

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name PALM BEACH TOWN HALL

other names/site number N/A; Florida Master Site File #8PB06476

2. Location

street & number 360 South County Road N/A  not for publication

city or town Palm Beach N/A  vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Palm Beach code 099 zip code 33480

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara C. Mattick / Deputy SHPO for Survey & Registration  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date 12/21/04

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of the Keeper Daniel J. Vira Date of Action 1/28/05

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)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/Town Hall

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Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/Town Hall

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/

Mediterranean Revival

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Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco

walls Stucco

roof Clay Tile; Tar & Gravel

other Cast Concrete

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Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey, recorded by Historic American Engineering Record.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1925-1967

Significant Dates

1925

1967

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arch: Harvey & Clarke; Volk, John L.

Blder: Newlon & Stephens; Walton, E.B.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State Agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of Repository

#

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1   7	5   9   5   8   2   0	2   9   5   3   6   8   0	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2				4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jane S. Day, Historic Consultanta/Carl Shiver, Historic Preservationist

organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date December 2004

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager, Town of Palm Beach

street & number 360 South County Road telephone (561) 838-6414

city or town Palm Beach state Florida zip code 33480

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 amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

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**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Palm Beach Town Hall is a three-story Mediterranean Revival style building that was constructed in two stages: 1925 and 1967. The 1925 portions of the building comprise the north and south ends and are constructed of stuccoed brick and hollow clay tile. The central section, added in 1967 to replace a walled courtyard that had been used as a city vehicle maintenance area, is constructed of stuccoed concrete block. The building has a multi-level roof that combines hipped sections surfaced with clay "Spanish" tile surrounding areas of flat roof covered with tar and gravel. The 1925 portions of the building were designed by the architectural firm of Harvey and Clarke, while the 1967 section was designed by architect John L. Volk. The style of the Palm Beach Town Hall draws upon many elements of the Italian and Spanish Renaissance, using towers, arched windows, balconies, and a wealth of relief and wrought iron decoration to conjure up a vision of the palaces of sixteenth century Italy and Spain. Today, Town Hall is in excellent condition and although it has been altered, mainly on the interior, over the years to meet the expanding needs of the municipality, the building largely maintains its architectural integrity. The building is part of the local Town Hall Square Historic District that was designated by the Landmarks Commission in 1990, and all renovations since that time have undergone architectural review.

**SETTING**

Palm Beach is a barrier island sixteen miles long located 65 miles north of Miami. To the east is the Atlantic Ocean and to the west is the Intracoastal Waterway, which separates Palm Beach from the cities of West Palm Beach and Lake Worth. The year-round population is 10,000 and the seasonal population is about 30,000. Palm Beach is the land area closest to the Gulf Stream which produces lush gardens, palm lined beaches, and an outstanding marine environment. Palm Beach's natural beauty and variety of cultural and social activities gives the community aura and mystique, attractive to both permanent residents and visitors. The Town of Palm Beach provides a full range of municipal services, including Police and Fire-Rescue protection, sanitation, recreation, street and road maintenance, planning, zoning and building and general administrative services. The municipal government employs approximately 394 full and part time employees. The community is noted for its Mediterranean Revival style architecture, acclaimed shopping, restaurants and hotels, a cosmopolitan culture.

The Palm Beach Town Hall is situated in downtown Palm Beach, Florida, occupying a parcel of land in the middle of County Road 360. One way traffic lanes and limited parking spaces heading north and south parallel the building on both the east and west facades. A pedestrian sidewalk surrounds the building and separates it from the street. The only landscaping on the site is the small area of lawn and ornamental plantings located near the south entrance to the building. To the south of the building the traffic lanes converge and head toward Worth Avenue, one of the town's main shopping streets.

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PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

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**PRESENT AND ORIGINAL APPEARANCE**

When Town Hall was constructed in 1925 (Photo 1), it was designed as two individual buildings, both of approximately the same size and scale, and connected by a walled courtyard. The fire station was placed in the three-story structure, situated at the north end of the parcel. The municipal offices, police station, jail, and a council chamber that seated 350 persons were housed in the two-story southern building. Both buildings feature decorative towers with arched opening. The courtyard between the two buildings was used as a garage and repair shop for municipal vehicles. The area had a one-story wall on both the east and west sides that shielded the area from public view. The north and south boundaries of the courtyard were the walls of the adjacent buildings. The south building's north wall was featureless. The south facade of the north building had windows that opened from the fire station into the courtyard. The courtyard was entered through tall arched openings fitted with wooden doors on the east and west sides. In 1967, the courtyard walls were demolished and the site was used to construct the addition designed by Palm Beach architect John L. Volk (Photo 2).

