

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration FormNATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Unitarian Church (preferred)
other names/site number Park Square Church

2. Location

street & number 7 Park Street N/A not for publication
city, town Peabody N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code 025 county Essex code 009 zip code 01960

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Valerie A. Taenage
Signature of certifying official

July 30, 1987
Date

Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religious Structure, Church

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

multiple dwelling, condominiums

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation unknown

walls clapboard

roof asphalt shingles

other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Peabody's First Unitarian Church (Park Square Church) displays a combination of Greek Revival and Italianate elements. In overall form it follows the classic New England meeting house with its pedimented facade and multi-staged steeple all of white painted wood. The entry porch added in 1872 is Italianate in character, with bold sculptural forms. The tall double doors are surmounted by a lunette, and are placed beneath a barrel-vaulted roof which projects from the center of the main facade. The doors are flanked by paired, incised pilasters; from there the wall on each side curves back to another pair of pilasters where it joins the main facade. Rectangular windows set into this curved wall are framed by a simple moulding. A heavy cornice is supported by brackets, emphasizing the sculptural quality of this portion of the building. The facade behind the porch is, in contrast, restrained in its use of ornament. This was the original portico of the church and six columns are still visible, although the spaces between them are now filled in and faced with clapboards. The columns terminate in modest molded capitals and support a plain board architrave and bracketed cornice. A well-proportioned pediment, also faced in wood clapboards, completes this temple-front facade.

On the north and south elevation are paired round-head windows below an oculus window, set within a round-arched hood moulding with a projecting keystone. Four of these are placed between the corner pilaster at the front of the building and a second pilaster approximately two thirds of the way down the facade, and date from the 1872 remodeling. The two large windows between this pilaster and the rear of the building are similar in form but differ slightly in scale. They are elongated and lack the hood moulding and keystone of the others. On the north facade a small round-arched window bordered with square lights is placed mid-way up the facade just beyond the middle pilaster, corresponding with the interior stair landing. This window is stylistically different from the others and appears to date from still later renovation of unknown date.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

First Unitarian Church,
Peabody, Massachusetts

Section number 7 Page 1

Below this window is a small entrance porch, covering the lower portion of the pilaster. This porch, whose paired pilasters and simple pediment echo the main facade, contains two more small round-arched windows on each side. The double doors are topped by a transom of square lights. A 1906 photograph shows a small bracketed cornice over a single door in this position; the present porch was probably added during a 1927 renovation. On the south wall there is a two-story rectory wing projecting from the facade, and covering the lower portion of the middle pilaster. This wing was added in 1868 and originally served as a chapel.

The church was originally surmounted by a multiple-stage steeple which was completed in 1829, at which time the original bell was installed. A new bell was installed in 1887. The cubic base of the steeple is ornamented with wooden quoins and contains an oculus window in the center of its east face. Curved brackets support a cornice echoing that on the building below. The base is all that now remains of the original three-stage steeple. The stage surmounting the base was ornamented with corner columns and round-arched windows similar to those on the north and south elevations. This stage was in turn topped by a pyramidal spire. The upper stages of the steeple were dismantled after the bell was removed and relocated to the new church in Danvers in 1967.

The interior of the church is divided into several distinct spaces. One enters through a vestibule which leads into the large, two-story auditorium space occupying most of the front half of the building. The interior furnishings of this space, which included wooden pews, a platform pulpit, choir and organ loft, were dismantled by the congregation when it relocated to Danvers. The organ was removed, and an Aaron Willard clock that had hung in the church was presented to the Peabody Museum. The pilastered walls and ceiling in this room have suffered damage from water infiltration in the years since the building was vacated.

The rear of the main block is divided into two floors. A round-arched door at the back of the auditorium opens on a staircase that leads up to the second floor. The rooms in this section were used for various purposes throughout the church's history, and contain no distinctive furnishings or trim. Attached to this portion of the original building is the ca. 1868 wing which served as a rectory and parish house. This wing contained meeting rooms, a dining room and kitchen. No significant interior details remain in this section.

continued

8/6/87

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

First Unitarian Church,
Peabody, Massachusetts

Section number 7 Page 2

The church has been the victim of gradual deterioration and decay during the past twenty years. No major work seems to have been done to the building since the 1939 renovations. A 1954 church visitation report noted that "the buildings are rather old and show signs of neglect," due no doubt to the dwindling resources of the parish. The loss of the steeple in 1967 has been the most dramatic change in the church's appearance.

Archaeology

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property, it is highly likely that sites are present. At least eight sites have been reported in the general area (within one mile). The physical characteristics of the property prior to European settlement may have made this an attractive area for native settlement and subsistence activities. Tidewater from the North River originally extended to this area as well as several tributary brooks. Following settlement, many of these wetlands were altered and filled through urban development. Many favorable site locations around wetlands peripherals may have also been altered or destroyed though it is possible some sites survived. Since patterns of prehistoric occupation in Peabody are poorly documented, any surviving sites would be significant. Regional as well as local significance might result from sites found in this area and their possible association with sites along Salem Harbor, Beverly Harbor, and their tributary river, all known areas of prehistoric period settlement about two to three miles to the north and east.

There is also a potential for significant historic remains on the property. Background research, controlled testing, and excavation may help to determine whether or not remains survive from settlement and economic activities which may have pre-dated church construction. Colonial settlement was present in this area beginning ca. 1626. Cultural remains may also survive from post-1826 church-related activities which took place on grounds around the structure. Each of these sources could provide detailed information on the changing social, cultural, and economic patterns that characterized the development from rural to urban life in Peabody.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Religion

Period of Significance

1826-1939

Significant Dates

1872

1927

1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The First Unitarian Church in Peabody, built in 1826 and remodeled several times, holds historical association with the growth of Unitarianism in Peabody and the North Shore area well into the 20th century. The building is architecturally significant for the fine quality of its Greek Revival and Italianate-style detailing. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling and workmanship, the First Unitarian Church thus fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places on the local level.

The history of the First Unitarian Church and its congregation is closely tied to the history of the town it served. The original village of Brooksby was settled in 1626; in 1752 it joined with Salem Village (now Danvers) to form Danvers Township. Although nominally united, the two functioned as separate towns, and after 1813 each elected its own town officials. During this period the town, first as South Danvers and then as Peabody, grew from an agriculture-based village of 700 to a large manufacturing town, with a population of 1,643 by 1800 and 8,110 by 1850. The leather industry, established in the 1730s, grew rapidly and gave Peabody an industrial character which emphasized its separate identity from the still-agricultural Danvers.

The religious character of the area was also changing in the late 18th-early 19th century. The liberalism which developed within the Congregational Churches of the Standing Order in New England was gaining strength, and by 1805 had caused the split between the Congregational Church and what came to be called Unitarianism. Between 1805 and 1835, approximately 1/3 of the Congregational churches in Massachusetts had become Unitarian; in other cases groups split off from the main congregation and formed their own churches. In Peabody, on January 1, 1825, "a company of 15 gentlemen assembled...to confer together as to the organization of a new religious society in South Danvers, which should be in harmony with the sentiments known as Unitarian". 1825 was the year in which the American Unitarian Association was organized, and towns all over New England were mirroring the events in Peabody. Once the church

☒ See continuation sheet

8/6/87

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

First Unitarian Church,
Peabody, Massachusetts

Section number 8 Page 1

was incorporated, in June of 1825, an appointed committee reported plans for the new church, which was to be "outwardly similar to the church in Lynn, and with interior arrangements like those of Rev. Mr. Coleman's church in Salem". Construction was begun shortly thereafter, and was finished in July 1826, at a total cost of \$8,734.00.

The founders and members of the original congregation included many prominent citizens of Peabody. Abner Sanger and Benjamin Goodridge, two men who were successful in the tanning industry, paid for the cost of building the cellar in exchange for allowing them to store hides in its for a period of ten years. Leverett Saltonstall and Benjamin Merrill, two successful lawyers in the area presented an Aaron Willard clock which was placed in the auditorium. The cost of construction was covered by selling pew subscriptions to the original congregation.

The church building was dedicated July 26, 1826, and the pulpit was temporarily supplied by Mr. Alonzo Hill. In April of 1827 a church was formed of 71 members, and the Reverend Charles Seawall of Dedham was installed as Pastor. The congregation grew with Peabody; as the tanning industry flourished, the town grew prosperous, and so did the church. The introduction of steam boilers and the invention of the splitting machine revolutionized the leather production in 1840; by 1855 it had become the town's chief industry with other 27 tanneries in operation. The growth of the town prompted agitation for a high school to serve the area, and in 1850 one was established in a small, one-story building at the rear of the church, which had once been used as a chapel or vestry. In the first year 25 pupils attended class there, and in ensuing years the class grew to 43.

A severe fire which swept Peabody in 1843 and "threatened at times the destruction of the entire center of Peabody" did spread to the church building, but serious damage was prevented by "strenuous and daring exertions of a few people who held their dangerous position on its roof until the peril was averted."

In 1855 the two towns that make up Danvers Township separated, and were incorporated as Danvers and South Danvers. At this time the high school was relocated to a new building designed to serve as the Town Hall. The building at the rear of the church became a dwelling, and was later moved to Washington Street. In 1868, the town of South Danvers voted to change its name to Peabody, after the famous philanthropist George Peabody, a native of the area. In May of the same year, construction was begun on a new chapel at the rear of the church. The chapel was completed in October 1869, the whole expense being assumed by the Ladies Association of the parish.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

First Unitarian Church
Peabody, Massachusetts

The prosperity of Peabody during this period is attested to by the major renovations undertaken in 1872. The original temple-front Greek Revival building was remodelled in the then-popular Italianate style. It was at this time that the portico was enclosed and an entry porch containing a new vestibule was added to the front facade. The large windows on the north and south were modified, and Italianate decorative elements incorporated. The interior of the church was completely reconstructed; the gallery was removed and the auditorium remodeled and refitted. The cost of these renovations, \$15,000, surpassed the cost of the original building, and were paid in full by the congregation. During the renovation services were held in the new chapel. The church was rededicated following the renovations; the sermon at the re-opening was delivered by Edward Everett Hale. A new organ was installed in 1886 and the following year the belfry was improved and a new bell installed.

Peabody and the First Unitarian Church flourished through the remainder of the 19th century and for the first decades of the 20th century. In 1927 a small entrance porch was added on the north elevation. A major restoration of the exterior of the church which returned it to "the traditional New England white meetinghouse" was undertaken by the congregation in 1939.

Support for the church dwindled in the 1940s as Peabody's population became predominantly Catholic. Of the more than 20 protestant churches in Peabody, the Episcopalian and Congregational Churches remained the strongest, while the Unitarian Church began to flounder. In 1945 it merged with the First Universalist Church of Peabody and became a federated church in 1947, with services to be held at the First Unitarian Church. The congregations, however, continued to erode and the location of the members shifted to Danvers. In 1965 the Peabody church united with the church in Danvers to become the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Church. Services were held in Peabody while a new church was being constructed in Danvers; when it was completed in September of 1967 the First Unitarian Church was vacated.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Osbourne, Theodore Moody A History of Peabody 1888 (Peabody Historical Society)
Wells, John B. The Peabody Story-Events in Peabody's History 1626-1972
Essex Institute, Salem Ma.
Church Records, Unitarian Universalist Assoc. 15 Beacon Street, Boston, MA.

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested (Part 2 denied 12-5-85)
☐ 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission
survey #305

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre
Quad: Salem Scale 1:25000

UTM References

A

1	9	3	4	1	7	1	0	4	7	0	9	5	9	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See assessors map

☐ See continuation sheet

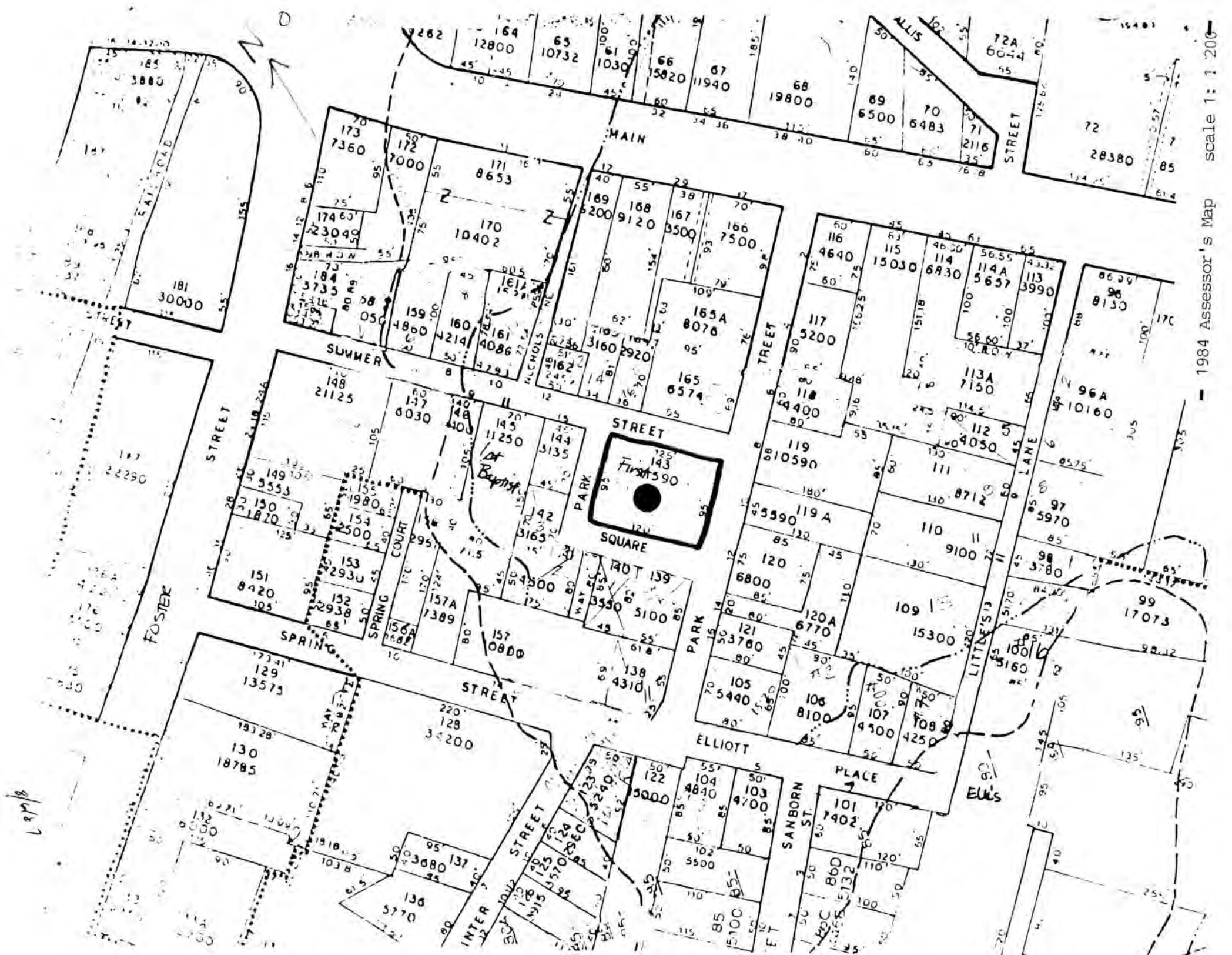
Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property are the boundaries of plot #143, 1590.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title American Landmarks Inc., Elizabeth A. White, Betsy Friedberg, Director National
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date Register
street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617 727-8470
city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02116



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

First Unitarian Church
Essex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Substantive Review

Working No. AUG 6 1987

Fed. Reg. Date: 9/14/87 - 9/20/87

Date Due: 9/14/87 - 9/20/87

Action: ACCEPT

RETURN 9-17-87

REJECT

Federal Agency:

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

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal

☒ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria Return

Reviewer Swage

Discipline Architectural History

Date 9/17/87

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	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved date <u></u>
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

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

Please describe the recent rehabilitation project within the context of its impact on the property's historic integrity from the applicable period of significance. (See back also) →.

