

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 8

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Leslie Fox, MHC - 1981

1. Lighthouse from Clark's Point,
Photo #1, by Fox, July, 1981

2. Aerial View, Photo #2 by the U.S.
Coast Guard, Boston, date unknown

HISTORIC NAME: Butler Flats Light Station

TOWN: New Bedford

LOCATION: New Bedford Channel, Acushnet River

COUNTY: Bristol CODE: 005

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 10th

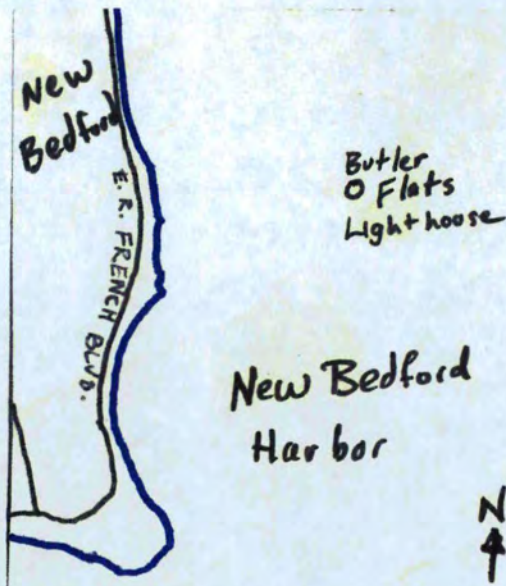
LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Bristol County Southern District
Registry of Deeds (Book 174, p. 305,
306, Comm. of Mass. to U.S.)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination is confined to the light
and its man-made foundation

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.: LAT41° 36'3"N LONG 70° 53'42"W

UTM COORDINATE: 19/341/800/4607/100

USGS QUADRANGLE: Prov., RI., Mass., Conn.

SCALE: 1:250,000

ACREAGE: Marine Site - less than one acre

OWNER(S): U.S. Coast Guard has right of way;
maintenance done by the Coast
Guard Commemorative Exhibit,
New Bedford (private organization)

STATUS: Active/Unmanned.

RECORDED BY: L. Fox/N. Salzman

ORGANIZATION: Mass. Historical Commission

DATE: August, 1981

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Butler Flats Light Station is located in New Bedford Channel at the entrance to New Bedford Harbor. Surrounded by water, it can be seen easily from the approach from the sea or from the Clark's Point Light (#12) at the very end of the peninsula, a remote end of the city of New Bedford. The peninsula, known as Clark's Point, has a scattered residential section, abandoned World War II barracks, a civil war fort, and a water-treatment plant.

Access to the lighthouse is made only by boat.

MAJOR ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION

The 53' caisson tank light was built on a marine site in 1898, and is a white and black cylindrical lighthouse that is very similar to the Borden Flats Light (#5) in Fall River. Butler Flats Light consists of a cast iron caisson foundation with curved wave deflecting plates at the top of the caisson. Butler Flats Light is unusual and perhaps unique among the caisson harbor lights in that the three story tower is constructed of brick and incorporates detailing of building architecture such as brick window sills and arches and raised brick below the watch deck level. The watchstanders room and lanternhouse are of cast iron construction. The tower was designed by F. Hopkinton Smith. Construction was completed April 30, 1898. It houses 1091 square feet: office space-201', housing-201': mess deck-254': storage or basement-530'; fog deck-78'; light deck-28'. This offers an example of the way in which the light station was used.

Until the station was unmanned, two officers and five enlisted men lived there and maintained the light and fog signal.

The light station was built on the soft mud bottom of the channel, upon which the concrete and filled stone foundation was placed.

Exterior: Access is gained from an iron ladder that leads directly up to the first balcony, or fog deck, that extends around the tower. There are at least three windows on this level, and a door leading into the tower. The fog or first deck is quite wide, and its roof is composed of many segments of steel and concrete fixed together. The Light balcony is located on the lamp room level. It is supported by Italianate brackets but the railing and balusters are of a simple design (though not a common one in New England). Nine thin iron vertical railings compose each section of the balustrade. Each baluster topped by a round finial.