The south section of the 1925 building (Photo 3) remains largely unchanged on the exterior. The south facade is two stories high and is surmounted by a tower (Photo 4-5) at the southeast corner. The tower has a flat roof and is pierced by arched openings with square columns and a turned balustrade. Like much of the 1925 building, however, the tower is asymmetrical in form. There are three arches on the south and east, but only two on the north and west. The entire design is crowned by a decorative cornice and cast stone finials. The link between the tower and the wall surface of the lower two stories is emphasized by a classical cornice supported by curved modillions that support the eaves of the barrel tile covered hip roof immediately above.

The south entrance to the building (Photo 3) is in the center of the elevation and has a monumental metal and glass arched door that leads into a small lobby of what is now the building department (originally the police department). The words "Town Hall" are incised above the arch. The fenestration of the south elevation is asymmetrical and comprises casement windows of different sizes. Some are paired and have arched fanlights above. Those on the second story are arranged in ascending order by size from west to east. The large window under the square tower has a fanlight, a cast stone arch, and an ornamented cantilevered balcony with carved brackets for support. This window is repeated on the east facade and on the second story, under the tower. These large windows illuminate the stairwell leading to the lobby of the town council chamber on the second floor. To the west of the entrance is a one-story, faceted extension that projects toward the street. This area has a polygonal roof covered with barrel tile. The faceted wall bays alternate between paired and single trefoil arched windows. The narrow windows have wrought iron grilles. Standing near the faceted southern extension is a double-faced, cast iron clock that was installed in 1990.

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PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

Exterior, East Elevation of South Building

The east elevation of the south section of Town Hall (Photos 4-7) features engaged piers, or buttresses at the corners of the tower that rise upward from the raised wall foundation and the street. The roof is hipped and covered with barrel tile. The fenestration is again asymmetrical. Casement windows with squared tops are paired together on the first story. Arched window pairs are found at the second story. The arched pairs are separated by column details. The two stories are divided by a belt course. Placed off center and surrounded by cast stone quoins and decorative work, the original door to this section of the building (Photo 7) no longer has public access but has been left intact. The former entranceway features a segmental arch whose opening has been filled with wrought iron gates. At the rear of a shallow alcove are double wood and glass doors surmounted by a fanlight. In addition to the quoins, the exterior of the doorway features a cast stone escutcheon over the center of the arch above which one finds false balcony supported by wall pilasters. The pilasters and the frieze of the balcony feature decorative panels acanthus leaves and other decorative motifs executed in low relief. The doorway originally provided access to the lobby of the town clerk's office, now used as a conference room.

Exterior, West Elevation of South Building

The western elevation of the south building (Photo 7) also largely retains its 1925 appearance. On the first story, the trefoil windows of the south faceted extension are repeated, once in a pair, and once in a combination of three. Moving north, there are three groups of three small windows, each raised to the top of the first story and fitted with wrought iron bars. These windows were originally part of the town jail. Of the two doors on the western facade, one is original; the other has replaced a small window. The original doorway (Photo 8) is located off center toward the south. It features a single leaf wooden door with a small multi-foil window covered with decorative wrought iron bars. The doorway is flanked by quoins and a cast stone frontispiece which has a two-pane transom in its center. The frontispiece has the form of a baroque entablature with elaborate pilaster flanking two cornices. Atop each pilaster is an urn finial, and in the center above the door is a shield that rests on flanking acanthus scrolls. Windows on the first and second stories are divided by a belt course. Five pairs of casement windows with fanlights above are symmetrically placed, reflecting their position within the council chamber. Each pair of these windows has a cast stone sill with a classical column between them.

Exterior, North Elevation of North Building

The north elevation of the north Town Hall building has four arched vehicle bays for fire trucks (Photo 9). The windows on the north facade of the fire station are 6/6-light double hung sashes positioned over the center of the garage door bays. The bays are separated by tapered classical pilasters

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DESCRIPTION

whose capitals form a continuation of the belt course that separates the upper and lower stories. The sash windows of the second story feature thick cast stone frames with sills that are supported at the corners by molded modillions. The plain wall surface rises to a narrow cornice that provides transition to the clay tile surfaced hip roof above.