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

The church does not appear to retain integrity from its early (1826) period due to its alterations (facade, entry, steeple, interior). Please review period of significance as currently defined and revise accordingly. The "restoration" of 1939 has not been documented as exceptionally significant and thus the termination date of the period of significance in 1939 is unsubstantiated. Please reevaluate.

If, in fact, the church has lost integrity from its early period, please discuss its continued (?) eligibility under criterion A for religion.

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

Oversight -
presumably local should
have been checked -
correct?

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to Beth Savage (202) 343-9550

Signed Patricia Andrews Date 9/17/87 Phone: _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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JUN 13 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration FormNATIONAL
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1. Name of Property

historic name First Unitarian Church (preferred)
other names/site number Park Square Church

2. Location

street & number 7 Park Street N/A not for publication
city, town Peabody N/A vicinity
state MA code 025 county Essex code 009 zip code 01960

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
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<u>1</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
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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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Valerie A. Talmage
Signature of certifying official

June 3, 1988
Date

Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religious Structure - Church

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Multiple Dwelling - Condominium**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek RevivalItalianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation unknownwalls clapboardroof asphalt shinglesother N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Peabody's First Unitarian Church (Park Square Church) displays a combination of Greek Revival and Italianate elements. In overall form it follows the classic New England meeting house with its pedimented facade and multi-staged steeple all of white painted wood. The entry porch added in 1872 is Italianate in character, with bold sculptural forms. The tall double doors are surmounted by a lunette, and are placed beneath a barrel-vaulted roof which projects from the center of the main facade. The doors are flanked by paired, incised pilasters; from there the wall on each side curves back to another pair of pilasters where it joins the main facade. Rectangular windows set into this curved wall are framed by a simple moulding. A heavy cornice is supported by brackets, emphasizing the sculptural quality of this portion of the building. The facade behind the porch is, in contrast, restrained in its use of ornament. This was the original portico of the church and six columns are still visible, although the spaces between them are now filled in and faced with clapboards. The columns terminate in modest molded capitals and support a plain board architrave and bracketed cornice. A well-proportioned pediment, also faced in wood clapboards, completes this temple-front facade.

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JUN 13 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 1 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Below this window is a small entrance porch, covering the lower portion of the pilaster. This porch, whose paired pilasters and simple pediment echo the main facade, contains two more small round-arched windows on each side. The double doors are topped by a transom of square lights. A 1906 photograph shows a small bracketed cornice over a single door in this position; the present porch was probably added during a 1927 renovation. On the south wall there is a two-story rectory wing projecting from the facade, and covering the lower portion of the middle pilaster. This wing was added in 1868 and originally served as a chapel.

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continued

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

RECEIVED

JUN 13 1968

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**NATIONAL
REGISTER**

Section number 7 **Page** 2 **First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA**

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8. Statement of Significance First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1826-1938

Significant Dates

18721927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The First Unitarian Church in Peabody, built in 1826 is an example of a Greek Revival church whose mid-19th century overlay of Italianate features reflects the prosperity and confidence of the Unitarian congregation. The building is architecturally significant for its fine quality Greek Revival and Italianate-style detailing. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling and workmanship, the First Unitarian Church conveys its associations with the development of the Unitarian Church in Peabody and the North Shore area well into the 20th century, thus fulfilling criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places on the local level.

The history of the First Unitarian Church and its congregation is closely tied to the history of the town it served. The original village of Brooksby was settled in 1626; in 1752 it joined with Salem Village (now Danvers) to form Danvers Township. Although nominally united, the two functioned as separate towns, and after 1813 each elected its own town officials. During this period the town, first as South Danvers and then as Peabody, grew from an agriculture-based village of 700 to a large manufacturing town, with a population of 1,643 by 1800 and 8,110 by 1850. The leather industry, established in the 1730s, grew rapidly and gave Peabody an industrial character which emphasized its separate identity from the still-agricultural Danvers.

The religious character of the area was also changing in the late 18th-early 19th century. The liberalism which developed within the Congregational Churches of the Standing Order in New England was gaining strength, and by 1805 had caused the split between the Congregational Church and what came to be called Unitarianism. Between 1805 and 1835, approximately 1/3 of the Congregational churches in Massachusetts had become Unitarian; in other cases groups split off from the main congregation and formed their own churches. In Peabody, on January 1, 1825, "a company of 15 gentlemen assembled...to confer together as to the organization of a new religious society in South Danvers, which should be in harmony with the sentiments known as Unitarian". 1825 was the year in which the American Unitarian Association was organized, and towns all over New England were mirroring the events in Peabody. Once the church

☒ See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

JUN 13 1988

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 1 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

was incorporated, in June of 1825, an appointed committee reported plans for the new church, which was to be "outwardly similar to the church in Lynn, and with interior arrangements like those of Rev. Mr. Coleman's church in Salem". Construction was begun shortly thereafter, and was finished in July 1826, at a total cost of \$8,734.00.

The founders and members of the original congregation included many prominent citizens of Peabody. Abner Sanger and Benjamin Goodridge, two men who were successful in the tanning industry, paid for the cost of building the cellar in exchange for allowing them to store hides in its for a period of ten years. Leverett Saltonstall and Benjamin Merrill, two successful lawyers in the area presented an Aaron Willard clock which was placed in the auditorium. The cost of construction was covered by selling pew subscriptions to the original congregation.

The church building was dedicated July 26, 1826, and the pulpit was temporarily supplied by Mr. Alonzo Hill. In April of 1827 a church was formed of 71 members, and the Reverend Charles Seawall of Dedham was installed as Pastor. The congregation grew with Peabody; as the tanning industry flourished, the town grew prosperous, and so did the church. The introduction of steam boilers and the invention of the splitting machine revolutionized the leather production in 1840; by 1855 it had become the town's chief industry with other 27 tanneries in operation. The growth of the town prompted agitation for a high school to serve the area, and in 1850 one was established in a small, one-story building at the rear of the church, which had once been used as a chapel or vestry. In the first year 25 pupils attended class there, and in ensuing years the class grew to 43.

A severe fire which swept Peabody in 1843 and "threatened at times the destruction of the entire center of Peabody" did spread to the church building, but serious damage was prevented by "strenuous and daring exertions of a few people who held their dangerous position on its roof until the peril was averted."

In 1855 the two towns that make up Danvers Township separated, and were incorporated as Danvers and South Danvers. At this time the high school was relocated to a new building designed to serve as the Town Hall. The building at the rear of the church became a dwelling, and was later moved to Washington Street. In 1868, the town of South Danvers voted to change its name to Peabody, after the famous philanthropist George Peabody, a native of the area. In May of the same year, construction was begun on a new chapel at the rear of the church. The chapel was completed in October 1869, the whole expense being assumed by the Ladies Association of the parish.

continued

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National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 2 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

The prosperity of Peabody during this period is attested to by the major renovations undertaken in 1872. The original temple-front Greek Revival building was remodelled in the then-popular Italianate style. It was at this time that the portico was enclosed and an entry porch containing a new vestibule was added to the front facade. The large windows on the north and south were modified, and Italianate decorative elements incorporated. The interior of the church was completely reconstructed; the gallery was removed and the auditorium remodeled and refitted. The cost of these renovations, \$15,000, surpassed the cost of the original building, and were paid in full by the congregation. During the renovation services were held in the new chapel. The church was rededicated following the renovations; the sermon at the re-opening was delivered by Edward Everett Hale. A new organ was installed in 1886 and the following year the bellfry was improved and a new bell installed.

Peabody and the First Unitarian Church flourished through the remainder of the 19th century and for the first decades of the 20th century. In 1927 a small entrance porch was added on the north elevation. In 1939, the church was painted white and clapboards were repaired.

Support for the church dwindled in the 1940s as Peabody's population became predominantly Catholic. Of the more than 20 protestant churches in Peabody, the Episcopal and Congregational Churches remained the strongest, while the Unitarian Church began to flounder. In 1945 it merged with the First Universalist Church of Peabody and became a federated church in 1947, with services to be held at the First Unitarian Church. The congregations, however, continued to erode and the location of the members shifted to Danvers. In 1965 the Peabody church united with the church in Danvers to become the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Church. Services were held in Peabody while a new church was being constructed in Danvers; when it was completed in September of 1967 the First Unitarian Church was vacated.

Presently, the church building is residential in use. Rehabilitation included the careful and faithful restoration of the exterior. All significant exterior features have been preserved. The new white iron railings across the upper half of the windows, and the shades at the lower half, are interior fixtures which indicate the new use within. The new floor level is not visible from the exterior.

continued

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Section number 8 Page 2 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

The interior treatment is characterized by retention of details and most partitions, but major spaces have been subdivided. The auditorium has been subdivided into multiple units, with new floor levels. All perimeter finishes have been preserved, including window casings, baseboards and doors. Although, the tall open space that historically defined the church as meeting place has been subdivided, the main entry vestibule retains most of its character even though it has been somewhat shortened by a new wall. The secondary entry hall and stair have also been preserved, but the similar space on the south has been altered by the introduction of a kitchen below the stair on the first level. Walls, doors, and finishes of the minister's quarters in the south ell have been preserved with a few partitions added.

end

9. Major Bibliographical ReferencesOsbourne, Theodore Moody. A History of Peabody. 1888(Peabody Historical Society).Wells, John B. The Peabody Story-Events in Peabody's History 1626-1972. Essex Institute, Salem, MA.

Church Records, Unitarian Universalist Association, 15 Beacon Street, Boston, MA

Previous documentation on file (NPS): HPCA#10410MA

☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested (part 2 denied 12/5/86)☐ 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 # _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State historic preservation office☐ Other State agency☐ Federal agency☐ Local government☐ University☐ Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

survey #305

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property less than one acre

Salem Quad Scale: 1:25,000

UTM References

A

1	9	3	4	1	7	1	0	4	7	0	9	5	9	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See Assessor's Map

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property are the boundaries of plot #143, 1590.

☐ See continuation sheet**11. Form Prepared By**name/title American Landmarks Inc. Elizabeth White, Betsy Friedberg, Director, National
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date May, 1988 Register
street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02116

WASO Form - 177
("R" June 1984)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

First Unitarian Church
Essex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 8-6-87

Fed. Reg. Date: _____

Date Due: 7/28/88

Action: ACCEPT

RETURN

REJECT 7-27-88

Federal Agency: _____

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

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☒ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

*Reviewed at staff conference.
See letter w/ explanation.*

Recom./Criteria Rept

Reviewer Savage

Discipline Architectural History

Date 7/27/88

_____ 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	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	

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 _____

see letter dated 8/18/88

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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JUN 13 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration FormNATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Unitarian Church (preferred)
other names/site number Park Square Church

2. Location

street & number 7 Park Street N/A not for publication
city, town Peabody N/A vicinity
state MA code 025 county Essex code 009 zip code 01960

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Valerie A. Faernage
Signature of certifying officialJune 3, 1988
DateMassachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Carol Shull9-18-89for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religious Structure - ChurchMultiple Dwelling - Condominium**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revivalfoundation unknownItalianatewalls clapboardroof asphalt shinglesother N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Peabody's First Unitarian Church (Park Square Church) displays a combination of Greek Revival and Italianate elements. In overall form it follows the classic New England meeting house with its pedimented facade and multi-staged steeple all of white painted wood. The entry porch added in 1872 is Italianate in character, with bold sculptural forms. The tall double doors are surmounted by a lunette, and are placed beneath a barrel-vaulted roof which projects from the center of the main facade. The doors are flanked by paired, incised pilasters; from there the wall on each side curves back to another pair of pilasters where it joins the main facade. Rectangular windows set into this curved wall are framed by a simple moulding. A heavy cornice is supported by brackets, emphasizing the sculptural quality of this portion of the building. The facade behind the porch is, in contrast, restrained in its use of ornament. This was the original portico of the church and six columns are still visible, although the spaces between them are now filled in and faced with clapboards. The columns terminate in modest molded capitals and support a plain board architrave and bracketed cornice. A well-proportioned pediment, also faced in wood clapboards, completes this temple-front facade.

On the north and south elevation are paired round-head windows below an oculus window, set within a round-arched hood moulding with a projecting keystone. Four of these are placed between the corner pilaster at the front of the building and a second pilaster approximately two thirds of the way down the facade, and date from the 1872 remodeling. The two large windows between this pilaster and the rear of the building are similar in form but differ slightly in scale. They are elongated and lack the hood moulding and keystone of the others. On the north facade a small round-arched window bordered with square lights is placed mid-way up the facade just beyond the middle pilaster, corresponding with the interior stair landing. This window is stylistically different from the others and appears to date from still later renovation of unknown date.

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

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JUN 13 1988

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 1 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Below this window is a small entrance porch, covering the lower portion of the pilaster. This porch, whose paired pilasters and simple pediment echo the main facade, contains two more small round-arched windows on each side. The double doors are topped by a transom of square lights. A 1906 photograph shows a small bracketed cornice over a single door in this position; the present porch was probably added during a 1927 renovation. On the south wall there is a two-story rectory wing projecting from the facade, and covering the lower portion of the middle pilaster. This wing was added in 1868 and originally served as a chapel.

