

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received MAR 6 1985

date entered

APR 4 1985

1. Name

historic EAST ATTLEBOROUGH ACADEMY

and/or common Superintendent's Office

2. Location

street & number 28 Sanford Street N/A not for publication

city, town Attleboro N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts code 025 county Bristol code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☒ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture ☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☐ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial ☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☒ educational ☐ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment ☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government ☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial ☐ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military ☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Attleboro

street & number 29 Park Street

city, town Attleboro N/A vicinity of state MA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bristol County Registry of Deeds

street & number Court Street

city, town Taunton state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets
of the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 7/21/71, updated 1985 ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state MA

7. Description

ATTLEBORO: EAST ATTLEBORO ACADEMY

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☒ moved

date 1874, returned to original site
1889

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The East Attleborough Academy, built in 1843, is a Greek Revival school building near the center of Attleboro, Massachusetts. The Academy sits on a 1.8-acre lot in the block bounded by Sanford, North Main, Dean and Bank Streets. Located at the east end of the lot, the school is set well back from Sanford Street and faces almost due south. In front of the building, the unlandscaped lot slopes gently down to the street, while to the west a parking lot occupies the remainder of the site.

The East Attleborough Academy is a text book example of the Greek Revival style in its classical temple form. It has a rectangular plan three bays wide and four bays deep. The building stands two stories high, and has a shallow gabled roof. To the rear, is a shallow two-story addition. The south gable end faces Sanford Street, and serves as a pediment for the full-width, Doric colonnaded porch that is the building's most prominent feature.

Although the Academy was moved from its site in 1874, it was returned to its original site in 1887. The shallow rectangular addition on the rear elevation most likely dates to that year. In the 1960s, a modular home was attached to the building on its west elevation, connected to the original building only by a narrow passageway. While this addition is visible in the photographs submitted with the nomination, it was removed by the City of Attleboro in the summer of 1984.

Built of wood, the school currently rests on a high brick foundation. Underneath the brick foundation is the original rough-hewn granite foundation, which extends only around the main block and indicates the original perimeters of the building. The entire foundation has been painted black. The building is sheathed in wood clapboard painted white. This is presumed to be the original siding. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles of undetermined age.

The Academy's primary elevation is dominated by its handsome colonnaded portico. Four fluted Doric columns, constructed of wood, support the gable-end pediment. The columns rest on short, square bases and have simple, classical Doric capitals. They support a broad, flat frieze divided into two parts by a narrow dentilated decorative band. A simple cornice surmounts this frieze. The pediment above is unadorned except for the wide trim outlining it.

The porch is reached by a flight of five wooden steps located between the two center columns. Behind the columns, the facade is broken by a central entrance with a pedimented door surround that is flanked by Doric pilasters. The pediment reflects the larger gable above, although the lower part of the frieze (below the dentilated band) is obscured by a sign reading "Superintendent of Schools". The door is an early twentieth-century replacement with three horizontal panels below a large pane of glass. Behind the colonnade on the building's facade, the corners are marked by Doric pilasters with long, narrow, recessed center panels.

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Continuation sheet Attleboro: East Attleborough Academy Item number 7 Page 1

The side elevations are of identical design. Doric pilasters like those on the main facade frame the four-bay elevations. Four symmetrically spaced windows appear on both the first and second floors. The window sash is 6/6 double-hung, with the muntins painted black. The windows are surrounded by flat boards and capped with simple entablatures. On the second floor, these entablatures butt up against the broad frieze that continues around the building from the south elevation. As previously noted, the west elevation was altered by a modular addition; the sill of the first floor window in the second bay from the front was lowered to provide an access door for this addition. The first three window bays on the first floor are missing their entablature caps. The city plans to fully restore this elevation to match the east elevation, which remains unaltered.

The rear, north elevation is also framed by pilasters, but the pediment on this facade is broken rather than closed. The one-bay deep, two-story, flat-roofed addition covers three quarters of this elevation, but does not obscure the cornice line. The only fenestration on the addition is on the west side, where there is a single window on the first floor and a door on the second floor. The door leads to an iron fire escape, which wraps around the rear of the addition. A narrow brick chimney, dating to the installation of a new furnace in the early twentieth century, rises up through the fire escape on the north side of the addition.

The building originally had a single large classroom on each of the two floors. The first floor was partitioned for the offices of the Attleboro Superintendent of Schools ca. 1900. The second floor was similarly partitioned in the 1920s or 1930s. Original wood floors have been carpeted. Windows and doors may retain their original trim beneath twentieth-century paneling. The only significant interior feature remaining is the staircase, but even its railing and newel posts have been somewhat altered. The original terminal newel post has been discovered in the building's attic, although there are no immediate plans for interior restoration. The attic is unfinished and used for storage.