Exterior, East Elevation of North Building

Two large arched casement windows are found on the first story of the two-story section of the east elevation of the fire station (Photo 10). These windows each have four panels and are separated by finial topped pilasters similar to the ones found on the north elevation. On the second story one finds another set of four 6/6-light double hung sash windows also set in cast stone frames. Slightly farther south in the three-story section of the fire station wing are two smaller arched casement windows, each having only two panels. Above these windows, on the second story is a close grouping of three casement windows that share a continuous sill and header. Above, in the third story of the building, is a loggia that has four open segmental arches on its east side and a single arch on its north side. The loggia has classical columns that support a hipped roof surfaced with clay tile. The balustrade wall of the loggia has been fitted with small clay drain pipes called canales in Spanish. The south end of the loggia abuts the north tower and has a doorway that opens onto the stair lobby of the offices found in that section of the building.

The tower section of the north building abuts the loggia (Photos 10-11). The door at the base of the tower provides access to both the stairs and the first floor of the fire station. The entrance has a wooden door surrounded by cast stone quoins and topped with baroque ornamentation cast in low relief. The surround rises upward with pointed finials toward a small casement window that illuminates the stairwell on the second floor. Above that, on the third floor, are three more narrow casement windows that provide illumination for the stairs and the stair lobby. This entire entrance bay is topped with an open tower with a pyramidal roof.

Exterior, West Elevation of North Building

The west elevation of the north building (Photo 12) repeats most of the features of the east elevation, except where the two smaller arched windows are found on the first story of the east side, there is only one such window. Immediately south of this window is a doorway with an arched transom that provides access to the first floor of the fire station. Above this entrance on the second story are a pair of 6/6-light double hung sash windows similar in appearance to the others found in the fire station section. On this elevation, the north part of the building rises only two stories and is topped by a hipped roof surfaced with clay tile.



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PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

Exterior of 1967 Addition

The greatest change in the architectural design of Town Hall occurred in 1967 when John L. Volk filled in the courtyard between the two 1925 buildings to expand the office space (Photos 10, 12). Volk chose a compatible Mediterranean Revival style design for his addition, but instead of using the asymmetrical pattern of the earlier buildings, he chose a classical formalism to unite the two spaces. The addition comprises two sections, the northern half of which is two stories in height and the southern half of which is three stories. Stucco, scored to resemble ashlar block is found on the first story of both sides of the addition, while the upper stories feature smooth stucco. On the east facade, Volk created a new main entrance for the building (Photos 4, 10). The cast stone door surround extends upward into the second story, where it surrounds a casement window and is topped by a Palm Beach seal above a classical pediment. The words "Palm Beach Town Hall" (Photo 13) are incised above the door, which is also flanked by two imposing wrought iron light fixtures that balance the wrought iron railing details on the second floor. The windows on the first story of both elevations are 4/4-light double hung sashes. There are also French doors with arched fanlights on the second story of both elevations. On the east elevation, each of the French door bays has been fitted with a wrought iron railing at the floor level. On the west the doors open onto a shallow wrought iron balcony that has been cantilevered out from the wall. The third story section of the building designed by Volk is today connected with the third floor of the north end of the building by an exterior walkway.

Interior Description of Town Hall

John Volk's addition to Town Hall made it a single structure, so the building was given a new main entrance (Photos 10, 13) on the east elevation of the Volk addition to facilitate public access to all sections of the building. The doorway opens onto a lobby containing an elevator that allows handicapped access to the floors above. The original office spaces on the first floor of the south section of Town Hall have suffered only minimal alteration but the function of some of the rooms has changed. The police station and jail were moved to another building so that the interior spaces of the south section of Town Hall, except for the town council chamber and a few other public spaces, are used solely for municipal offices. The south lobby (Photo 14), stairway, some restrooms, and an early safe remain largely unchanged. The former east entrance to the south building was left in place but no longer serves as an entranceway, and the interior space that was once called the north lobby still exists but is now a conference room (Photo 15) for the building department. The Town Council Chamber and lobby (Photos 16-17) are still found at their original second floor location, but the council chamber now has a very modern appearance. It has been outfitted with a dropped ceiling, fluorescent lighting fixtures, theater style public seating.