The church was originally surmounted by a multiple-stage steeple which was completed in 1829, at which time the original bell was installed. A new bell was installed in 1887. The cubic base of the steeple is ornamented with wooden quoins and contains an oculus window in the center of its east face. Curved brackets support a cornice echoing that on the building below. The base is all that now remains of the original three-stage steeple. The stage surmounting the base was ornamented with corner columns and round-arched windows similar to those on the north and south elevations. This stage was in turn topped by a pyramidal spire. The upper stages of the steeple were dismantled after the bell was removed and relocated to the new church in Danvers in 1967.

The interior of the church is divided into several distinct spaces. One enters through a vestibule which leads into the large, two-story auditorium space occupying most of the front half of the building. The interior furnishings of this space, which included wooden pews, a platform pulpit, choir and organ loft, were dismantled by the congregation when it relocated to Danvers. The organ was removed, and an Aaron Willard clock that had hung in the church was presented to the Peabody Museum. The pilastered walls and ceiling in this room have suffered damage from water infiltration in the years since the building was vacated.

The rear of the main block is divided into two floors. A round-arched door at the back of the auditorium opens on a staircase that leads up to the second floor. The rooms in this section were used for various purposes throughout the church's history, and contain no distinctive furnishings or trim. Attached to this portion of the original building is the ca. 1868 wing which served as a rectory and parish house. This wing contained meeting rooms, a dining room and kitchen. No significant interior details remain in this section.

continued

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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JUN 13 1968

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 2 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

The church has been the victim of gradual deterioration and decay during the past twenty years. No major work seems to have been done to the building since the 1939 renovations. A 1954 church visitation report noted that "the buildings are rather old and show signs of neglect," due no doubt to the dwindling resources of the parish. The loss of the steeple in 1967 has been the most dramatic change in the church's appearance.

Archaeology

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property, it is highly likely that sites are present. At least eight sites have been reported in the general area (within one mile). The physical characteristics of the property prior to European settlement may have made this an attractive area for native settlement and subsistence activities. Tidewater from the North River originally extended to this area as well as several tributary brooks. Following settlement, many of these wetlands were altered and filled through urban development. Many favorable site locations around wetlands peripherals may have also been altered or destroyed though it is possible some sites survived. Since patterns of prehistoric occupation in Peabody are poorly documented, any surviving sites would be significant. Regional as well as local significance might result from sites found in this area and their possible association with sites along Salem Harbor, Beverly Harbor, and their tributary river, all known areas of prehistoric period settlement about two to three miles to the north and east.

There is also a potential for significant historic remains on the property. Background research, controlled testing, and excavation may help to determine whether or not remains survive from settlement and economic activities which may have pre-dated church construction. Colonial settlement was present in this area beginning ca. 1626. Cultural remains may also survive from post-1826 church-related activities which took place on grounds around the structure. Each of these sources could provide detailed information on the changing social, cultural, and economic patterns that characterized the development from rural to urban life in Peabody.

8. Statement of Significance First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1826-1938

Significant Dates

18721927

Cultural Affiliation

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Significant Person

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Architect/Builder

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☒ See continuation sheet

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Previous documentation on file (NPS): HPCA#10410MA

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has been requested (part 2 denied 12/5/86)
- ☐ 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 # _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission
survey #305

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

Salem Quad Scale: 1:25,000

UTM References

A

1	1	9
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

--	--	--

D

--	--	--

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See Assessor's Map

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property are the boundaries of plot #143, 1590.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title American Landmarks Inc. Elizabeth White, Betsy Friedberg, Director, National
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date May, 1988 Register _____
street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02116

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

JUN 13 1968

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 1 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

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continued

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

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Peabody and the First Unitarian Church flourished through the remainder of the 19th century and for the first decades of the 20th century. In 1927 a small entrance porch was added on the north elevation. In 1939, the church was painted white and clapboards were repaired.

Support for the church dwindled in the 1940s as Peabody's population became predominantly Catholic. Of the more than 20 protestant churches in Peabody, the Episcopalian and Congregational Churches remained the strongest, while the Unitarian Church began to flounder. In 1945 it merged with the First Universalist Church of Peabody and became a federated church in 1947, with services to be held at the First Unitarian Church. The congregations, however, continued to erode and the location of the members shifted to Danvers. In 1965 the Peabody church united with the church in Danvers to become the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Church. Services were held in Peabody while a new church was being constructed in Danvers; when it was completed in September of 1967 the First Unitarian Church was vacated.

Presently, the church building is residential in use. Rehabilitation included the careful and faithful restoration of the exterior. All significant exterior features have been preserved. The new white iron railings across the upper half of the windows, and the shades at the lower half, are interior fixtures which indicate the new use within. The new floor level is not visible from the exterior.

continued

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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JUN 13 1988

NATIONAL
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2 First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

The interior treatment is characterized by retention of details and most partitions, but major spaces have been subdivided. The auditorium has been subdivided into multiple units, with new floor levels. All perimeter finishes have been preserved, including window casings, baseboards and doors. Although, the tall open space that historically defined the church as meeting place has been subdivided, the main entry vestibule retains most of its character even though it has been somewhat shortened by a new wall. The secondary entry hall and stair have also been preserved, but the similar space on the south has been altered by the introduction of a kitchen below the stair on the first level. Walls, doors, and finishes of the minister's quarters in the south ell have been preserved with a few partitions added.

end

JUN 13 1989

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Park Square Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

Section number 8 Page 3 of 10 (First 2 continuation sheets part of original nomination filed 6/7/85)

A better understanding of the context within which the First Unitarian church flourished at the time of its 1872 alterations, and the influences which lead to those changes, can be better understood from an examination of the city during the period leading up to, during, and immediately following the Civil War.

Profile Of Peabody As A Town

Peabody, Massachusetts evolved in the relatively short space of thirteen years from the South Parish of Danvers, to the separate municipality of South Danvers in 1855, to the Town of Peabody in 1868. Matching a steady population increase, the valuation of property rose steadily from \$2 million in 1856 to \$3.6 million in 1860 to \$3.8 million in 1865, to \$7.2 million by 1887.

As mentioned earlier in the section, but worth repeating, the complexion of the community changed, from a primarily agrarian economy through the 1830's to, at the time of its separation from Danvers in 1855, an industrial center primarily devoted to tanning and shoe and boot manufacture. The value of manufactured products rose steadily from \$2.5 million in 1855, to \$2.85 in 1860, to \$4.2 million in 1865 where it peaked, remaining steady in the \$4.2 million range through the early 1880s.

While the agricultural output increased by approximately the same 60% during the same years, rising from \$75,000 in 1855 to \$120,000 in 1880 the percentage of total town revenue generated by agricultural pursuits, became less and less significant.

Karen A. Talung
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
July 25, 1989

JUL 13 1989

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4 of 10

In his definitive *History of Essex County Massachusetts*, published in 1888, D. Hamilton Hurd wrote: "The town of Peabody has continued the process of development begun half a century ago, and has become distinctly a manufacturing town. Large numbers of operatives, many of them of foreign birth, labor in the various factories..." "The general aspect of the town is suggestive of a thriving active and successful business community, with many evidences of cultivated taste and judgement in the dwellings on the principal streets, and manifestations of an enlightened public spirit seen in excellent streets, commodious and well-kept public buildings and school houses..."

By the mid 1860s the town contained, in addition to its 27 tanneries, 24 currying shops (hide preparation prior to tanning), 13 skin lining shops, 12 boot and shoe manufacturers, 4 glue factories, a last factory (producing wooden shoe mould), and a woolen mill...all relating one way or another to a slightly unglamorous business spectrum of animal by-products, but a profitable niche in the industry of eastern Massachusetts nonetheless.

Although in 1860 leather workers earned an average of \$ 375/yr. compared to the \$ 225 annual wage of shoe workers, local histories record two "extensive strikes" among men employed in the manufacture of leather in the town, one in 1863 and another, lasting seven months, in 1886.

The percentage of "foreign born" or immigrant labor was relatively small in Peabody at the time however (827 out of a total population of 6,500, or 12% in 1860), a far smaller percentage than in some of the state's larger industrial centers like Fall River, Lowell and Lawrence. On balance, the assimilation of immigrant groups does not figure prominently into the annals of Peabody, a town in which the native population seems to have adapted, without the need for massive infusion of cheap immigrant labor, in its transition to manufacturing.

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5 of 10

By the years just after the Civil War, Peabody was becoming, not only an important manufacturing center, but also a suburb. According to Hurd, "many of the heads of families are occupied during the day in Boston, the facilities of railroad communication making the town a convenient place of residence for such as do not wish, or cannot afford to live in the city [of Boston]."

In 1865 the first steam fire engine was bought, a Button engine purchased at the cost of \$ 3,500. Four years later, in 1869, the largest cemetery Cedar Grove, covering 136 acres, was purchased by the City for \$5,000.

Peabody's growth during the period is also reflected in its infrastructure. The town water supply, for instance, until 1850 provided through a series of hollowed-out wooden logs, was upgraded in that year by the installation of iron pipe, and again in 1867 when the town laid cement pipes with 16" feeders to accommodate the growing demand by industry and residents.

Peabody of the 2d and 3d quarters of the 19th century, was a town in transformation, rapidly on its way to becoming a thriving city built on an economy which was, alas, awas in the case of so many other textile and leather centers in New England, to vanish in the 2d and 3d quarters of the 20th century.

Effect On Houses Of Worship:

The quarter-century between 1850 and 1875 witnessed a sustained commitment to upgrading and modifying protestant houses of worship - noteworthy in Peabody as a reflection of the vitality which cut across the industrial and mercantile sectors of the town life. Following is a brief, but telling summary of the changes to the three other major churches in the town at the time. They place in much clearer comparative focus, the changes made to the First Unitarian Church during the same period.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
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The First Universalist Parish of Peabody (formerly the Second Universalist Society of Danvers) altered its 1833 Greek Revival church building in 1867, when the Society "voted to remodel the church...in a thorough manner at an expense of \$ 9,000" (1). The church was rededicated in 1868. In 1873 the Society remodelled its vestry, spending an additional \$ 1,200. In 1879 the Universalists spent \$2,500 more to literally raise their church building off the ground "to give more height to the vestry and to improve the entrance"(2).

The Second Congregational church of Danvers (South Parish) was Peabody's oldest parish, its church building originally constructed in 1811. The building was torn down in 1836, and replaced by a new church building. A new parsonage was added to the church complex in 1869. Changes to the Second Congregational church continued. In 1880 "extensive changes were made to the interior of the church" according to Hurd.

As an interesting aside, we know that the First Unitarian Church at Park Square had offered the use of its then quite new (1828) building to the Congregationalists in 1834 while their new church was being constructed. Interestingly, the Congregationalists spurned the offer, deciding instead to meet in a cramped, makeshift hall.

To a lesser extent the Methodists were not immune to the competition, for in 1859 their own 1836 church structure was "raised up and remodelled"; in 1863 a Stevens clock was placed in the tower of the church, and a new bell was installed; in 1868 the society purchased a parsonage on Sewell Street for \$ 2 thousand. Further improvements and modifications to the Methodist meeting house continued on into the 1880's, including remodelling the vestry in 1876, and a new organ in 1879. In 1882 the Stevens clock was replaced by a new Howard clock

1. Hurd, D.H. History Of Essex Co. Vol 2., page 1023

2. *ibid*, page 1030

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 of 10

While there is no hard evidence to substantiate it, one might easily conclude from the frenzy of church building and remodelling of the period, that in addition to the competition for the salvation of souls, there was a certain unspoken social competition associated with church parishes during the period between 1825 and the end of the century.

These facts concerning the physical manifestations of Peabody's religious life are of relative insignificance today; however they underscore and reflect the rapidity with which the community was quickly evolving, and gaining importance as a manufacturing community in the regional economy.

These ubiquitous remodellings and retrofits of the towns protestant parishes during the period also suggests a general perception of one's religious affiliation as integral to one's civic persona- indeed it would seem that religion in Peabody during those years, or at least Protestantism, was a virtual competition to see which parish could out spend the others.

The architecture of the old meeting houses, especially in the cases of the four Protestant denominations, was clearly not sacrosanct to their congregations. Today, with 100 years hindsight and our appreciation for the simplicity of an earlier era, we regard pristine classical revival church buildings as quintessentially "New England". In the 1860's and '70's, Peabody was in a state of profound change, economically, socially, and one may infer, religiously. The parishes of that period had no self-image of quaintness, nor qualms about fundamental change to existing church structures. In fact, the drastic changes which took place in all three of the major Protestant houses of worship reflect a dynamism and forward-looking attitude which is difficult for us to gauge today.

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
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As an historical footnote, it should be mentioned that the Roman Catholic population of Peabody, then growing through the immigration of Irish and Italian labor for the tanning and shoe industries, had no church at all in Peabody until 1879 when St. John's Church parish was dedicated. By far the largest church structure in Peabody when completed, St. John's accommodated 1,200 worshippers at mass. Constructed of "brick with granite trimmings", St. John's became, and remains to this day, the largest religious structure in Peabody.

The Episcopalians, also late-comers in the development of organized religion in Peabody, were not to erect their first church until 1877.

The Influence Of George Peabody:

Although difficult to prove empirically, one underlying explanation for the development of an unusually singular community identity in the decade following the Civil War, was the impact of the benefactions of George Peabody, international financier and the town's most famous son. Peabody, who founded the predecessor firm to the House of Morgan, was, at the time of his death in 1870, said to be the richest man in the world, having a fortune exceeding \$ 8 million. In 1868 the town of South Danvers formally adopted the name of Peabody in his honor.

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George Peabody had been born in town, as one of ten children in a family of relative poverty. Although he left South Danvers at an early age and spent his productive years abroad, George Peabody retained a lasting affection for the town of his birth, and, over the years he lavished benefactions on it. The Peabody Institute of South Danvers, more recently known simply as the Peabody Institute, was endowed with more than \$ 200,000 from Peabody during the 1850s and '60s.

His English benefactions to establish housing for the poor, and gifts to the southern states of the US to promote education of blacks, totalled over \$ 4 million. Although difficult to fathom in our own age of popular cynicism toward big business, Peabody was lionized on two continents as embodying the loftiest of human virtues. At the time of his death, his body was accompanied from England on Queen Victoria's orders, by a royal prince for burial in Peabody, and crowds numbering in the thousands gathered for the rites.

George Peabody's fascinating life no doubt touched every citizen of the town, and although his presence was not felt on a daily basis, it is reasonable to assume that the wordly nature of his activities, imparted a somewhat larger vision to the town's inhabitants and their institutions. However unglamorous its manufacturing base, Peabody, Massachusetts was no parochial backwater. Not surprisingly, the town's churches constitute the best single manifestation of "lofty" community self-image.