The Academy's parcel stands within the area of a recorded but largely undocumented prehistoric archaeological site, one of seven known sites within a half mile of the property. Potential historic archaeological resources include features relating to the building's construction, move, and expansion, features relating to the use of the building (wells, privies, carriage sheds), and survivals from prior historic uses of the structure (prior uses are unknown).

8. Significance

ATTLEBORO: EAST ATTLEBORO ACADEMY

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☒ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400–1499	☒ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500–1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600–1699	☒ architecture	☒ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1843 Builder Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The East Attleborough Academy possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Located in what was known as East Attleborough Village, the building is an important element in the history of education in Attleboro, serving first as a private academy and later as the first home for the East Attleborough High School. In addition, it is a fine example of institutional Greek Revival architecture and is the only temple-front Greek Revival building in Attleboro. The East Attleborough Academy meets criteria A and C on the local level for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Although the town of Attleborough was established in 1694, the area now known as Attleboro Center (the shortened spelling was adopted by the city in 1887) was not settled until the turn of the nineteenth century. While earlier settlement had been in what is now North Attleboro, by the 1790s population growth had shifted to the east along the Bungay River, an area which afforded good waterpower sites. With the growth of East Attleborough Village as both an economic and residential center, a need for schools to provide for the education of Attleborough children arose. To meet this need, a number of one-room schoolhouses were built in the 1810s and 1820s, several of which still stand (although converted to residences).

By 1840, however, the community had a need for more elaborate educational facilities than could be provided in a one-room schoolhouse. In that year, a group of Attleborough citizens banded together to form a proprietorship for the purpose of fostering higher education in the town. In the next few years, the Proprietors of Academy Hall were able to sell nearly 110 shares at a price of \$12.50 per share. The money raised in this manner was to be put toward the construction of an Academy building. Actual construction was delayed until a building site was found in 1843, when a plot of land at the edge of the village was donated to the Proprietors by Nathaniel W. Sanford.

Nothing is known of Sanford beyond the generosity of his gift. Sanford's deed of the parcel to the Proprietors did not grant simple, full ownership of the property. Instead, it granted that the land be held in trust by the Proprietors while it was used for educational purposes. If the property ceased to be used for educational purposes, ownership was to revert back to Nathaniel Sanford's heirs.

The Proprietors erected the Academy building in 1843. Neither the architect, if there was one, nor the builder is known. The proprietors chose to build a relatively high-style Greek Revival building, with one large classroom on each

9. Major Bibliographical References

Daggett, John, "The Sketch of the History of Attleborough," Press of Samuel Usher, Boston, 1894.
Attleborough High School Yearbook, 1932.
Letter, from Robert S. Oroian, City Solicitor, to Mayor Gerald J. Keane, November 8, 1982.
Record of Deed Search on the East Attleborough Academy.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.8 acres

Quadrangle name Attleboro

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 19 310590 4646100
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached Assessors Map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Kate Sampson, MHC, with Ruth Nerney and Marian Wrightinton, Attleboro Historical Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December, 1984

street & number 80 Boylston St. telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date February 18, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Melissa Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/4/85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Attleboro: East Attleborough

Continuation sheet

Academy

Item number

8

Page

1

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date entered

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level. The choice of this style is significant, for all of the earlier schoolhouses in Attleborough had been simple, one-story structures, typically three bays long with a side entrance on the long side. The new, grand Greek Revival Academy carried a sense of dignity and grandeur that far surpassed these earlier schools. The Academy is, in fact, the only temple-front Greek Revival building (institutional or residential) built in Attleborough.

The building was used as a private Academy until 1864, when the school appears to have closed. Ownership of the property then reverted to Anna H. S. Crane, the sole heir of Nathaniel Sanford, according to the terms of the original deed. Two years later, Anna Crane and her husband, Jonathan Crane, deeded all of their right, title, and interest in the property to Capron Peck, a farmer residing in Attleborough.

Despite its change in ownership, the building was soon in use again as a school. On April 1 1867, Attleborough voted to establish its first public high schools, one in East Attleborough and one in North Attleborough. The East High School opened that year in the upper story of the Academy building. The first principal of East High School was Calvin A. Hill. In that first year he was responsible for the education of twenty students.

Although the records are unclear, it appears that the Academy building was moved from its original location to a nearby site in 1874. The East High School moved with the building, and remained in the Academy until 1882. In 1889, the Academy was moved again, back to its original location. A new brick foundation was laid over the old foundation, and the rear ell was built at the same time.

Around 1900, the first floor of the building became the home of the offices of the Superintendent of Schools of Attleboro. The city seems to have rented the building from Capron Peck and his heirs during this period. In 1920, the City of Attleboro was able to purchase the property, and has owned it since that date. The offices of the Superintendent of Schools remain on the first floor, while the second floor is currently occupied by the Attleboro Historical Commission.

Additional investigation of the prehistoric archeological resources of the site are necessary before a determination of significance can be made. Historic archeological significance is deemed to be low to moderate.