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PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
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The north building has a large open space designed around four bays for fire trucks (Photo 18). The space also includes storage areas and a small office for the chief. The second floor was designed to be simple and functional. The floor plan has a dormitory, a locker room, recreation room, kitchen, and dining area. The third story of the fire station originally contained a small two bedroom apartment for the fire chief. The apartment has been converted into municipal office spaces.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Town Hall suffered some inappropriate alterations and the usual wear and tear of regular use. Some windows were blocked up and air conditioners and electrical conduits were hung from other openings. Exterior walls were painted an "unrelenting" chalk white. In 1985, a handicap entrance with a concrete ramp and hand rail was added to the south entrance. As historic preservation gained a foothold in Palm Beach after the passage of a historic preservation ordinance in 1979, a fund raising drive was established by the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach to restore the building. This work was undertaken in 1990 by architect Jeffrey Smith of The Smith Architectural Group. Sensitive to both the 1925 Harvey and Clarke buildings and the 1967 John L. Volk addition, Smith's renovations received a Florida Trust Award for its accomplishment and in 1990 received the American Institute of Architects' "Award for Excellence." Since that time, repairs have been made as needed, but changes have been minimal. In 2001, a parapet wall was added to the north end of the building to hide air conditioning units and telecommunications equipment. Today, the building is still in use and in excellent condition. It is at the heart of Palm Beach's civic and public life and is the centerpiece of the locally designated Palm Beach Town Hall Historic District.

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Section number 8 Page 1 PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

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**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Palm Beach Town Hall is significant at the local level under Criteria A and C in the areas of Politics/Government and Architecture. The building also fulfills Criteria Consideration G for a building that has achieved significance within the last 50 years. It has been the seat of the municipal government of the Town of Palm Beach since 1925 and is an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture that was popularized in south Florida during the Boom years of the 1920s. The original Town Hall was designed by regionally prominent architects, Henry L. Harvey and L. Phillips Clarke, and was provided with designs for a 1967 addition by the prominent architect John Lathem Volk, who produced designs for many architecturally significant buildings in Florida and other locations. The building has been the center of Palm Beach's civic and political life for nearly 80 years. The Town Council, the ruling elected body of local government meets in the council chamber monthly, and the building houses most of the departments and agencies of the town government, including the staff administrative offices, the Town Manager's and the Town Clerk's offices, the building department, the finance department, and one of three fire stations in the municipality.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Although the first families moved to the barrier island situated between Lake Worth and the Atlantic Ocean in the area that is today's Palm Beach in 1876, it was not until 1911 that the Town of Palm Beach incorporated. As part of the newly formed Palm Beach County, which had been carved out of Dade County in July 1909, the small town already had a post office; hotels; a daily newspaper, The Palm Beach Daily News; the Bethesda-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, and the Royal Poinciana Chapel. Elisha Newton "Cap" Dimick, who had formerly served in the Florida House of Representatives and would later be elected to the Florida Senate, was elected as the first Mayor. The first Town Council included William Fremd, D. John W. Doe, Enoch Root, and J.B. Donnelly. John P. McKenna was chosen as Town Clerk.<sup>1</sup>

Even before incorporation, however, Palm Beach had already established itself as a winter resort for America's wealthy. Industrialist and Standard Oil partner, Henry M. Flagler extended the Florida East Coast Railroad to Palm Beach in 1894, and the same year opened both the 540 room Royal Poinciana Hotel and the Palm Beach Inn which was later renamed the Breakers. These hotels attracted visitors to the short winter social season that ended with Washington's Birthday. In 1901, Flagler added another important structure to the Town when he built "Whitehall," a Neoclassical style mansion

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<sup>1</sup>Susan J. Oldfather, Elisha Newton Dimick and His Influence on the Development of Palm Beach. (Boca Raton, Florida: Florida Atlantic University, Masters Thesis, 1989) p. 69.

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SIGNIFICANCE

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designed by John M. Carrere and Thomas Hastings, as a wedding gift for his wife Mary Lily Kenan.<sup>2</sup> Situated on a six acre lake front site, the house cost \$2,500,000 to build and \$1,500,000 to furnish. The press called it the "Taj Mahal of North America."<sup>3</sup>

The year 1911 marked the construction of the first vehicular bridge across Lake Worth to Palm Beach. Encouraged by the success of E.R. Bradley's Floral Park Subdivision north of the Flagler property, Mayor Dimick platted Royal Park and Royal Park Addition, a 150 acre plot further south on the island, spanning the width of Palm Beach from lake front to ocean, and from today's Royal Palm Boulevard on the north to Worth Avenue on the south. Swamp, alligators and tropical jungle had to be eliminated for Dimick to succeed, and a second bridge was needed so that customers could drive directly to the new development. In the middle of these plats, between Australian and Chilean Avenues, on what was originally called Palm Beach Avenue, Dimick set aside a small plot of land that in 1924 would become the site of the new Palm Beach Town Hall.