Summary Statement:

In summary, Peabody's First Unitarian Church at Park Square, now the oldest surviving ecclesiastical building in the town, was not unique in its radical change from, simple Greek Revival temple to Victorian amalgamation. On the contrary, it was only one of four churches with a similar evolutionary history.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 10 of 10

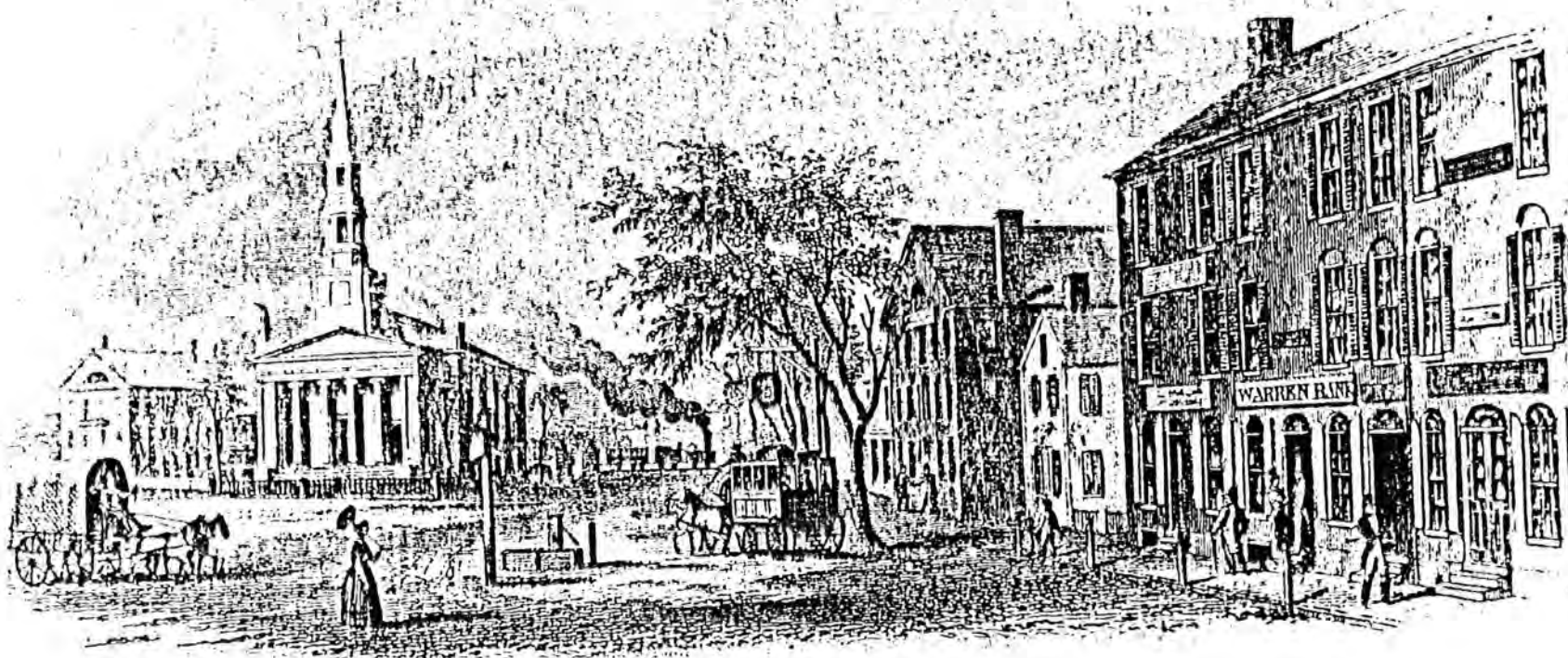
The mere fact of its survival however, makes it unique today as the last of the churches of its day, and the only one left as a legacy from the most fertile and energetic era in Peabody's history.

9. Additional Bibliographical References

The Wizard (newspaper) Issues of 1865-'67

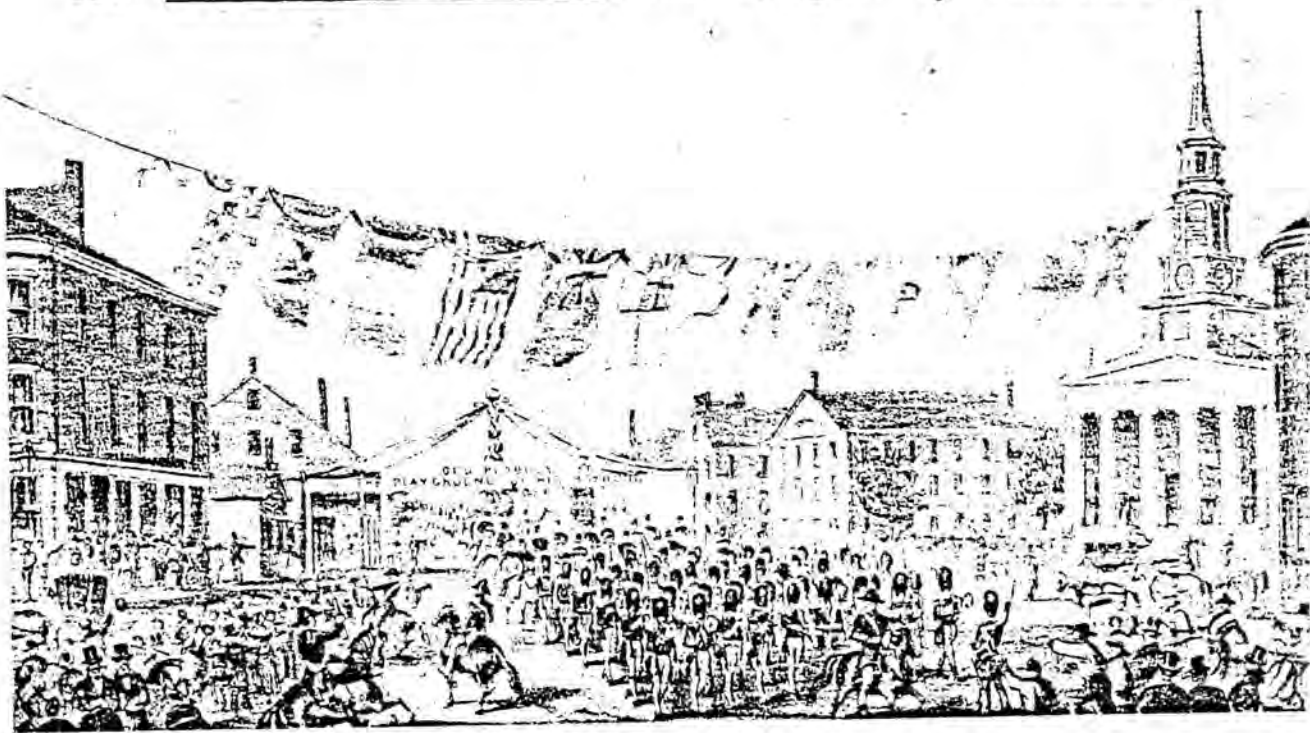
The Peabody Press (newspaper) Issues of 1868-'75

Hurd, D. Hamilton, History Of Essex County, Massachusetts, Vol 2., J.W. Lewis and Co. Philadelphia, PA 1888

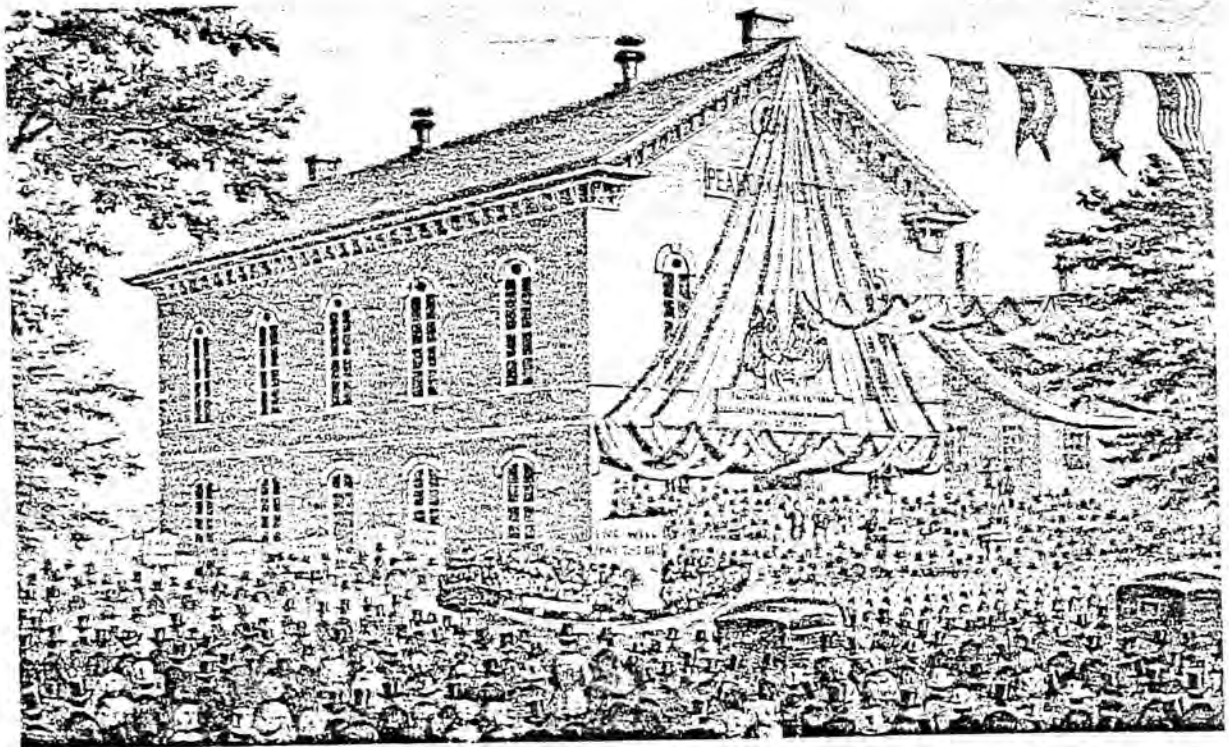


From History Of Essex County, Vol 2., by D. Hamilton Hurd
 PEABODY SQUARE in 1848 copied from back of Warren Bank bill. View shows last South Church* on the square (1844-1960); Ashland building (Klemm's Bakery) next to church; Allen block with bank before enlargement; Lewis Allen residence; and Dustin Hotel.
 * Second Congregational

For First Unitarian Church of Peabody, Mass
 NRHP Nomination 6/89.



RECEPTION TO GEORGE PEABODY October 9, 1856 with large parade passing through Peabody Square.



THE PEABODY INSTITUTE AT THE TIME OF THE ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

GEORGE PEABODY addressing his fellow citizens at Reception of 1856.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 88001091Date Listed: 09/18/89First Unitarian Church
Property NameEssex
CountyMA
StateMultiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Careal D. Shull
Signature of the Keeper

2-22-90
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Criteria considerations

Criteria exception A is applicable for the property's previous religious ownership and function.

This information was confirmed with Ann Tait, Acting National Register Director, MASHPO, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: First Unitarian Church

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 8/04/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/18/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 88001091

NOMINATOR: STATE

DETAILED EVALUATION: Y

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9/18/89 DATE *eds*

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Architecturally significant Church
which reflects local prosperity and
religious mores through its modernization
throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.
Sufficient contextual documentation has
now been provided which justifies the
significance of the property's evolution
and its remodelled condition within
the context of developments affecting
Protestant churches in Newbury.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C
REVIEWER Savage
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 9/15/89

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments (Y/N see attached SLR (Y/N)
see letters dated 8-18-88
+ 3-20-89.

CLASSIFICATION

☐ count ☐ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

☐ historic ☐ current

DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification
☐ materials
☐ descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage ☐ verbal boundary description
☐ UTM's ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____



First Unitarian Church-North and
East facade

First Unitarian Church
(Park Square Church)
7 Park Street
Peabody, MA

American Landmarks, Inc.
1985

negative: American Landmarks, Inc.
72 Broad Street
Boston, MA 02110

north and east facades
#1 of 5



First Unitarian Church-South and
East facades

First Unitarian Church (Park Square Church)

7 Park Street

Peabody, MA

American Landmarks, Inc.

1985

negative: American Landmarks, Inc.

72 Broad Street

Boston, MA 02110

South + east facades

#2 of 5



PARK STREET CHURCH
7 PARK ST, PEABODY, MA
AMERICAN LANDMARKS, INC.
1987

NEGATIVE: AM. L'MARKS, INC.
72 BROAD ST
BOSTON MA 02110

FROM NORTHEAST

#3 of 5



PARK ST. CHURCH
7 PARK ST, PEABODY MA
AMERICAN LANDMARKS, INC.
1987

NEGATIVE: AM. LANDMARKS, INC.
72 BROAD ST
BOSTON MA 02110

FROM SOUTHEAST

#4 of 5

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name

First Unitarian Church

County, State

Essex,
Massachusetts

Reference Number

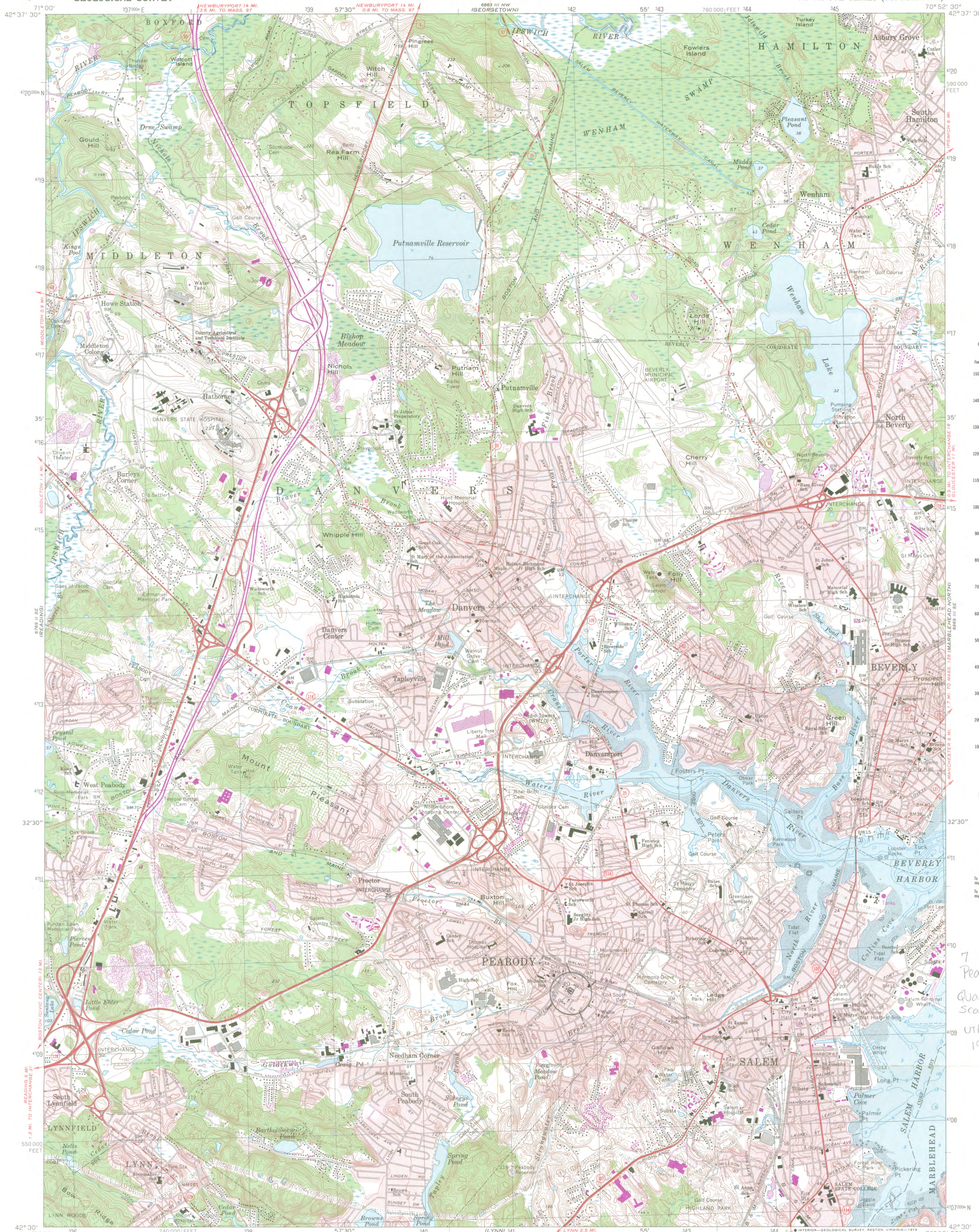
88001091

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

☐ Nomination Form

☒ Photographs (#5)

