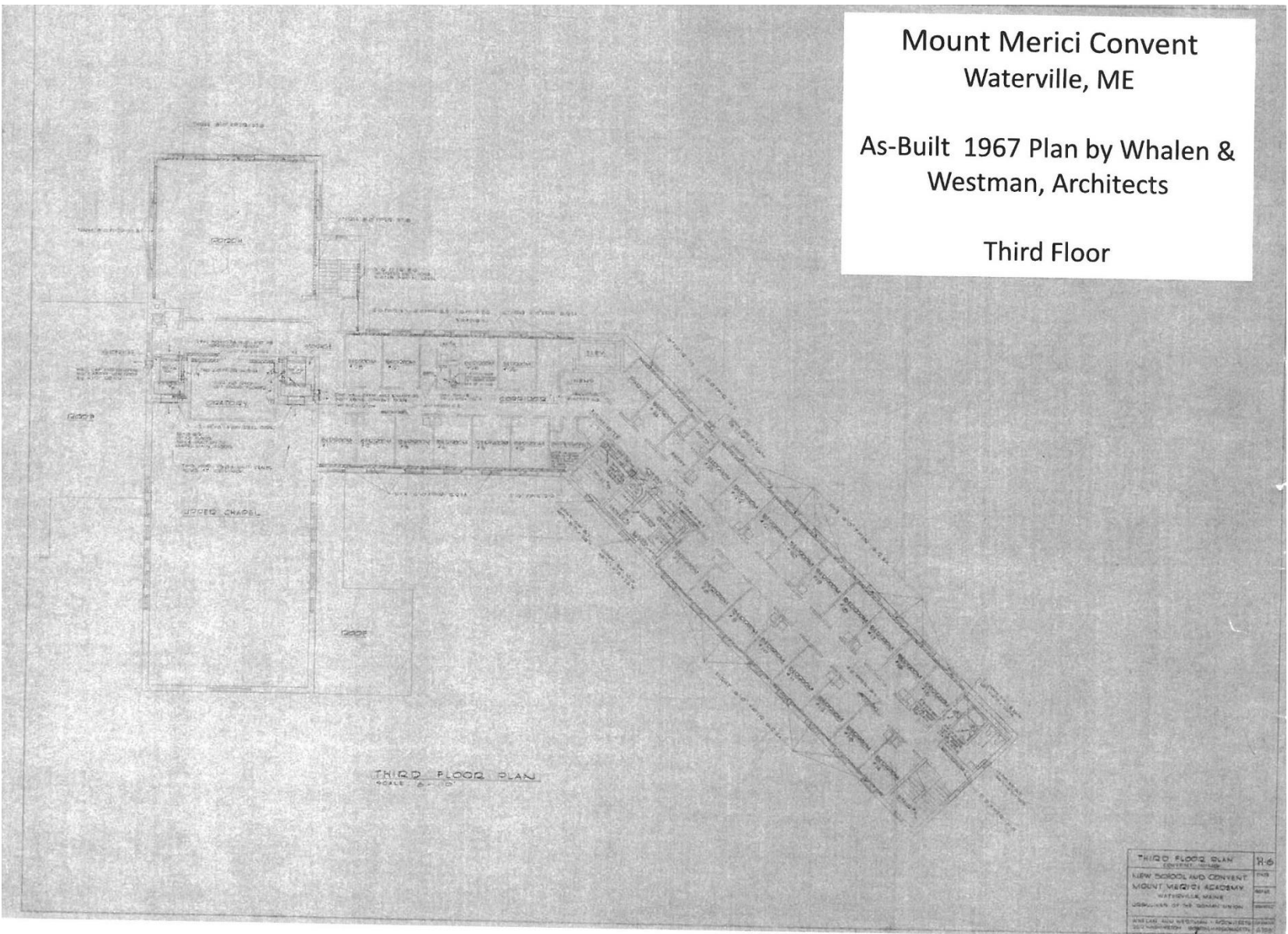


Figure 9











MOUNT MERICI
ACADEMY



MOUNT MERICI ACADEMY
In the Upright Tradition Since 1911
Our Mission
Mount Merici Catholic School is dedicated to nurturing the whole child: mind, body and spirit, providing love and guidance so that each student can achieve their personal best. In partnership with parents, our mission is to instill Christ-centered values of respect, responsibility and self-discipline, teaching students to live their lives as a reflection of service to our community and the world.

J. ALFRED BO

ANNUAL APP



A large blue bulletin board on the right wall features a calendar titled "ANNUAL APP" with a grid of dates and names. Above the calendar is a small photograph of a group of people.



SERVIAM
proud tradition
promising fu

COBY



EXIT



SAFE HAVEN

5





Honesty
Being truthful to others
Being truthful to yourself
Using what's right regardless
of what's around
Being someone others can trust

Responsibility
1. Being in control of your own behavior
2. Being truthful with important jobs
3. Making your work finished on time
4. Doing your part when working together

Effort
1. Learning your lesson through commitment
and hard work
2. Doing your best in everything you
do
3. Trying without giving up or giving in
4. Making the most of every opportunity

Caring
1. Treating others with kindness and respect
2. Being helpful and not disrespectful
at all times
3. Being a good listener and understanding
4. Being the person who can count on

Respect
1. Treating others the way you want
to be treated
2. Showing respect and understanding
3. Being respectful to those around you
4. Keeping others from what they don't
want

CHRIST

Scholastic L299
Wednesday, October 11, 2000
Homework
Math 10:00-11:00 am
Science 11:00-12:00 pm
Vocab
Grammar
Spelling
Reading 12:00-1:00 pm

You Can
Not Do It
If You Don't
Try









VIRGINIA STATE
MOUNTAIN VIEW















3rd
Floor





2nd
Floor





















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 2/22/2019 Date of Pending List: 3/7/2019 Date of 16th Day: 3/22/2019 Date of 45th Day: 4/8/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 3/28/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Roger Reed  Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2278 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

KIRK F. MOHNEY
DIRECTOR

19 February 2019

Alexis Abernathy, Control Unit
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Control Unit:

Enclosed please find three National Register nominations for properties in the State of Maine.

Singhi Double House, Knox County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Singhi Double House to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

Former Town Office and Jail, Aroostook County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Former Town Office and Jail to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

Mt. Merici Historic District, Kennebec County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Mt. Merici Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

If you have any questions relating to these nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me at (207) 287-5435.

Sincerely,

Michael Goebel-Bain
Architectural Historian

Enc.