

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 20 1975

DATE ENTERED OCT 31 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**HISTORIC *only* Center Methodist Church

AND/OR COMMON

Center for the Arts

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER 356 Commercial Street

CITY, TOWN Provincetown

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
twelfth

STATE Massachusetts 02657

CODE  
025

COUNTY Barnstable

CODE  
001**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS  
☒ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED  
☒ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
☒ ACCESSIBLE  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE  
☐ COMMERCIAL  
☒ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☐ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME First National Bank of Cape Cod

STREET & NUMBER  
Commercial Street

CITY, TOWN Provincetown

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Massachusetts 02657**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Barnstable County Registry of DeedsSTREET & NUMBER  
Route 6A

CITY, TOWN Barnstable

STATE  
Massachusetts**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE 1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN Boston

STATE  
Massachusetts

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

—EXCELLENT  
—GOOD  
X FAIR

—DETERIORATED  
—RUINS  
—UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

—UNALTERED  
X—ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

X  
—ORIGINAL SITE  
—MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Center Methodist Church is a white clapboard 2 story structure whose bell tower design was based on the pattern established by the English baroque architect, Sir Christopher Wren. The church faces south on Commercial Street towards Provincetown Harbor and is surrounded by small one and two story residential and commercial buildings. It is situated on one of the highest points of land in the town, and this topographical advantage, combined with the height of the tower, make the church an important visual landmark from the harbor.

A two story projecting pavilion, one bay deep and three bays wide, is the focus of attention on the facade. The first floor of the center pavilion is of wood made to look like smooth faced rusticated stone. The bays are articulated by round headed wall arches, with rusticated vousoirs and keystones. A thick stringcourse marking the springing point of the arches runs across the sides and front of the first floor.

The second floor of the pavilion, the building's principal story, has a tall slender round headed wall arch flanked by ionic pilasters in each elevation. A balustrade above the full entablature and modillioned cornice completes the central pavilion.

The main body of the church is rectangular in shape and also demonstrates the importance of the second floor as the main meeting room story. The windows on the side elevations were altered when the building was converted into a museum, but the hood moldings over the windows on the second story were retained. The string course between the first and second floors on the center pavilion, as well as the full entablature and cornice extend from the pavilion onto the facade and continue around the building.

The two stage tower rises from the center of the pediment and rests partly on the roof and partly on a massive five sided base which is enclosed by the balustrade on top of the central pavilion. The base and the tower, as well as the pediment and facade, are of flush boarding treated to represent stone. The first stage of the tower has eight sides: four broad elevations each containing a round headed wall arch with a molded surround and articulated keystone and flanked by pilasters whose capitals mark the springing point of the arches, and four narrow recessed elevations each with a tall slender segmental wall arch. The heavy cornice follows the planes of the eight elevations, creating a baroque broken cornice line.

The second stage of the tower is also eight sided but does not have the recessed and projecting masses. A round headed arched opening with the same moldings, keystones and pilasters found on the second stage wall arches pierces each of the eight sides. A balustrade circles the base of the second stage between the arched openings, and a heavy cornice rests on top of the narrow entablature. A carved finial in the center of the roof of the second stage takes the place of a steeple which was lost during a hurricane in 1889.

The interior of the building and the windows on the side elevations were altered when the church was converted into an art museum in 1958. The meeting room on the second floor was divided into two floors and the stained glass windows were removed and replaced by plain 1/1 sash. The original double staircases, curving up from either side of the main entrance, are still intact and the trompe l'oeil ceiling paintings, although they are not easily visible because of the alterations, are extant.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

### PERIOD

☐ PREHISTORIC  
☐ 1400-1499  
☐ 1500-1599  
☐ 1600-1699  
☒ 1700-1799  
☒ 1800-1899  
☐ 1900-

☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  
☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  
☒ AGRICULTURE  
☐ ARCHITECTURE  
☒ ART  
☐ COMMERCE  
☐ COMMUNICATIONS

### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING  
☐ CONSERVATION  
☐ ECONOMICS  
☐ EDUCATION  
☐ ENGINEERING  
☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
☐ INDUSTRY  
☐ INVENTION

☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
☐ LAW  
☐ LITERATURE  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSIC  
☐ PHILOSOPHY  
☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

☐ RELIGION  
☐ SCIENCE  
☐ SCULPTURE  
☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  
☐ THEATER  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)

### SPECIFIC DATES

1861

### BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Center Methodist Church, a significant architectural landmark in Provincetown, is important for its historical and cultural contributions to the development of the community.