☐ USGS Map



CONVERSION
SCALES



Feet	Meters
1	3048
2	6096
3	9144
4	12192
5	15240
6	18288
7	21336
8	24384
9	27432
10	30480

To convert feet to meters
multiply by .3048
To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

7 Park Street
Peabody, MA
Quad Salem
Scale 1:25000
UTM References:
19/341710/4709590

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1938. Topography by planetable surveys 1942.
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970.
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 240 and
241 (1970). This information is not intended
for navigational purposes.
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone.
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19.
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works.
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown.



SCALE 1:25 000
1 0000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9 FEET
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

SALEM, MASS.
N4230—W7052.5/7.5
1970
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6869 III SW—SERIES V814

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

H4215(424)

FEB 9 1987

Mr. Frederick W. Lyman
American Landmarks, Inc.
72 Broad Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

Re: Park Street Church, 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts
Project Number: 10410MA
Taxpayer's Identification Number: 22-2495066

Dear Mr. Lyman:

This is in response to your letter of January 26, 1987, and in further reference to the December 15, 1986, request for an administrative review of the decision of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service that the rehabilitation of the property referenced above does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The request for an administrative review was made pursuant to Department of the Interior regulations (36 CFR 67.10) for purposes of Federal historic preservation tax incentives contained in the Internal Revenue Code. As you know, such reviews are performed at the discretion of the Chief Appeals Officer.

At this time the Park Street Church is not yet listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and it is my understanding that the nomination is not presently scheduled for submission to the State Review Board until September. Although I recognize that availability of the 25 percent investment tax credit is predicated on "certified historic structure" designation, given the full schedule of appeals in the coming months, I have decided not to act on your request until such time as the Park Street Church is actually nominated to the National Register by the State. I do note, however, that the Internal Revenue Service rulemaking, 26 CFR Part 1, permits claiming the credit prior to receipt of final certification from the Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. Lyman

2

As soon as the building is listed in the National Register, I will proceed with processing your client's request for an appeal. In the meantime, you may wish to contact the Massachusetts Historical Commission about expediting the presentation of the nomination to the State Review Board.

Sincerely,

(sgd) Ernest A. Connally

Ernest Allen Connally
Chief Appeals Officer

cc: Mr. Charles F. Saunders
Vice President
Charing Cross Corporation
P.O. Box 3488
83 Pine Street
Boston, Massachusetts 01961-3488

SHPO-MA

bcc: MARO-Stevenson
SOL-Hanslin, Main Interior, Room 6540
Dr. Connally, 1100 L St., Room 2113
001-Reading File 001-Mott 400-Reading File
424-Siler
424-BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 424
FNP:SBLUMENTHAL:skb:2/6/87:343-9593 (ITT "Lyman")
Filed: H4215(Specific)



P 685 548199

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary of State
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director

State Historic Preservation Officer

July 29, 1987

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Boston (Charlestown), Francis B. Austin House, 58 High Street
Needham, Robert Fuller House, 3 Burrill Lane
Peabody, First Unitarian Church, 7 Park Street

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination form.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure



June 3, 1988

Ms. Carol Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the revised nomination forms for the following properties, which were returned by your office for technical and substantive corrections.

Becket, North Becket Historic District, Main, High, and Pleasant Streets
(please note that photographs do reflect current condition of buildings within the district)

Boston (Charlestown), Francis B. Austin House, 58 High Street (HPCA #10350MA)

Boston, Temple Place Historic District, 11-55, 26-56 Temple Place

Cambridge (MRA amendment), Harvard Square Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Chicopee, Thomas C. Page House, 105 East Street

Peabody, First Unitarian Church, 7 Park Street (HPCA #10410MA)

All corrections have been made, as requested. Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

JUN 13 1988



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127



IN REPLY REFER TO:

H32(413)

AUG 18 1988

Ms. Valerie A. Talmage
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Dear Ms. Talmage:

Our review of the nomination of the First Unitarian Church in Peabody to the National Register of Historic Places has been concluded.

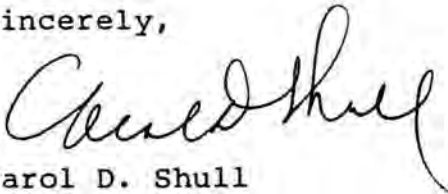
After careful evaluation of the nomination documentation we have concluded that the property does not meet the National Register criteria for evaluation, because of its loss of historic integrity over time. The church was originally constructed in 1826 in the Greek Revival style and subsequently substantially remodelled with Italianate detailing in 1872. The 1872 remodelling included the filling in of the original entrance portico, the addition of a new vestibule and entrance, the alteration of the windows, the addition of Italianate decorative elements, and "the interior was completely reconstructed; the gallery was removed and the auditorium remodeled and refitted." Other more minor alterations are indicated in the documentation from 1927 and 1939. In 1967, the church suffered another series of alterations when its interior furnishings (including the pews, the pulpit, the choir and organ loft, the organ, and the clock), two sections of its three-part bell tower, and its steeple were removed upon the congregation's move to Danvers.

Recently the church was rehabilitated and is now used for multiple unit housing. During the recent rehabilitation project, the interior was altered once again by the subdivision of space both horizontally and vertically through the insertion of a floor level into the already reduced auditorium space and the insertion of new, additional room partitions. The rehabilitation work is characterized as "the faithful restoration of the exterior...and the retention of details and most partitions" on the interior. However, the only interior space described as having retained most of its character is the vestibule, "even though it has been somewhat shortened by a new wall." It is our opinion that the cumulative effect of the aforementioned alterations has resulted in the loss of the church's historic integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The property has been subjected to so many layers of alteration that it clearly does not retain integrity from the 1826 period. The nomination documentation does not justify the 1872 remodelling as a particularly significant alteration on its own merit, nor does it justify the architectural significance of the church as a particularly good example of an evolutionary amalgam reflective of distinctive architectural trends over a continuous period of significance from 1826 to 1938. On the exterior, the church does not clearly represent a significant example of any specific period(s) or architectural style(s), but rather it is a combination of individual decorative elements and features from various periods, none of which are documented as particularly significant within the context of Peabody's historic architectural development. On the interior, the church has lost all semblance of what historically constituted its character-defining features through its subdivision and alteration. The combination of the complete loss of the church's historic interior spaces, the numerous exterior alterations, and the property's new use as condominiums has destroyed the property's ability to convey historic or architectural significance.

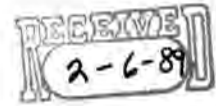
If we can provide any further information, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
Interagency Resources Division

Enclosure



January 26, 1989

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

RE: First Unitarian Church, Peabody, Massachusetts

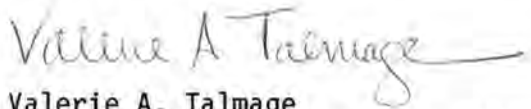
Dear Ms. Shull:

I am writing at the request of Frederick P. Lyman of American Landmarks Inc., preservation consultant for the owners and developers of the First Unitarian Church, Peabody. Mr. Lyman is appealing the decision of the National Register staff that the nominated property does not meet the National Register criteria for evaluation because of its loss of integrity over time.

Massachusetts Historical Commission staff and the State Review Board of the MHC believe that the property possesses both historic and architectural significance, and that it does retain integrity. The building holds strong associations with the development of Unitarianism in Peabody and is the oldest extant church in the city. It is a good example of ecclesiastical architecture, an amalgam of Greek Revival and Italianate styling; the addition of features in the latter style 45 years after initial construction reflects the prosperity of the congregation and the city in the decades following the Civil War. Finally, despite certain changes to its interior during its period of significance, the building's exterior remains essentially unchanged since its 1872 updating, save for the addition of an entry porch in the 1920s and the loss of its steeple in the 1960s. Therefore, MHC staff feels that the building continues to retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

I urge the National Register staff to reconsider its rejection of this property for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Valerie A. Talmage", followed by a horizontal flourish line.

Valerie A. Talmage
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

cc: Frederick P. Lyman

City of Peabody, Massachusetts

Office of the Mayor

Debra S. MacGregor
Administrative Assistant



24 Lowell Street
Peabody, MA 01960
(617) 532-3000

Peter Torigian
Mayor

January 30, 1989

Mr. Jerry Rogers
Keeper of the National Register
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D. C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I am writing to express my support for a reversal of the decision by the National Park Service to reject the application to list 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts (Park Square Church) in the National Register of Historic Places.

From a very practical standpoint, I want to point out that the Park Street/Park Square neighborhood has been the target for special revitalization consideration since 1985. The adaptive re-use of the church, which was a vacant and derelict structure and an eyesore to the downtown core for many years, was long a priority of the City's redevelopment program. It appears to me that although the interior has been changed, the exterior still retains its architectural and historical integrity, and the church is certainly the oldest in the City.

Architecturally, the church has been cited as "a good example of 19th century Greek Revival and Italianate detailing with strong associations to the development of Unitarianism in Peabody." There is no doubt that the building is of great local significance and an asset to our downtown core area.

Again, I urge your reconsideration to place this important property on the National Register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Torigian".

Peter Torigian, Mayor
CITY OF PEABODY

PT:MRP:mf

American Landmarks, Inc.

Investment and Development Consultants for Historic Properties

(Nom.)

APPEAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 3, 1989

SUBJECT: First Unitarian Church, 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts

TO: Mr. Jerry Rogers, Ms. Carol Shull et als

FROM: Frederick W. Lyman

A full architectural description of the First Unitarian Church, and a statement of its significance were provided in our initial NRHP nomination of March 1985, and in updated materials furnished by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Accordingly, they needn't be re-read verbatim here. What I would like to present is a carefully-considered response to Ms. Shull's denial letter of August 18, 1988 which will, we hope, have a bearing on your deliberation, and ultimately contribute to the listing of the First Unitarian Church building of Peabody Massachusetts to the National Register of Historic Places.

The crux of the issue is really two-fold.

- 1.) While the effects of the recent rehabilitation were brought into question, NPS feels that the building lost its integrity by benefit of alterations in 1872, 1927 and 1965 previous to the recent rehabilitation of 1985, and, therefore
- 2.) cannot now convey historic or architectural significance sufficient to warrant listing.

Specifically, we wish to respond in a constructive way to statements made by Ms. Shull in her denial letter as follows:

In paragraph 1 Ms. Shull states " the church was originally constructed in 1826 in the Greek Revival style and subsequently substantially remodelled with Italianate detailing in 1872". Later in paragraph 4 on page 2. Ms. Shull goes on to say that the documentation "does not justify the 1872 remodelling as a particularly significant alteration on its own merit".

We believe on the contrary, that the church actually metamorphosed from a simple Greek Revival structure in 1872, taking on a whole new identity at

that time. This is supported by the recent discovery of a transcribed address by Reverend John W. Hudson on July 23, 1876. According to Hudson, then the pastor, the changes which took place in 1872- the church's fiftieth anniversary - were "\$15,000 - far greater than that of the original church". The original church had cost \$ 8,734, only slightly more than half the cost of the 1872 "remodelling". Such a dramatic transformation of the church was in fact a clear reflection of the powerful surge in Peabody taking place at that time. The city was emerging from its spartan colonial Yankee roots and architectural austerity, after years of a relatively static local economy, into a robust, multi-ethnic industrial center reflective of the vitality and architectural dynamism of post Civil War industrial America. Peabody was rapidly becoming one of the largest tanning centers in North America, providing cured leather to the pre-eminent shoe industry of the Merrimac River valley, and its Unitarian congregation wanted to be a part of this new vitality.

Ms. Shull concludes by observing, "on the exterior, the church does not clearly represent a significant example of any specific period(s) or architectural style(s), but rather is a combination of individual decorative elements and features from various periods". With all due respect we would differ by observing that the church stands today as a uniquely beautiful amalgam of the earlier very simple Greek Revival, overlaid with wonderfully robust Italianate decorative devices. The beautifully proportioned and detailed entry vestibule is, to my mind, really an exquisite architectural composition in its own right. The paired round head sash, surmounted in each case by an oculus window, the deeply incised ashlar of the steeple base, and other detailing from the 1872 reconstruction, combine with the earlier 1826 temple form to create a building of surprising vitality and architectural merit.

In fact I genuinely believe the result of this marriage of styles is an exceptional piece of architecture - one unique to my knowledge - in the Boston area. Moreover, the modifications were carried out with such aplomb that, even though the architect is not recorded, the design was the work of a genuine master of the profession.

I believe the photographs we have brought show the building to best advantage, and that conversely, the pre-rehabilitation photographs which accompanied the initial nomination do not do justice to the building as a cohesive architectural entity.

With respect to the interior, Ms. Shull observes on page one of her letter, that the church lost integrity over time, among other reasons, because in 1872 the "interior was completely reconstructed". Subsequently, "in 1967 "the church suffered another series of alterations when its interior furnishings ... were removed upon the congregation's move to Danvers."