In the early years of the 1920s, many of the grand Mediterranean Revival estates that have come to characterize early Palm Beach were built. Addison Mizner completed the Everglades Club, the shopping "Vias" on Worth Avenue, and homes for many of Palm Beach's elite. Maurice Fatio, John Volk, Marion Sims Wyeth, and Harvey and Clarke were also busy, working with similar Mediterranean Revival forms. Even the institutional architecture of the new Palm Beach Public School that was designed by R.H. Tremble and completed in 1921 was built in this popular style. It was no surprise that, when it was time to construct a new Town Hall, Mediterranean Revival was the obvious choice for the Palm Beach Town Council.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

In February 1924, while occupying a one story wooden building on Royal Poinciana Way in Floral Park, the town council passed a bond issue for \$350,000, of which \$100,000 was for a new municipal building. The Palm Beach Post reported that "for many years, the citizens of Palm Beach have wished for a town hall to accommodate the different departments of the town government and in harmony with the high standards of architectural beauty prevalent in the resort."<sup>4</sup> On October 28, 1924 the firm of Harvey and Clarke, Architects was retained by the town council to design the building.<sup>5</sup> It

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<sup>2</sup>Research Atlantica, Inc. "Town of Palm Beach, Florida: Historic Sites Survey," Town of Palm Beach, 1997. pp.5-6.

<sup>3</sup>"Whitehall, The Henry Morrison Flagler Museum," (Palm Beach: 1988).

<sup>4</sup>"Palm Beach Town Hall Completed," Palm Beach Post, December 18, 1925. Information on the bond issues can be found in H.E. Matter. "\$350,000 Palm Beach Bonds, Hearst Mansion and \$250,000 Apartment to Boost Trade," Palm Beach Post, February 27, 1924.

<sup>5</sup>Town Council Minutes, Town of Palm Beach, October 28, 1924. On file with the Town Clerk and a copy at the Palm Beach County Historical Society.

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PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

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was also decided at the time to move the location of Town Hall from Floral Park and put it on the plot in the center of Palm Beach Avenue (360 South County Road). One rationale behind this decision was that if the building was placed in the center of the avenue, it could offer access from all four sides, creating an impressive presence.<sup>6</sup> It was also true that with the opening of the Royal Palm Avenue Bridge there was automobile access to the Palm Beach Town Hall from the west. Residential development had moved south on the island. Worth Avenue had become a popular shopping venue, and the Everglades Club and Golf Course had become the center of the social life of Palm Beach. All of this activity was closer to the new site for Town Hall than to the old one.

When hired by Palm Beach to design Town Hall, the architectural firm of Harvey and Clarke was the among the largest and most successful in Florida, with over a dozen employees.<sup>7</sup> Both partners, Henry Stephen Harvey and Louis Phillips Clarke, had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania before World War I. Henry Harvey, the senior partner in the firm, was born in Winoma, Mississippi, in 1889 and had served in the Construction Division of the U.S. Signal Corps during World War I. In 1921, he arrived in Palm Beach as the guest of his former classmate Louis Phillips Clarke. Clarke was the grandson of Commodore Charles J. Clarke of Pittsburgh and Palm Beach, one of the pioneer settlers in the resort. When the two decided to establish an architectural firm on May 19, 1921, they became an immediate success. Later Harvey noted that, "the town was growing so fast that we had our first commission just a day and a half after I arrived."<sup>8</sup> Harvey's influence in the area was strengthened in 1924 when he was elected mayor of the nearby city of West Palm Beach, a post he filled until 1927.

Besides the two lead architects, the firm also included Oliver Vinour, a Frenchman who had trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Vinour was the firm's principal designer and draftsman and his initials appear on the original drawings of Town Hall. He later became a professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology and a partner in an Atlanta architectural firm.<sup>9</sup> The contract to build the Palm Beach Town Hall, as designed by Harvey and Clarke, was awarded on April 16, 1925 to Newlon and Stephens. This contractor submitted the lowest bid of \$160,200 which, however, was well over the \$100,000 projected cost.<sup>10</sup>

Other projects by the firm of Harvey and Clark included Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, the Comeau Building (NR 1996), the Pennsylvania Hotel, the Alhambra Apartments, and the Guaranty Building in West Palm Beach. They also designed fifty passenger stations all over Florida for the

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<sup>6</sup>"Palm Beach Town Hall Completed," Palm Beach Post, December 18, 1925.

<sup>7</sup>"Town Hall Palm Beach - A Restoration Project of the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach," Palm Beach Daily News, January 3, 1988, p.6.