The church was built in 1861, the fourth structure to be constructed by the Methodists in Provincetown, who used it for religious purposes until 1961 when the building was sold to Walter P. Chrysler to house an art collection. The Methodist congregation included many members of Provincetown's artistic community, and as the second oldest church extant in the village, was important in developing the community's image.

The Center Methodist Church, clearly visible from Provincetown Harbor, was also an important visual landmark from the sea. It was portrayed in/innumerable paintings, sketches, and etchings as a dominant part of the skyline of Provincetown, and the church tower was the first building that was visible to fishermen returning from sea.

The building is an outstanding architectural landmark in a community which is largely composed of small scale, unostentatious structures. The detailing on the facade and the magnificent tower (even without its steeple) are a definite statement of community pride. The architectural significance of this building with its massive scale and elaborate Wren-baroque ornamentation and the building's importance to the community cannot be underestimated.

Future plans for the structure are uncertain. After the Walter Chrysler Museum was closed in 1974 the building was converted into a Center for the Arts to house various functions related to the arts, but funding ran out and plans are now awaiting further financial developments.



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of New England Southern Conference, Vol. 1, compiled by Rev. Rennetts C. Miller  
1897  
Jenning's Provincetown or Odds & Ends from Cape Cod, Fred Hallet, Yarmouthport, MA  
1890  
Art in Narrow Streets, Ross Moffett, Falmouth MA 1964

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 1/2 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 401950 4656180  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C         

UTM OK WNW  
12-5-75

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Christine Boulding, Assistant Survey Director, and Thomas Randleman

ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

October 7, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

294 Washington Street

TELEPHONE

617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts 02108

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elizabeth Reed Amador*

TITLE Mass. State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

10/14/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Acting*

DATE

10/31/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*Ronald M. Greenberg*

DATE

10/31/75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Property Center Methodist Church

Barnstable

State Mass.

Working Number 10.20.75.1845

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 1

Maps 1

**CONTROL**

OK pl  
10.23.75

**HISTORIAN**

Accept  
E. Smith  
10-29-75

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

ACCEPT  
W. W. W. W.  
10/29/75

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory       

Review       

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

Accept  
Cole  
10.29.75  
act  
**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

act  
Pfeiffer  
10/31/75

National Register Write-up       

Send-back       

Entered OGT 31 1975

Federal Register Entry 2-3-76

Re-submit       

INT:2106-74







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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RECEIVED OCT 20 1975

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Center Methodist Church

AND/OR COMMON Center for the Arts

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Provincetown

\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Barnstable

STATE MA

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Provincetown Advocate

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Provincetown Historical Association

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO 1

south elevation

Loc.

Barnstable County, Mass.

South elevation

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Center Methodist Church

AND/OR COMMON

Center for the Arts

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Provincetown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Barnstable

STATE MA

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE U.S.G.S., Provincetown, Mass. quadrangle

SCALE 1:24,000

DATE 1958

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

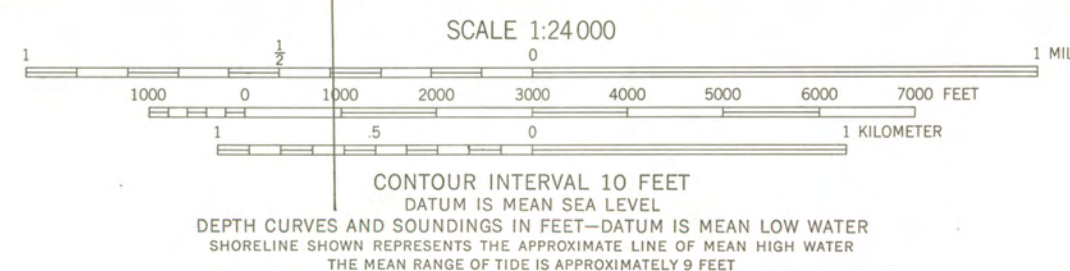
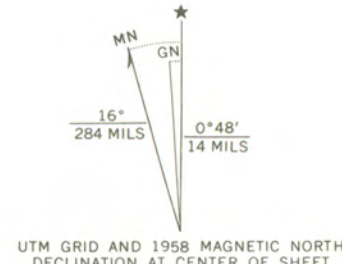
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES





Provincetown, Center  
Methodist Church.  
UTM reference:  
19/401950/4656180

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USC&GS, USCE, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1938. Topography by planetable surveys 1941  
Revised 1958  
Hydrography compiled from USC&GS charts 580 (1954) and  
1208 (1955)  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,  
mainland zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 19, shown in blue



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

PROVINCETOWN, MASS  
N4200-W7007.5/7.5

1958

AMS 6968 II SW-SERIES V814

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST





ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered OCT 31 1975

Name

Location

Center Methodist Church

Provincetown  
Barnstable County

Town Hall Square Historic District

Sandwich  
Barnstable County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy  
Hon. Edward W. Brooke  
Hon. Gerry E. Studds