We realize that the recent rehabilitation was a profound one, but we also believe that Ms. Shull's observation regarding a loss of integrity to the interior in 1967 are germane. Accordingly, I felt as the consultant, and after much deliberation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission's NRHP and Technical Services staffs, that the loss of interior integrity would permit alternative use of the building for residences, while not irreparably damaging the building's overall significance and eligibility for the Register. This was a delicate balance to be struck, but there was a consensus on this at the state level which allowed the project to proceed, and for the church building to be saved.

An important factor in this complicated equation is that the rehabilitation of the church building for residences saved it from almost certain arson and/or demolition. The pre-rehabilitation photographs taken in 1985 clearly show the building to have been *in extremis*.

If one accepts the testimony of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the City of Peabody, the building is of major local significance both historically and as a universally-known local landmark. It was the availability of the investment tax credit for certified rehabilitation which stimulated the church's more recent rehabilitation.

As pertinent background for evaluating the effect of the recent rehabilitation, you should know that in 1981 the City of Peabody actively

solicited a grant for establishment of a district with the church as its centerpiece. (Appendix A) The Massachusetts Historical Commission responded with its opinion that the Park Square Church and surrounding neighborhood was "quite intact and appears to meet the National Register criteria". (Appendix B) Due to the lack of available funding the district could not be nominated, and the city actively participated in the search for a purchaser for the church- by then it a state of near loss through abandonment and neglect. (Its previous use had been as a storage warehouse for the Boston Opera Co. stage sets.)(Photo #12.) The state worked closely with the purchaser, Charing Cross Corp., and with us as their consultant, in developing a plan for the rehabilitation which it felt both met the Standards and National Register evaluation criteria. In fact knowing that both had to be satisfied in order to make the project a reality, we conducted meetings with both the NRHP and Technical services staffs at the state level. The NRHP staff requested a number of changes to the basic plan, most importantly the relocation of bedrooms to the basement level so as to leave in tact an unusually significant roof framing system. (See photos# 10 and 11) (Correspondence Appendices C, D and E).

Thus, we come to you today, not with some after-the-fact effort to commemorate a building and to validate a rehabilitation for the investment tax credits alone, but with a genuine sense of bewilderment that the process could have gone astray.

I deeply believe that this was and remains a building deserving of recognition by the Register. As a preservation consultant I have personally supervised the inventory of several thousand buildings, and the listing of several hundred. I realize that this is only a small fraction of the number of buildings the Chief of Registration and her staff have overseen, and I do not present myself as anything more than a well-educated consultant and committed preservationist.

We ask you to reconsider the merits of the First Unitarian Church as a unique and beautiful evolutionary building meeting criterion C. We ask that you consider the circumstances of its recent past and the high likelihood that the building would have been lost to history altogether had not the recent

residential conversion taken place. Finally, and further, we ask that you weigh the requests of the Unitarian-Universalist Association of America, the City of Peabody and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (Appendices F, G and H) for recognition of the structure under criterion A, as an important landmark in the City of Peabody and an important ecclesiastical building to the development of the Unitarian-Universalist faith in Massachusetts.

We stand ready to answer any questions you may have and to provide you with whatever additional data are needed to provide a foundation for a decision to include the First Unitarian Church on the National Register.

Thank you.

APPENDIX A

December 20, 1984

Ms. Valerie A. Talmage
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Ms. Talmage:

The Peabody Historical Commission is interested in completing a historical survey for the Park Street area in our downtown. The area is largely intact and includes some interesting public and private buildings.

Peabody's Community Development Department will complete the survey with the help of the local Historical Commission and Society. Our goal is to register the area as a National Historic District. There are potentially some tax act projects in the area.

We would like to get underway as soon as possible. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,


Richard Higgins, Chairman
Peabody Historical Commission



MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

June 8, 1981

Paul Bracciotti, Coordinator
Community Development Department
City Hall
Peabody, MA 01960

Dear Paul:

It was a pleasure to meet with you last week to review the National Register potential of Peabody's downtown and the Park Square and Washington Street neighborhoods. As we discussed, I do not believe that the downtown would be eligible as a district although I do think that a few individual buildings such as the Sutton Block could be listed. The other two areas are quite intact and appear to meet the National Register criteria. I am enclosing maps with suggested boundaries although these may change somewhat based on further research. I hope that the city will be able to hire a professional to prepare nomination forms and perhaps to develop a preservation plan for the downtown area.

If you have any questions please let me know. Thank you for the publications on Peabody and the articles.

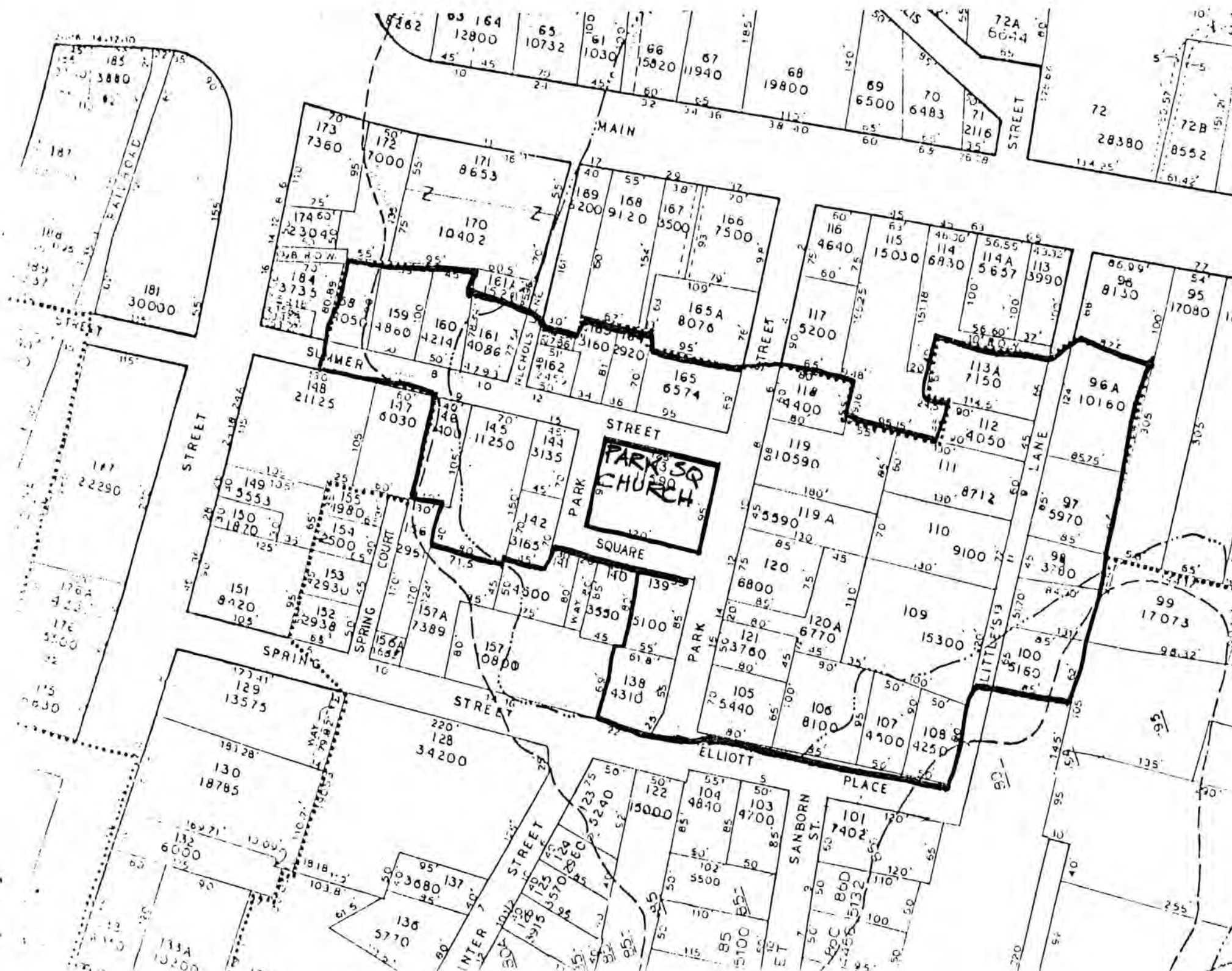
Sincerely,

Candace

Candace Jenkins
Registration Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

CJ/pb

Enclosures





Christine: We should follow up w/ letter on info below.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary of State
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Valerie A. Talmage
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

November 4, 1985

Frederick Lyman
American Landmarks Inc.
167 Milk Street
Boston, MA 02109

Dear Fred,

The Massachusetts Historical Commission staff has reviewed the material you submitted for the First Unitarian Church on Park Street in Peabody. As you know, there has been some confusion as to whether the Massachusetts Historical Commission staff had ever said that the property was eligible. I have enclosed a copy of Julie Johnson's letter to Claudia DePaola of the Peabody Community Development office on the subject. We had expected that the questions in the letter would be answered before a National Register nomination was submitted, so that we could complete the eligibility opinion process.

As it happens, the National Register prepared by Katherine Boonin has answered most of the questions that MHC staff had about the property, and we feel that the nomination demonstrates the historical significance of the church.

However, the nomination and photographs submitted of the church raise important questions about the integrity of the building. As you know, a property must return integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. While most of these are met, we are concerned about the church's integrity of design and materials, particularly after a rehabilitation of the building has been undertaken.

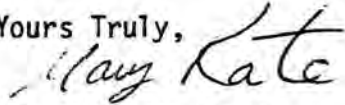
To that end, before we can determine if the property is eligible for the National Register, it will be necessary to know the general plans for the building's rehabilitation. What quantity of the historic fabric will have to be replaced to renovate the building? What is the church's proposed new use? In addition, we would like a few interior photographs, especially of the sanctuary. The architectural significance and integrity of the sanctuary is very important in evaluating a church. What is proposed for the sanctuary space? Finally, please submit a plan of the church, showing additions and demolition or removal of additions with their appropriate dates.

Note prior removal of all pews and screen damage to plaster - also altar removal etc. for open stage construction

If we do determine that the property is eligible for listing, we will require a little more information on the property before the nomination is finalized. Please answer questions #3, #5, #6 and #7 of the section on Historic Context in the attached letter to Claudia DePaola. Also answer questions #1, #3 and #4 under Architectural Context.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Kate".

Mary Kate Sampson
Survey Clerk
Massachusetts Historical Commission

cc: Claudia DePaola

MKS/aet



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary of State
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director

State Historic Preservation Officer

December 13, 1985

Frederick Lyman
American Landmarks, Inc.
167 Milk Street
Boston, MA 02109

Dear Fred:

Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Planning staff have reviewed the additional material submitted on December 10, regarding the Park Street Church. The staff are satisfied that the church's interior and exterior materials and design as they presently exist are sufficiently intact to meet National Register criteria for integrity. In particular, the staff noted as critical to the retention of integrity, the fact that exterior fabric (clapboards, window surrounds, doors) was salvageable and would be retained. However, this should not be taken to mean that other elements of the church's materials and design are irrelevant to its integrity.

All other questions regarding the rehabilitation of the property are irrelevant to the staff's evaluation of the NR eligibility of the church as it presently stands. These should be directed to the Technical Services Division as part of the review of the Historic Preservation Certification Application for the property. Additional questions related to the integrity of the structure as part of the proposed rehabilitation may arise from TSD's review.

This letter confirms that, as presented, the Park Street Church meets criteria A and C of the National Register on the local level as a good example of 19th century Greek Revival and Italianate ecclesiastical architecture with strong associations to the development of Unitarianism in Peabody and as the oldest extant church in the city. It retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

MHC staff will review the previously submitted National Register nomination materials and forward their comments to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sally".

Sarah J. Zimmerman
Director, Preservation Planning
Massachusetts Historical Commission

SJZ/dr

American Landmarks, Inc.

Brokerage, Investment Counseling and Technical Services for Historic Properties

December 27, 1985

Mr. Joseph R. Orfant
Director, Technical Services
Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02118

Dear Joe:

RE: HPCA Park Square Church, Peabody, MA

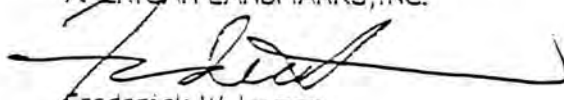
Enclosed after an extended interval during which the above-referenced church was being evaluated for National Register significance, is the HPCA for the property. Attached is the letter from Sally Zimmerman confirming this. We understand that the NRHP review process was held up pending review of the plans for rehabilitation with Technical Services people involved; thus I trust there has been at least conceptual agreement between the National Register and Technical Services staffs at MHC with respect to the level of alteration permissible to list and keep listed the church after rehabilitation is complete.

Enclosed are one copy of the two-copy MHC/NPS HPCA package revised to incorporate the requested changes to the architectural plan, plus the front portion of the second original MHC/NPS set (Part 1 and first page Part 2). The original photos and attachments for the second copy are in the possession of the MHC NRHP staff. Please ask someone at MHC to recombine the two sections to complete the second of the MHC/NPS sets.

Thank you for prompt review of this project which is under construction at the present time in a manner which conforms to the changes requested by the NRHP staff of MHC. If you have any questions please let me know as soon as possible.

Thanks again for your help.

Very truly yours,
AMERICAN LANDMARKS, INC.



Frederick W. Lyman

FWL:jka cc: Charing Cross Corp.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE APPENDIX E.
STATE REVIEW SHEET
Historic Preservation Certification Application—Part I

Property: Park Street Church, 7 Park Street, Peabody, MA

Historic District: _____

_____ date initial application received by State

7/25/86 date complete information received by State

_____ date additional information
requested by State

10/86 date of this transmittal to NPS

Inspection of property by State staff? no x yes date: 8/27/86

_____ There is adequate documentation enclosed to evaluate the historic character and integrity of this property.

_____ There is insufficient documentation to evaluate the property adequately. The application is missing the following items: _____

Reasonable efforts, described below, have been made to obtain this information. Copies of the information requests are enclosed.

1

This property involves:

_____ Extensive loss of historic fabric

_____ Substantial alterations over time

x Preliminary determination of listing

_____ for district

x for individual property

_____ Obscured or covered elevation(s)

_____ Moved property

_____ State recommendation inconsistent
with NR documentation

_____ Recommendation different than the
applicant's request

2

Complete one section below as appropriate.

(1) The property contributes does not contribute to the historic significance of this

district in: location design setting materials workmanship feeling and association

Property is mentioned in the NR documentation in Section _____, page _____.

(2) For properties less than 50 years old:

_____ the historical merits of the district (the periods and areas of significance) are documented in the
National Register nomination form or district documentation on file as less than 50 years old,
justifying the certification of this property's contribution.