Lens Room - The balcony around the octagonal lens room has a very simple iron railing that consists of single balusters and railings. It has an iron segmented roof (8 triangular segments) topped by the ball-shaped air vent and a lightning rod.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1898 - Station designed and built by F. Hopkinton Smith, "famous writer-architect-builder"; completed April 30. A navigational aid with lighthouse tower, light, and fog signal.
- 1975 - A local campaign was begun to save the lighthouse when the Coast Guard determined it was no longer required for safe passage into New Bedford, as the recently built Hurricane Barrier was more effective (1/2 mile closer to Harbor). A small dyke light was installed there.
- 1978 - The station was unmanned and fully automated by April, and automatic signals and a speed call 7843 encoder/decoder were installed. The fog signal was moved to the Hurricane Barrier. A private, non-profit group that had organized a successful New Bedford marine campaign for the Bicentennial (the Coast Guard Commemorative Exhibit) expressed interest in maintaining the light.
- 1979 - A Revocable License and Standard Department of Transportation Title VI Assurance was given to the city of New Bedford to operate the light as a private aid.
- 1981 - The Coast Guard Commemorative Exhibit plans to make necessary repairs and maintain the light.

Level of Significance

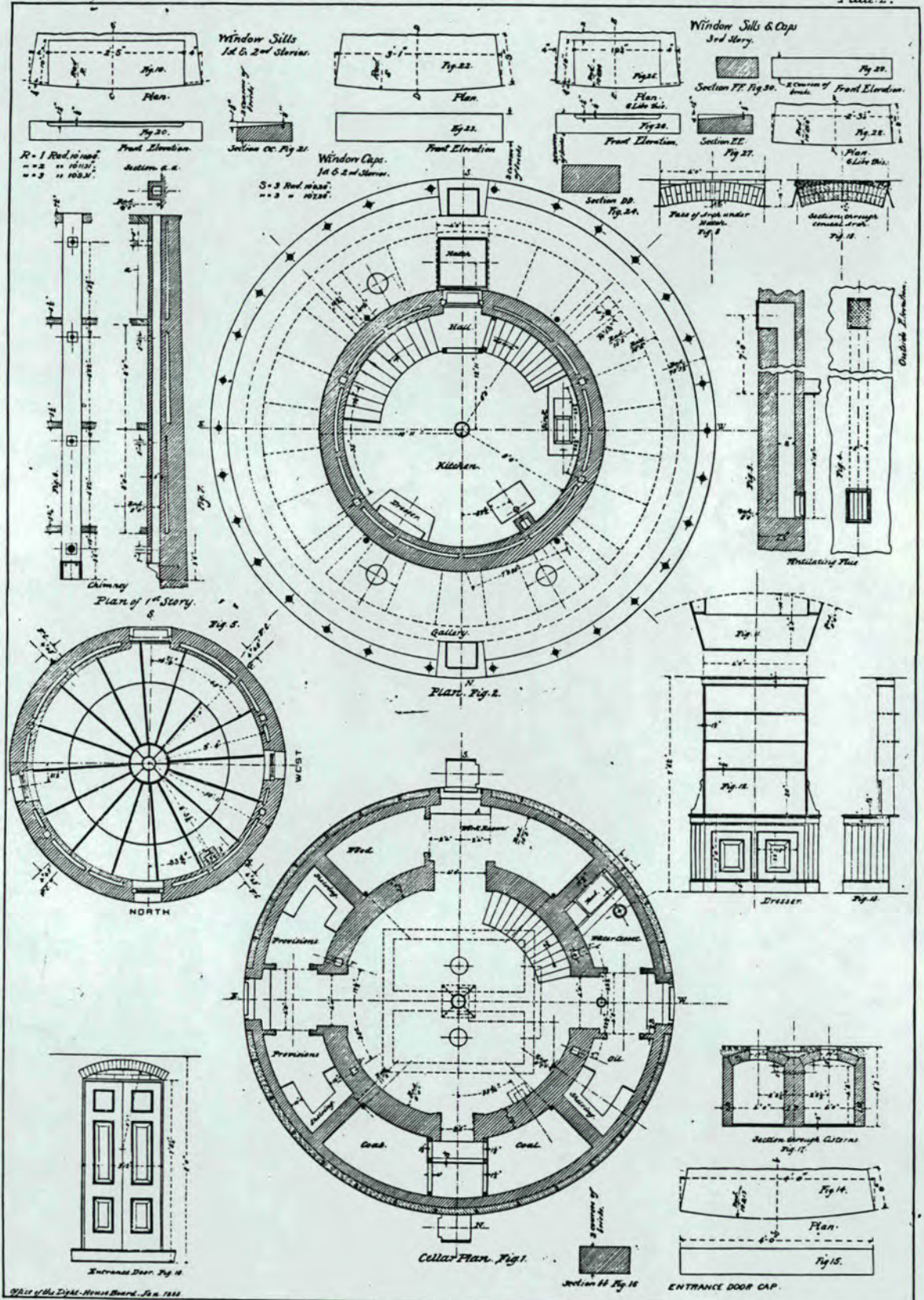
The Butler Flats Light possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship as well as important associations with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. Erected in 1898, it is a well-maintained example of caisson type construction and the only one of its type designed by a known marine architect. The Station meets criteria A, B and C of the National Register of Historic Places. It also meets survey criteria 1c, 1e, and 4a.