<sup>8</sup>Chris Hunter, "Henry Harvey, Town Architect Dies at 97," Palm Beach Daily News, 1987, p.1.

<sup>9</sup>"Town Hall Palm Beach - A Restoration Project of the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach." op.cit.

<sup>10</sup>"Palm Beach Town Hall Contract Given," Palm Beach Post, April 16, 1925.

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Seaboard Coastline Railroad, and in Palm Beach completed the North Fire Station. In all, Harvey and Clarke, Architects completed over two hundred projects. The partnership of Harvey and Clarke, however, did not survive beyond the 1920s. When the Great Depression hit, Harvey changed careers. "I made a lot of money until 1929," Harvey said. "Then I lost a lot of money. No one was doing much building during the Depression years, so there wasn't much need for architects."<sup>11</sup> For a time Harvey looked for work in Alabama, leaving the area in 1931, but he returned to live in West Palm Beach in 1933 and set up a successful hardware business in Palm Beach. Henry Harvey died in 1987.

When Town Hall was completed on December 18, 1925 it was called, "one of the most elegant municipal buildings in the state."<sup>12</sup> It soon became the center and symbol of government and political life in Palm Beach. The police department, fire department, and all municipal offices were located at the site. The town council chamber on the second floor of the south building, which are still used today, became the venue for the variety of hearings and meetings that take place in the administration of local government. The central courtyard between the two buildings was used by the police, and by the department of public works to store and repair their vehicles.<sup>13</sup> Also, with the completion of Town Hall in 1925, the area in the immediate vicinity of the building experienced a small building boom.<sup>14</sup>

In 1929, concerned that Palm Beach was growing too rapidly with too little planning, the Garden Club of Palm Beach hired the firm of Bennett, Parsons, & Frost from Chicago as consulting architects to evaluate the town. As part of their report, they prepared the first Plan of Palm Beach, which was adopted by the town council in 1930. In that plan, the consultants criticized the location of Town Hall, placed in the middle of County Road, stating that "the principal criticism is that an element of traffic danger has been introduced, (but) on the other hand, to purchase a new site and build a new Town Hall would be costly."<sup>15</sup> They suggested that sidewalk arcades be built between Brazilian and Chilean Avenues to redirect pedestrian traffic. They also stated "although there might be a traffic problem around Town Hall, ...the building was creditable and its situation is imposing."<sup>16</sup> In the end they recommended against the relocation of Town Hall.

The largest change to Town Hall occurred in 1967 when architect John L. Volk was hired to expand the space for needed offices by filling in the middle courtyard. E.B. Walton, a well known local contractor and designer was chosen to do the construction. Like Harvey and Clarke, Volk used the

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<sup>11</sup>"Henry Harvey - 92 Years of Achievements," Palm Beach Life, November 1981, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup>"Palm Beach Town Hall Completed," Palm Beach Post, December 18, 1925.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>"Town Hall Palm Beach - A Restoration Project of the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach," Palm Beach Daily News, January 3, 1988.

<sup>15</sup>Bennett, Parsons, & Frost. The Plan of Palm Beach. (Palm Beach, 1930). p.25.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

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Mediterranean Revival style of architecture for his three story addition but focused on the more classical and symmetrical forms of the style. He added a new entrance to the east and also reworked some of the interior spaces while leaving the Town Council Chamber, south lobby, and much of the fire station intact. Volk was also sensitive to the character of the original design and made a concerted effort to intrude as little as possible on the 1925 buildings.

John Volk was one of an elite group of early 1920s architects who developed successful careers during the Florida Boom of the 1920s. Volk was born in Graz, Austria in 1901, and studied at Columbia University in New York and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris before opening an office in Palm Beach in 1925. During his nearly sixty-year architectural career, he took on more than 2,000 commissions, and his work can be found throughout Florida, across the United States, and in many Caribbean nations. His designs included the Beach Club in Palm Beach, additions to the Society of the Four Arts, the Bath and Tennis Club, and the Everglades Club, and the development of Paradise Island in the Bahamas. Many of his residences are also still intact and cherished by their owners. His clients included members of high society and pillars of industry such as William Paley, George Vanderbilt, Nicholas DuPont, Henry Ford II, Horace Dodge II, and John S. Phipps. Volk always had a sensitivity for historic structures and in 1979 served on the Palm Beach Landmarks Commission. John Volk died in 1984.

After the two Harvey and Clarke buildings were joined by John Volk, Town Hall continued to be the center of local government where meetings took place and the public had access to the governmental process. The public works and the police departments, were moved to another location, but the fire station remained, one of three stations in the town. Over the years, maintenance was always completed as needed on Town Hall, but inappropriate alterations did occur.