_____ the strong historical or architectural merit of this property as described in the National Register
nomination form or district documentation on file justifies its certification as contributing.

_____ there is insufficient justification to consider this property contributing to the district on the basis
of its individual architectural or historical merits or the significance of the district does not
extend up to and including the latest 50 year period.

Briefly explain how Standard (3) applies to this property's individual merits or its significance
in relationship to the significant qualities and characteristics of the district.

(3) For preliminary determinations:

A. The status of the nomination for the property/historic district:

_____ Nomination has already been submitted to State review board, and if reviewed by the board,
nomination will be forwarded to the NPS within a reasonable period of time. (Draft nomination
is enclosed.)

_____ Nomination was submitted to the NPS on _____

_____ Nomination will be submitted to the State review board within twelve months.

x Nomination process likely will be completed within thirty months.

_____ Other; explain: _____

B. Evaluation of the property:

x Property x is individually eligible and meets National Register Criteria for Evaluation

_____ Property is located within a potential registered district that meets National Register
Criteria for Evaluation

x A _____ B x C _____ D Exceptions:

(4) The property is located in a registered district, is outside the period(s) and/or area(s) of signifi-
cance as documented in the NR nomination and:

_____ appears to contribute to the expanded significance of the district. Enclosed is the revised
nomination documentation.

3

Complete sections below for all properties:

Description of district including the period(s) and area(s) of significance as described in the National Register documentation or documentation on file (except for preliminary determination of individual listing).

Period(s) of significance: _____ Section _____, page _____

Description of the property documenting current condition.

See draft nomination. At the time of evaluation, church was deteriorated but retained integrity inside and outside. Adaptive reuse into housing, completed 9/85, has rehabilitated exterior and adapted interior spaces.

Retains sufficient integrity? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Statement of significance of the property

The Park Street Church meets Criteria A and C on the local level as a good example of 19th century Greek Revival and Italianate ecclesiastical architecture with strong associations with the development of Unitarianism in Peabody and the oldest extant church in the city.

as

4

State Official Recommendation:

This application for the above-named property has been reviewed by Kim Lovejoy, a professionally qualified architect, architectural historian, or historian on my staff.

The property is included within the boundaries of a registered historic district, contributes to the significance of the district, and is a "certified historic structure" for the purpose of rehabilitation.

The property is included within the boundaries of a registered historic district, contributes to the significance of the district, and is a "certified historic structure" for a charitable contribution for conservation purposed in accordance with the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980.

The property does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.

☒ The property appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be nominated.

The property does not appear to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will not be nominated.

The property appears to contribute to the significance of a:

potential historic district which appears to meet the National Register Criteria For Evaluation and will likely be nominated.

registered historic district but is outside the period(s) and area(s) of significance as documented in the National Register nomination or district documentation on file with the NPS. Revised nomination or district documentation is enclosed.

The property should be denied a preliminary determination that it could qualify as a certified historic structure.

Insufficient documentation has been provided to evaluate the structure.

☒ Detailed NPS review recommended ☐ Precedent setting case ☐ Forwarded without recommendation

Date:

9/17/86

State Official Signature:

Joseph R. [Signature] DSJPD

Peabody Celebrates Church Restoration

Three hundred parishioners and friends of the First Unitarian Church in Peabody, Mass., attended a service in recognition of the restoration of the exterior of the building to the traditional New England white meetinghouse on Sunday afternoon, November 19. Dr. Howard Charles Gale delivered the address, "The Tradition and Obligation of the New England Meetinghouse." Participating in the service were Rev. Frank B. Crandall of the Second Church, Salem, Mass., and Rev. Bradford E. Gale of the First Church, Salem. W. Forbes Robertson represented the American Unitarian Association. Mrs. Doris White Whitney, a noted 'cellist, gave a recital, and the choir, under the direction of Fred M. Phillips, presented a musical program with Ida A. Bushby at the organ.

Historically, the church is closely affiliated with the founders of the city of Peabody, for in 1825 Gideon Foster, Oliver Saunders, Andrew Torr, Benjamin Wheeler, O. C. Felton, Nathaniel Putnam, John Endicott, Abner Sanger, and Benjamin Goodridge among others made plans for building a Unitarian church which is said to be one of the first in New England established for this purpose. Sanger and Goodridge agreed to build the cellar of the church provided they could store hides in it for a period of ten years. The handsome Aaron Willard clock in the auditorium was presented to the church by Leverett Saltonstall, the grandfather of the governor, and Benjamin Merrill, who were at the time two prominent Salem lawyers.

HISTORICAL SUPPORT MATERIAL MISC.

The Centenary of the First Unitarian Church
Peabody, Mass.

Public Meeting

Thursday Evening, January First, 1925, 7.30 p. m.

"The first meeting held for the purpose of organizing this society and making plans for building a church was holden at the house of Oliver Saunders, Main street, on the evening of January 1, 1825."

"Act of Incorporation—signed June 18, 1825."

"The Church Building was dedicated July 26, 1826, remodeled in 1872, and re-dedicated in 1873."

Chairman of Centenary Meeting

FRED W. BUSHBY

ORGAN PRELUDE
OLD HUNDREDTH
SCRIPTURE READING
ANTHEM
PRAYER
CONGREGATIONAL HYMN
ADDRESS
ADDRESS
CONGREGATIONAL HYMN
BENEDICTION
ORGAN POSTLUDE

MRS. FRED W. BUSHBY
No. 573
REV. HAROLD L. PICKETT
CHURCH CHOIR
REV. ANITA T. PICKETT
No. 504
LYMAN P. OSBORN
REV. B. R. BULKELEY
No. 452

Sunday Church Service, Jan. 4, 1925, 10.30 a. m.

Centenary Sermon by Mr. and Mrs. Pickett



January 26, 1989

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

RE: First Unitarian Church, Peabody, Massachusetts

Dear Ms. Shull:

I am writing at the request of Frederick P. Lyman of American Landmarks Inc., preservation consultant for the owners and developers of the First Unitarian Church, Peabody. Mr. Lyman is appealing the decision of the National Register staff that the nominated property does not meet the National Register criteria for evaluation because of its loss of integrity over time.

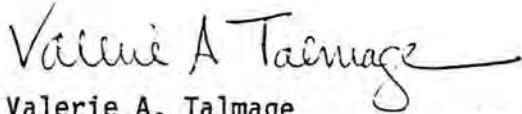
Massachusetts Historical Commission staff and the State Review Board of the MHC believe that the property possesses both historic and architectural significance, and that it does retain integrity. The building holds strong associations with the development of Unitarianism in Peabody and is the oldest extant church in the city. It is a good example of ecclesiastical architecture, an amalgam of Greek Revival and Italianate styling; the addition of features in the latter style 45 years after initial construction reflects the prosperity of the congregation and the city in the decades following the Civil War. Finally, despite certain changes to its interior during its period of significance, the building's exterior remains essentially unchanged since its 1872 updating, save for the addition of an entry porch in the 1920s and the loss of its steeple in the 1960s. Therefore, MHC staff feels that the building continues to retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Massachusetts Historical Commission, Valerie A. Talmage, *Executive Director, State Historic Preservation Officer*
80 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116 (617) 727-8470

Office of the Secretary of State, Michael J. Connolly, *Secretary*

I urge the National Register staff to reconsider its rejection of this property for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie A. Talmage". The signature is written in dark ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Valerie A. Talmage
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

cc: Frederick P. Lyman

APPENDIX G.

City of Peabody, Massachusetts

Office of the Mayor



Debra S. MacGregor
Administrative Assistant

24 Lowell Street
Peabody, MA 01960
(617) 532-3000

Peter Torigian
Mayor

January 30, 1989

Mr. Jerry Rogers
Keeper of the National Register
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D. C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I am writing to express my support for a reversal of the decision by the National Park Service to reject the application to list 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts (Park Square Church) in the National Register of Historic Places.

From a very practical standpoint, I want to point out that the Park Street/Park Square neighborhood has been the target for special revitalization consideration since 1985. The adaptive re-use of the church, which was a vacant and derelict structure and an eyesore to the downtown core for many years, was long a priority of the City's redevelopment program. It appears to me that although the interior has been changed, the exterior still retains its architectural and historical integrity, and the church is certainly the oldest in the City.

Architecturally, the church has been cited as "a good example of 19th century Greek Revival and Italianate detailing with strong associations to the development of Unitarianism in Peabody." There is no doubt that the building is of great local significance and an asset to our downtown core area.

Again, I urge your reconsideration to place this important property on the National Register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Peter Torigian".

Peter Torigian, Mayor
CITY OF PEABODY

PT:MRP:mf

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations



25 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108

(617)742-2100

January 30, 1989

Mr. Jerry Rogers
Keeper, National Register of Historic Places
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Rogers,

I am writing to you in support of the efforts of the Massachusetts Historical Commission in regard to the nomination of the First Unitarian Church of Peabody, MA to the National Register of Historic Places. Several Unitarian or Universalist places of worship are now historic landmarks in cities across the continent. Knowing the architectural and historical value of the church structure on Park Street in Peabody, I believe it is worthy of inclusion on the National Register. This church was important in the development of our faith on the North Shore of Boston, and certainly its legacy of being the oldest church structure in Peabody is notable. I hope you will reconsider your decision and give recognition to the First Unitarian Church of Peabody. Thank you.

With sincere best wishes,

Rev. Mark Harris
Historian/Archivist
Unitarian Universalist Association





FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH, PARK COR. SUMMER STREET, PEABODY. ORGANIZED JAN. 1, 1825.

First Unitarian

*Peabody.
Formerly Ch.*

*Extracts from &
by the
Rev. John
Fifth Unitarian
Services
July 25.*

Some later year

American Landmarks, Inc.

Investment and Development Consultants for Historic Properties

February 7, 1989

Mr. Jerry Rogers
Keeper Of The National Register
P.O.Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127



Dear Mr. Rogers:

RE: First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

On behalf of the owners and myself, I want to thank you for taking the time to hear our appeal last Friday afternoon, of the staff denial of the First Unitarian Church to the National Register. Our session was very constructive, I feel, and resulted in the kind of dialogue that I had hoped would take place.

Clearly the question of whether or not the building possesses the level of integrity, both associative and architectural, which would render it eligible for inclusion on the Register is ultimately a highly subjective one. We presented the reasons underlying our sincere belief that the church building continues to possess a level of integrity far in excess of minimum standards for listing. In addition, I hope the letters which have been sent to you by the city, the state and the church, add a measure of validity to our views. Of course only you can make the final determination, and we anxiously await it. I would again ask that you consider not only the high standard to which the owners held restoration of the exterior, but also the fact that virtually none of the considerable amount of architectural material surviving on the interior was sacrificed during the recent rehabilitation. While not precisely germane to your deliberation, I feel it is also worth reiterating that the rehabilitation of the church under what hopefully will be a certified aegis, resulted in a major uplift of a small neighborhood possessing unusual qualities as an intact 19th c. enclave within Peabody.

On a technical matter, I have looked carefully through the pre-rehabilitation photographic documentation, and find that indeed there was a recessed front

Mr. Jerry Rogers

2.

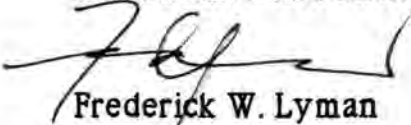
February 7, 1989

portico on the original church which was infilled in connection with the reconstruction in 1872. Therefore Carol Shull was correct in this regard. This was however, as you know, only one aspect of a complete transformation of the church at that time, and in a way serves to further underscore the fact that that rehabilitation was indeed substantial and does have major integrity in its own right.

One final note on the state recommendation with transmittal of the HPCA. It is my recollection that their's was a recommendation for approval with reservations pertaining only to the subdivision of the interior space. This recommendation for approval "with reservations" was due to the fact that the state was in effect deferring to the federal government for an interpretation of the degree to which the interior had lost its significance, and hence the degree to which it was subdividable without violating the Secretary's Standards. In fact the state had many good things to say about the rehabilitation, particularly commending the retention of all woodwork and the faithful restoration of the exterior.

Thank you again for your interest in this small but important project to Peabody, and for having Don Williams and me to you office along with Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Doonan from Representative Mavroules' and Senator Kerry's offices. If there is anything else you need in order to make your determination on our appeal for NRHP listing of the First Unitarian Church please let me know and I will gladly get it to you.

Very truly yours,
AMERICAN LANDMARKS, INC.



Frederick W. Lyman

FWL:spc

Enclosures

NICHOLAS MAVROULES
6TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
SMALL BUSINESS

CHAIRMAN:
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
PROCUREMENT, INNOVATION AND
MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2432 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-8020

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

DISTRICT OFFICES:
70 WASHINGTON STREET
SALEM, MA 01970
(617) 745-5800

140 UNION STREET
LYNN, MA 01902
(617) 599-7105

10 WELCOME STREET
HAVERHILL, MA 01830
(617) 372-3461

TOLL FREE WITHIN
MASSACHUSETTS
(800) 272-6730

C.L. 88-4466

February 15, 1989

Mr. Jerry Rogers, Associate Director for Cultural Resources
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the prompt and courteous manner in which you accommodated my constituents, Mr. Frederick Lyman and his associates who are concerned with the historic listing of the Park Square Church in Peabody, Massachusetts. I am grateful for your personal attention to this matter.

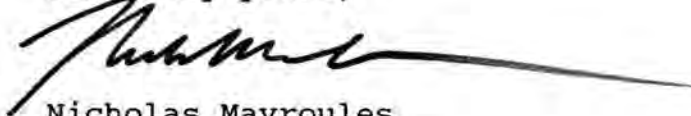
I understand that the information Mr. Lyman presented at the meeting was enlightening and I am hopeful that it has cast new light on the question of the Park Square Church's qualifications for a listing on the Federal Historic Register. Although I am certainly no authority on this subject, I have long been aware of the Church's historic significance, locally.