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THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

Butler Flats Light-Station, New Bedford Harbor, Mass.

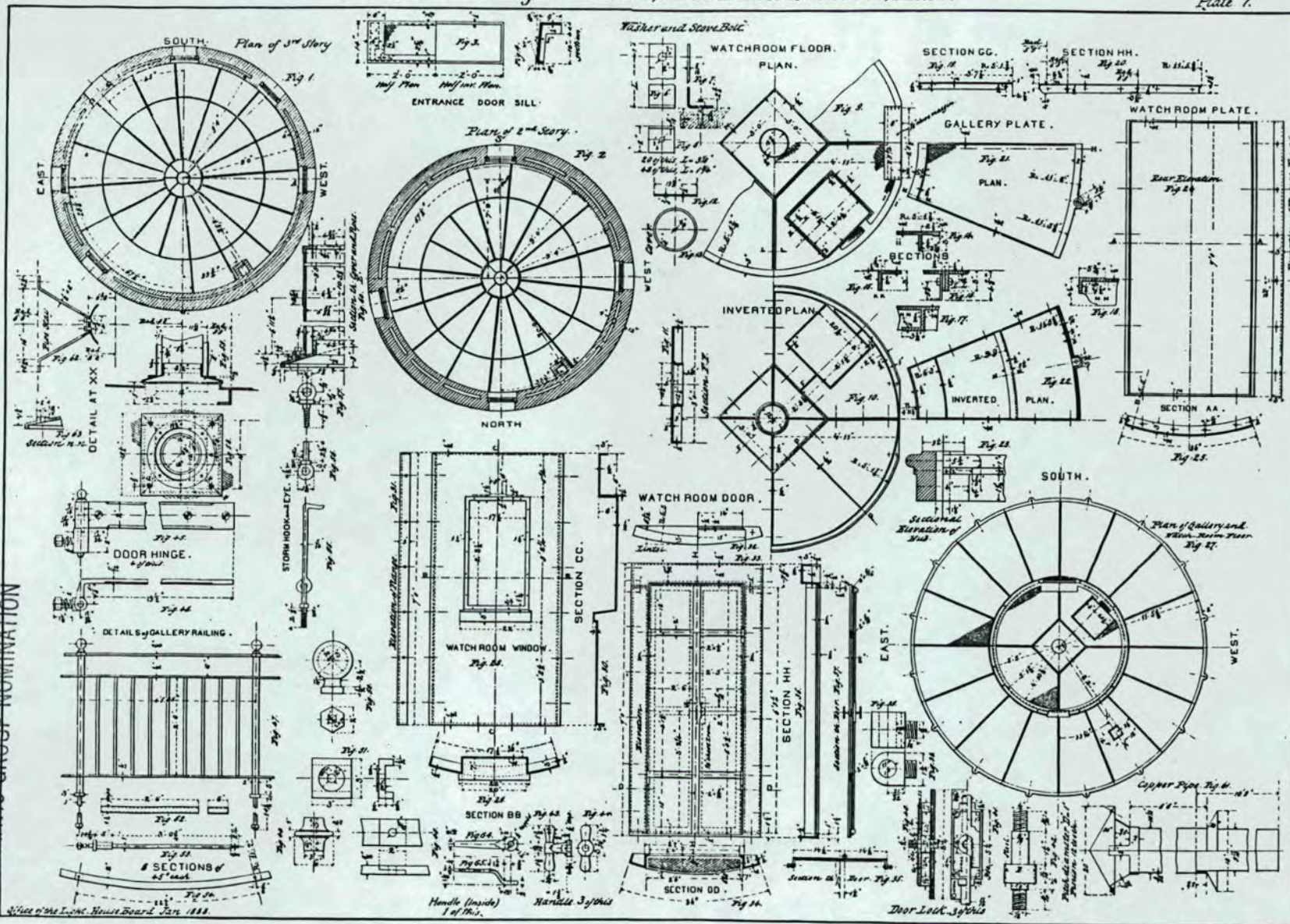
Plate 2.