East Attleborough Academy
Attleborough, MA



Map by
American Air Surveys, Inc.
907 PENN. AVE.
PITTSBURGH, PA.
4-27-64
Scale 1"=80'

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

East Attleborough Academy
Bristol County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. MAR 6 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86
Date Due: 4/4/85 - 4/20/85
Action: ACCEPT 4-4-85
RETURN
REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- ☐ 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 Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

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	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ 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

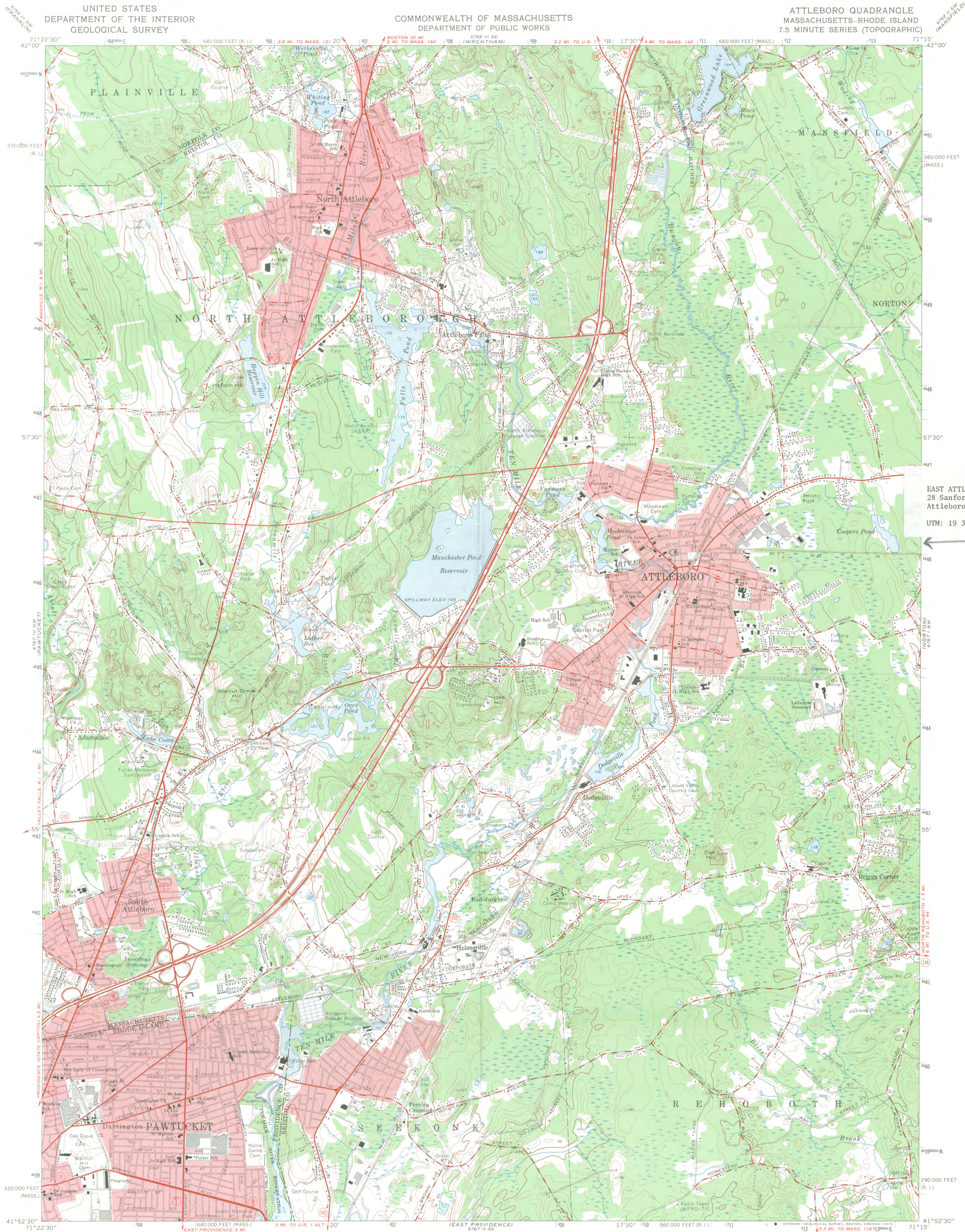
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



EAST ATTLEBORO ACADEMY
28 Sanford Street
Attleboro, MA

Photogr: Steve McGuire, 1979



EAST ATTLEBORO ACADEMY
28 Sanford Street
Attleboro, MA
UTM: 19 310590 4646100

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1935 and 1938-1939
Revised 1964
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and Rhode Island coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

UTM GRID AND 1964 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24,000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route ——— U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

ATTLEBORO, MASS.—R. I.
N4152.5—W7115.7.5

1964
AMS 6767 IV NE—SERIES V814