Just three years after Volk's addition to the center of the site, a remodeling of the first floor interior left windows blocked and air conditioning units extended from openings. These assaults to the character of Town Hall were remedied when the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach started a fund raising effort in 1988 to do a complete renovation of the building. They raised \$600,000 for the project and The Smith Architectural Group, Inc. was hired by the Town to do the work under the leadership of head architect Jeffery Smith. The contractor was Keystone Restoration, Inc. The Garden Club of Palm Beach donated the plants for the landscaping at the south entrance, and Mary Alice Fortin, a long time Palm Beach resident, gave the 14-foot tall double faced cast iron clock and chimes that were also installed at the south end of the building. The dedication of the renovated building took place on March

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11, 1990.<sup>17</sup> This renovation was honored with an American Institute of Architects Award of Excellence, and also received a Florida Trust Award .

Today, the Palm Beach Town Hall stands as both a symbol of the history of Palm Beach and as a working municipal building where government confronts the challenges of twenty-first century life. It is associated in the public mind with government and its workings and as such fulfills Criterion A. It is also an outstanding example of the Mediterranean Revival style architecture and is the center piece of an island of outstanding architecture. Its form is further valued because of its association with well known local architects, Harvey and Clarke, and John L. Volk, both of whom are already represented on the National Register of Historic Places and as such fulfills Criterion C.

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<sup>17</sup>Chris Romoser, "Town Requests P.B. Street Clock," Palm Beach Daily News, July 22, 1989. and "Dedication of Renovated Town Hall is Set for Noon Tuesday," Palm Beach Daily News, March 11, 1990.



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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The Palm Beach Town Hall is located in the Royal Park Addition that was platted and recorded in 1913. It is on parcel number 50-43-43-23-05-020-0030 in South County Road lying between Blocks 7 & 8.

### Boundary Justification

The above described boundary contains all of the historic resources associated with Palm Beach Town Hall.

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PALM BEACH TOWN HALL  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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**LIST OF PHOTOTOGRAPHS**

1. Palm Beach Town Hall
2. 360 South County Road, Palm Beach (Palm Beach County), Florida
3. Unknown
4. 1928 (Historic Photo)
5. Palm Beach Historical Society
6. Camera Facing Northeast
7. Photo 1 of 18

1. Palm Beach Town Hall
2. 360 South County Road, Palm Beach (Palm Beach County), Florida
3. Unknown
4. 1990 (Historic Photo)
5. Palm Beach Historical Society
6. Camera Facing Northwest
7. Photo 2 of 18

1. Palm Beach Town Hall
2. 360 South County Road, Palm Beach (Palm Beach County), Florida
3. Jane S. Day
4. 2003
5. Research Atlantica, Inc.
6. South Facade, Camera Facing North
7. Photo 3 of 18

**Numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.**

6. East Facade, Camera Facing Northwest
7. Photo 4 of 18

6. Southeast Tower, Camera Facing Southwest
7. Photo 5 of 18

6. Old East Entrance, Camera Facing West
7. Photo 6 of 18

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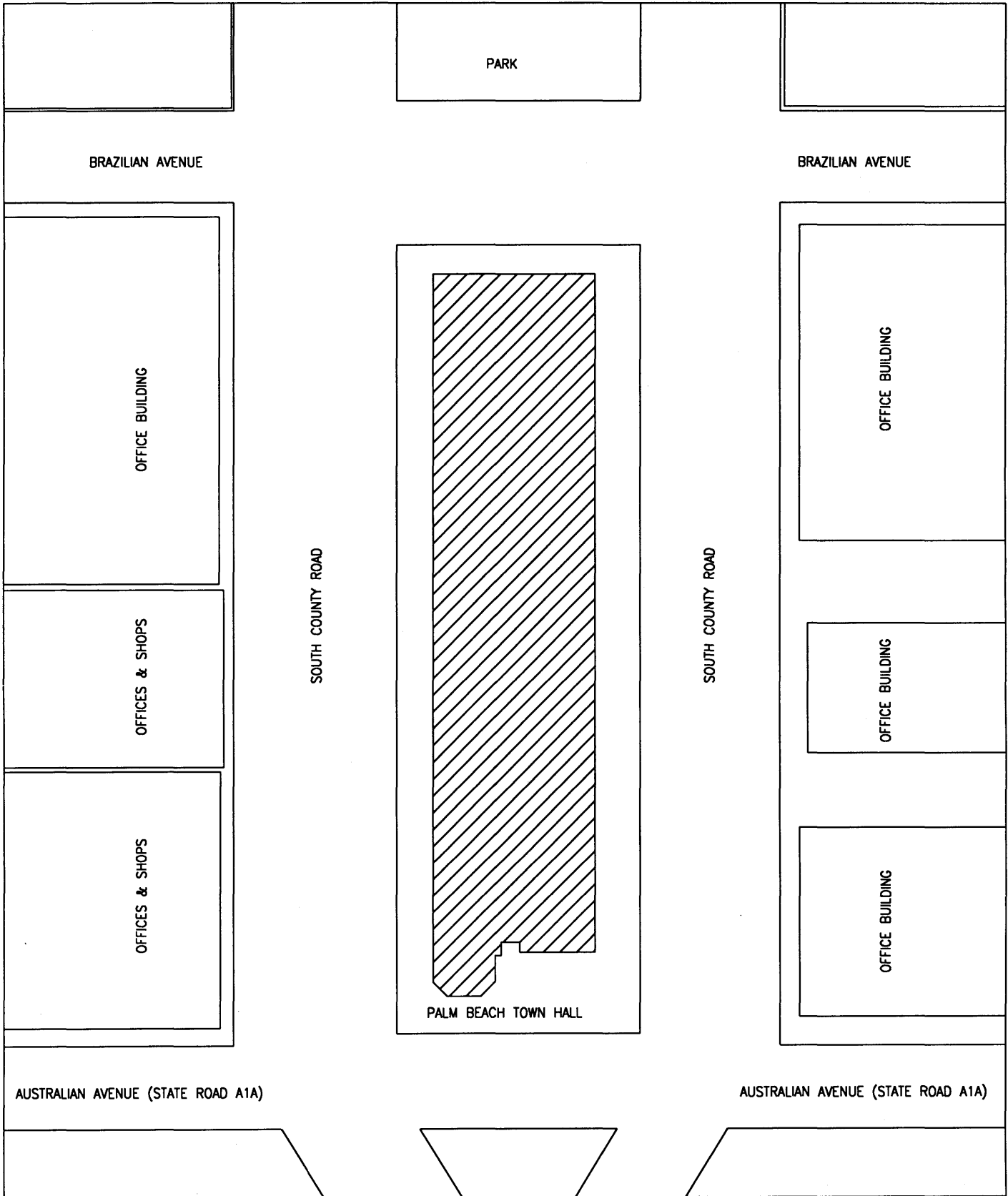
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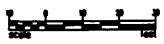
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- 6. West Facade, Camera Facing Northeast
- 7. Photo 7 of 18
  
- 6. Old Jail Entrance, Camera Facing East
- 7. Photo 8 of 18
  
- 6. North Elevation, Camera Facing South
- 7. Photo 9 of 18
  
- 6. East Facade, Camera Facing Southwest
- 7. Photo 10 of 18
  
- 6. North Tower, East Side of Roof, Camera Facing Northwest
- 7. Photo 11 of 18
  
- 6. West Facade, Camera Facing Southeast
- 7. Photo 12 of 18
  
- 6. Decoration above 1967 Entrance, Camera Facing West
- 7. Photo 13 of 18
  
- 6. South Lobby, Camera Facing South
- 7. Photo 14 of 18
  
- 6. Former Police Chief Office (Conference Room), Camera Facing East
- 7. Photo 15 of 18
  
- 6. Council Chamber Lobby, Second Floor, Camera Facing Northwest
- 7. Photo 16 of 18
  
- 6. Council Chamber, Second Floor, Camera Facing North
- 7. Photo 17 of 18
  
- 6. Fire Department Vehicle Storage Area, Camera Facing West
- 7. Photo 18 of 18



<p><b>PALM BEACH TOWN HALL</b>          360 SOUTH COUNTY ROAD          PALM BEACH (PALM BEACH COUNTY), FLORIDA</p>	<p>DRAWING TITLE:  <u>EXISTING SITE PLAN</u></p>	<p>DRAWN BY:          W. CARL SHAW, HISTORIC PRESERVATIONIST          FLORIDA BUREAU OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION          P.A. OWY BUILDING          500 S. BRINDLEH STREET          TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32309-0250          PHONE: (850) 245-6333</p>	<p>DATE:          OCTOBER 2004</p>	<p>SCALE:          AS SHOWN (APPROXIMATE), SOME DETAILS SIMPLIFIED          FOR PURPOSE OF CLARITY</p> 
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