Butler Flats Light-Station, New Bedford Harbor, Mass.

Plate 7.

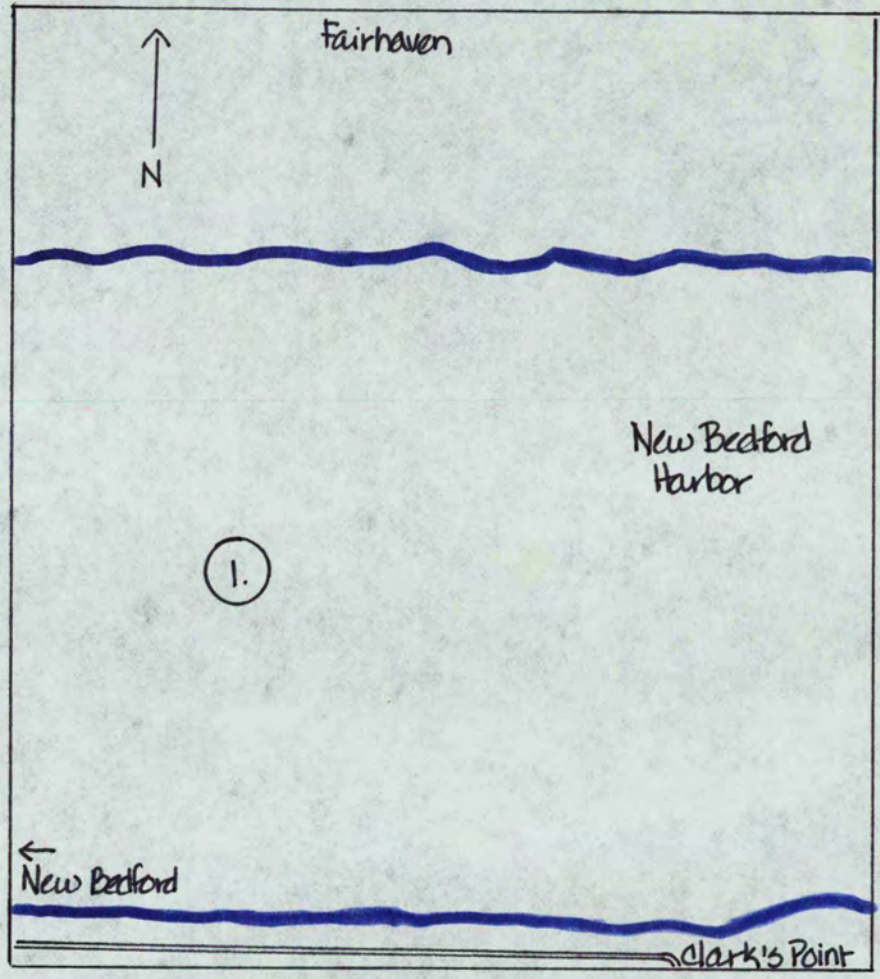
N^o 560
SHEET 7 of 10.



LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

Gift of the Lighthouse Board, Jan. 1888

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION



Butler Flats Light Station

1. Tower

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received MAY 4 1987
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 374

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 107 21. Hospital Point Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*
Attest _____
- 22. Graves Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*
Attest _____
- 23. Annisquam Harbor Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*
Attest _____
- 24. The Beacon *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*
Attest _____
- 25. Bird Island Light *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*
Attest _____
- 26. Borden Flats Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*
Attest _____
- 27. Boston Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*
Attest _____
- 108 28. Brant Point Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*
Attest _____
- 29. Butler Flats Light Station *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 6/15/87*
Attest _____
- 109 30. Cape Poge (Pogue) Light *Entered in the National Register* *for* Keeper *Delores Byers 9/28/87*
Attest _____

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Butler Flats Light Station (Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR)

Bristol County

MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4/28/87

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88

Date Due: 6/18/87

Action: ACCEPT 6-15-87

RETURN

Entered in ~~the~~ the National Register REJECT

Federal Agency: USCG

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

- Check one
- unaltered
 - altered

- Check one
- original site
 - moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 ___ national ___ state ___ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



PLEASE CREDIT
U.S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
FIRST COAST GUARD DISTRICT
BOSTON, MA

File No.

011076-06

Subject

Butler Flats Lt

Location

Photographer

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION



BUTLER FLATS LIGHT STATION
NEW BEDFORD #8

PHOTO #2 OF 2

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
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Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282