If you feel that there is further helpful information that my office may provide on this matter, please feel free to call on me. I anxiously await word from your office.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

I remain,

Sincerely yours,



Nicholas Mavroules
Member of Congress

NM/kjg

CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON

CONTROLLED CORRESPONDENCE 1987

DATE 02/22/89

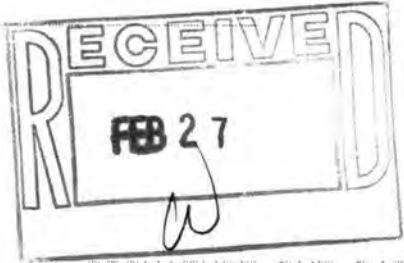
CONTROL NUMBER: CL-88-6666

TO: 400

LAST NAME: MAVROULES

FIRST NAME NICHOLAS

CONSTITUENT: ^{ER}FREDICK LYMAN
1



SIGNATURE DUE DATE / /

SUBJECT: NAT. REGISTER

DESCRIPTION: RE HISTORIC LISTING OF THE PARK SQUARE CHURCH IN PEABODY, MA

SIGNATURE LEVEL:

CASEWORKER: MP PHONE NUMBER: 343-1330

PLEASE PROCESS THE ATTACHED AS INDICATED BELOW:

1. DRAFT FOR _____'S SIGNATURE BY: _____
2. FINAL FOR DIR'S SIGNATURE BY: _____
*** PLEASE ADD THE ABOVE CONTROL NUMBER TO FNP LINE.
3. DIRECT REPLY (in REGION) BY: _____
____ PLEASE FAX COPY OF RESPONSE TO 190 UPON SIGNATURE.
____ PLEASE SEND COPY OF RESPONSE TO 190 (DO NOT USE BLUE ENVELOPE).
*** PLEASE ADD THE ABOVE CONTROL NUMBER TO FNP LINE.
- ✓ 4. REVIEW FOR ACTION AS APPROPRIATE: Please advise 190

inform of
decision
when made
if possible by

3/10

BS to
MP 2/27.

ATTACHMENT

BS to MP decision will be final by 3/20
cause just transmit decision to the
at that time? Yes 3/7/89

H32(413)

MAR 20 1989

Savage
3/20/89
Shull
3/20/89
Reed
3/20/89

Honorable Nicholas Mavroules
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2106

Dear Mr. Mavroules:

Enclosed is our response to Mr. Frederick Lyman's request for reconsideration of the First Unitarian Church (Park Square Church) for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

We appreciate your thoughtful comments in support of the property's eligibility. If we can provide further information or assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Jerry L. Rogers

Jerry L. Rogers
Associate Director, Cultural Resources
and Keeper of the National Register of
Historic Places

Enclosure

bcc: Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
190-Reading File, Pearson
400-Reading File
413-Reading File
Record Center

FNP:B.Savage:adr:03-16-89:343-9536

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 413

IDENTICAL LETTERS SENT TO: Peter Torigian and Mark Harris
SYS 64:(bls/Letters)-Mavroules

H32(413)

Mr. Frederick W. Lyman
American Landmarks, Inc.
72 Broad Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

MAR 20 1989

Savvy
3/20/89
Shull
3-17-89
Leat
3/20/89

Dear Mr. Lyman:

We have concluded our reevaluation of the First Unitarian Church (Park Square Church), located in Peabody, Massachusetts, for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

At the time of its nomination, after rehabilitation, the property's historic integrity had been substantially reduced by the amount and degree of interior and exterior alterations incurred both before and during the rehabilitation and conversion for condominiums. The cumulative effect of the various changes has rendered the church's historic integrity marginal at best. This was described in the National Register's detailed letter rejecting the property for listing. It was also discussed in correspondence from the State conveying differing staff opinions on its integrity (copies of these are located in the historic preservation certification file for the property).

Ideally, the most appropriate approach for listing the church is as a contributing resource in a historic district. However, in light of the supplementary written and photographic documentation presented with your memorandum of February 3, 1989, and the community support for the property's preservation expressed in letters from Representative Mavroules, Mayor Torigian, and the Unitarian Universalist Association, we have determined that the church is eligible for individual listing. However, you will need to integrate the new information into an amended nomination.

We offer the following comments regarding the necessary revisions. Currently the statement of significance does not provide sufficient contextual information on the church's architectural importance within the realm of Peabody's historic development. The statement of significance narrative is descriptive rather than analytical. The justification for the architectural importance of the church's 1872 renovation contained in your February 3 memorandum illuminates specific

aspects of Peabody's prosperity during this period. This information provides additional context which helps to explain the importance of the church's evolutionary character. Because buildings are often modernized to reflect changes in architectural taste, rarely are buildings pure examples of an architectural style. It is important, therefore, to evaluate the kinds and amount of changes which occur. It is necessary not only to describe, but to assess, why the transformation of the church is significant relative to similar changes incurred by similar properties in Peabody during the era.

If this information had been provided in the nomination originally, or when the nomination was returned with questions about its integrity and significance, the National Register's rejection and this reevaluation would probably have been unnecessary.

Please revise the nomination in conjunction with Ms. Talmage's staff, and request that Ms. Talmage resubmit it to the National Park Service.

Sincerely,

Jerry L. Rogers

Jerry L. Rogers
Associate Director, Cultural Resources
and Keeper of the National Register of
Historic Places

Enclosures

cc: Ms. Valerie Talmage, SHPO, Massachusetts
Honorable Nicholas Mavroules, Massachusetts
Mayor Peter Torigian
Reverend Mark Harris

bcc: Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, Attn: Alisa McCann
190-Reading File, Pearson
400-Reading File
413-Reading File
Record Center

FNP:B.Savage:adr:03-16-89:343-9636:CL-88-6666

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 413

SYS 64:(bls/Letters)-Lyman

American Landmarks, Inc.

Investment and Development Consultants for Historic Properties

Ms. Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Suite 310
80 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

March 23, 1989

Dear Betsy:

RE: First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

I am delighted to report that the National Park Service has determined the First Unitarian Church to be eligible for listing on the National Register as a result of information provided to Mr. Jerry Rogers at our appeal of denial last month. I enclose Mr. Roger's letter informing us of their decision.

Once you have reviewed this letter please give me a call to make arrangements whereby I can assist MHC in providing the additional data NPS suggests we incorporate into the final draft of the nomination. If you will be assigning the responsibility for reworking the material to Ann Tate again, as before, I will be happy to work directly with her. Since it is clearly needed, I intend to spend some time in Peabody next week in order to obtain information on other manifestations of the economic upsurge in the local economy during the early 1870's, so clearly found in the alterations of the First Unitarian Church.

I'm sure you are as happy as I am to learn of the NPS decision, since this property is one for which MHC gave full support through Sally Zimmerman, yourself, and of course, Val Talmage.

Very truly yours,
AMERICAN LANDMARKS, INC.



Frederick W. Lyman
FWL:spc
Enclosures
cc: Donald Williams, Trustee

American Landmarks, Inc.

Investment and Development Consultants for Historic Properties

March 23, 1989

Mr. Jerry Rogers
Keeper Of The National Register
P.O.Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127



Dear Mr. Rogers:

RE: First Unitarian Church, Peabody, MA

We are in receipt of your letter regarding the eligibility of the First Unitarian Church in Peabody, and I want to express my appreciation for the thorough evaluation you gave to our appeal. Naturally, I am delighted that you agreed with us that the church should be found eligible, but I also recognize the multiple factors which had to be weighed in coming to that determination.

Assistance from this firm was not solicited by the Massachusetts Historical Commission in the course of their preparation of answers to original questions posed by the NRHP staff regarding eligibility. We will, nonetheless, be taking the lead in obtaining additional information on other manifestations of the economic upsurge in Peabody in the 1870's which brought about the substantial alterations of the structure at that time. I expect to have assistance from the MHC staff of course, since it is technically they, who be finalizing the nomination to reflect your suggestions. I will be obtaining field information and assisting MHC in the reformatting of the nomination.

Again, we appreciate the National Park Service's cooperation and assistance with this unusual but significant property.

Very truly yours,
AMERICAN LANDMARKS, INC.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Frederick W. Lyman'.

Frederick W. Lyman
FWL:spc
Enclosures

NReg. File
COPY

H4215(404)

APR 10 1990

Mr. Donald R. Williams, Jr.
Trustee, Park Square Condominium Association
18 Baker's Hill Road
Weston, Massachusetts 02193

Re: Park Square Church, 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts
Project Number: 10410MA
Taxpayer Identification Number: 04-3050830

Dear Mr. Williams:

My review of your appeal of the decision of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service, denying certification for the rehabilitation work on the property referenced above has been concluded. The appeal was made in accordance with Department of the Interior regulations (36 CFR Part 67) governing historic preservation certifications required under section 48(g) of the Internal Revenue Code for Federal tax incentives provided in the Code. I wish to thank you and your preservation consultant, Mr. Frederick W. Lyman, for meeting with me in Washington on October 16, 1989, and for explaining your rehabilitation project.

After carefully considering the facts of the case, including the additional documentation submitted at that meeting and in Mr. Lyman's letters of October 31, November 2, and November 6, 1989 (which was received January 3, 1990), I have determined that the rehabilitation of the property known as Park Square Church, 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts, is not consistent with the historic character of the structure and that the project does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Therefore, the denial issued by the National Park Service on December 5, 1986, is hereby affirmed.

Individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 18, 1989, the First Unitarian Church, also known as Park Square Church, is a wood-frame building constructed in 1826 in the Greek Revival style. Alterations made to the church over its history include the addition of a two-story wing ca. 1868, construction of an Italianate entry porch and other remodeling ca. 1872, and replacement of the original sash with stained glass windows. When the congregation moved from this location in 1967, it removed the church furnishings (pulpit, pews, organ, etc.), two of the three sections of the steeple, and the eight stained-glass windows from the sanctuary.

The rehabilitation of the building into 14 apartments included repair of the exterior wood siding and architectural features, insertion of two floors of apartments within the sanctuary, replacement of the missing sash with casement windows, and retention of some interior trim. In denying certification of the rehabilitation, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Director cited the insertion of two levels of apartments within the sanctuary and the installation of eight casement windows as infringements of Standards 1, 2, 5,

and 9. The Regional Director also identified the change in the texture of the interior plaster from smooth to a "sprayed-on texture finish" and the installation of railings in front of the upper half of the windows as possible infractions of the Standards.

After a thorough analysis of the complete record in this matter, I have concluded that the changes made to the interior of Park Square Church when the congregation departed and subsequently when a portion of the building was used for making and storing stage sets did not seriously compromise the historic character of the sanctuary. Although the fixtures and stained glass windows had been removed, the essential form and extent of the ordered space, with its regularly-spaced arched windows, conspicuous coved ceiling complete with panel and central rosette, and the arched enframing at the head of the sanctuary, remained to define a whole historic space of notable distinction. I find, therefore, that the surviving sanctuary was the essential character-defining interior constituent of the church. With the insertion of two levels of dwelling units into the sanctuary, the bisected and partitioned space can no longer be perceived as a once unified whole with the historic relationship of ornament to space intact. The retention of window enframements, which are now interrupted by the new floors, and the plaster ceiling medallion, which is now part of an upper-level corridor, are insufficient to preserve the distinctive historic character of the sanctuary. Further, I find that the construction of the apartments has visibly altered the exterior of the main block of the structure owing to the intrusion of the new floors and protective railings at two locations in the tall arched windows. Consequently, I have determined that the subdivision of this portion of the church into two floors of apartments breaches Standards 2, 5, and 9 and that the rehabilitation of Park Square Church is not consistent with the historic character of the structure.

Finally, I appreciate the diligence with which Mr. Lyman has researched the evolution of the eight arched windows of the sanctuary. In that regard I accept that the sash which were removed by the departing congregation were hung with an operable lower sash. Generally, replacement windows must match the historic windows in kind, including mechanics, and in this rehabilitation the sash changes from historic single-hung to casement. However, in this case I find that the replacement windows minimally meet Standard 6. Nevertheless, in view of my finding that the overall project does not meet Standards 2, 5, and 9, the marginally acceptable replacement windows cannot outweigh the damage to the historic character of Park Square Church brought about by the insertion of the new apartments into the former sanctuary space.

As Department of the Interior regulations provide, my ruling is the final administrative decision regarding rehabilitation certifications. A copy of this decision will be provided to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Questions concerning specific tax consequences of this decision or interpretations of the Internal Revenue Code should be addressed to the appropriate IRS office.

Sincerely,

Ernest Allen Connally

Ernest Allen Connally
Chief Appeals Officer
Cultural Resources

Mr. Donald R. Williams, Jr.

3

cc: SHPO-MA
IRS

bcc: MARO-Stevenson, SERO-Hartwig, RMRO-Wheaton, WRO-Pepin-Donat, ARO-Hart
SOL-Hanslin, Main Interior, Room 6540
Dr. Connally, 1100 L St., Room 2113
424-Robinson
001-Reading File 001-Ridenour 400-Reading File
424-BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 424
FNP:§BLUMENTHAL:dyw:04 04 90:343-9592
Filed: H4215(Specific)



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H4215(424)

5/31/89

Mr. Frederick W. Lyman
American Landmarks, Inc.
72 Broad Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

Re: Park Street Church, 7 Park Street, Peabody, Massachusetts
Project Number: 10410MA
Taxpayer Identification Number: 22-2495066

Dear Mr. Lyman:

This is in reference to your appeal of the decision of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service, that the rehabilitation of the property referenced above does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and to my letter of February 9, 1987, in which I declined to consider an appeal until the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In a telephone conversation of March 31, you informed Mrs. Sally Blumenthal of the Preservation Assistance Division that the property was now enrolled in the National Register and, consequently, a meeting to discuss the rehabilitation project was scheduled for June 6.

It has come to my attention that the Park Street Church is not in fact yet listed in the National Register and that the actions that were directed by Jerry L. Rogers, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, in a letter to you of March 20, 1989, have not yet been completed and that a revised nomination has not yet been received by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Mr. Rogers' decision was issued in connection with your appeal of the decision of the Chief of Registration that the property did not meet the National Register criteria for evaluation.

Consequently, I have decided not to proceed with your request for an appeal in the matter of the rehabilitation certification until such time as the Park Street Church nomination is resubmitted to the National Register by the

Mr. Frederick W. Lyman

2

State per Mr. Rogers' decision of March 20. I recognize that this matter has been pending for some time but under the circumstances, our meeting of June 6 will have to be rescheduled after the property is listed in the National Register. In the meantime, you may wish to contact the Massachusetts Historical Commission about expediting the necessary revisions to the nomination.

Sincerely,

Ernest Allen Connally

Ernest Allen Connally
Chief Appeals Officer
Cultural Resources

cc: SHPO-MA

bcc: MARO-Stevenson
Dr. Connally, 1100 L St., Rm. 2113
SOL-Hanslin, Main Interior, Rm. 6540
001-Reading File 001-Ridenour 400-Reading File
424-Robinson 413-NR
424-BASIC FILE RETAINED in 424
FNP:BLUMENTHAL:dyw:5/31/89:343-9593
Filed: H4215(specific)



July 25, 1989

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

AUG 04 1989
NATIONAL
REGISTER

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following information which is to augment the argument for the historical significance of the First Unitarian Church, Peabody (Essex County), Massachusetts. We are forwarding this information directly from the consultant who completed this nomination. I have also sent a copy of the original submission for your referral.

Sincerely,

Anne E. Tait
Acting National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

encl.