Regional Director, North Atlantic  
Region

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon  
Executive Director, Massachusetts  
Historical Commission  
294 Washington Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

PR MMott/je 11/10/75

## NOTIFICATION OF GRANT-IN-AID ACTION

Do Not  
Use  
This  
Space

1. STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER

75050496

2. (Reserved for use by State central information reception agency)

3. GRANTOR: a. Federal agency

Department of the Interior

b. Organizational unit

National Park Service

c. Administering office—(1) Name

Division of Grants

(2) Address—Street or P.O. Box

18th and C Streets, NW.

City

Washington

State

D.C.

Zip Code

20240

4. FEDERAL AGENCY GRANT IDENTIFIER: a. Code

25-76-00650-00

b. Title

Center Methodist Church Acquisition

c. Purpose The preservation objective is to purchase the 1861 Center Methodist Church and use it as an art museum and community center.

5. GRANTEE: a. Name

Massachusetts Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon, Exec. Dir., MA Historical Commission

b. Address—Street or P.O. Box

40 Beacon Street

City

Boston

State

Massachusetts

Zip Code

02108

6. GRANTEE TYPE (Check only the single most applicable box)

a. State

☒b. Inter-  
state☐

c. County

☐

d. City

☐e. School  
district☐f. Special  
unit☐g. Community  
action☐h. Sponsored  
organization☐

i. Other

☐

7. APPLICATION RECEIPT DATE

Year Month Day  
76 3 26

8. ACTION DATE

Year Month Day  
76 5 3

9. EFFECTIVE STARTING DATE

Year Month Day  
76 3 15

10. ENDING DATE

Year Month Day  
79 5 3

11. TYPE OF ACTION (Check as many boxes as apply to this action)

a. New  
grant☒b. Continuation  
grant☐c. Supplemental  
grant☐

d. Change in existing grant

(1) Increase in  
duration☐(2) Decrease in  
duration☐

(3) Cancellation

☐

(4) Increase(\$)

☐

(5) Decrease(\$)

☐

12. AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION

a. Federal—(1) basic

\$ 5,300

(2) Supplemental

\$

b. State

\$ 264,700\*

c. Local

\$

d. Other

\$

13. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM (if none, clarify in item 16)

a. Program Number

15.904

b. Supplemental Program Number

14. AUTHORIZATION

a. Federal Budget Accounts

10-58-1040-0-1-405

b. Public Laws

PL Title Sec.  
89 665

PL Title Sec.

PL Title Sec.

c. U.S. Code

16 U.S.C. 470

15. FACILITY LOCATION: (For facility grant actions only)

a. City

356 Commercial Street, Provincetown

b. County

Barnstable

CD 12

16. REMARKS

\*Town of Provincetown



# Methodist Church entered in National Register

PROVINCETOWN — Center Methodist Church, 356 Commercial St., has been accepted for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, State Secretary Paul Guzzi, Chairman of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, has been informed by Gary Everhardt, Director of the National Park Service in the United States Department of the Interior.

The Center church is a significant architectural landmark in Provincetown and is important for its historical and cultural contributions to the development of the community. Built in 1861, the fourth structure to be constructed by the Methodists in Provincetown, it was used for religious purposes until 1961 when the building was sold to Walter P. Chrysler of automotive fame to house an art collection. The Museum was closed in 1974 and the former church was converted into a Center for the Arts to house various functions related to the arts but funding ran out and the property is now in the hands of the First National Bank of Cape Cod.

The Methodist congregation included many members of Provincetown's artistic community and, as the second oldest church extant in the village, it was important in developing the community's image. Clearly visible from Provincetown Harbor, the Center Methodist Church was also an important visual landmark from the sea. It was portrayed in innumerable paintings, sketches and etchings as a dominant part of the skyline of Provincetown, and the church tower was the first building that was visible to fishermen returning from the sea.

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# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 3/17/77  
Reviewer INITIALS: *goff*  
NR DOE Oct. 31, 1975

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Center Methodist Church

OTHER NAMES: Center for the Arts *MA sec*

## LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER: 356 Commercial Street  
CITY, TOWN: Provincetown  
STATE: Massachusetts  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 12th  
COUNTY: Barnstable  
code 001

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST  
SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## FEATURES:

| INTERIOR                      | EXTERIOR                      | ENVIRONS                      |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Substantially intact-1</u> | <u>Substantially intact-2</u> | <u>Substantially intact-3</u> |
| unknown - 4                   | unknown - 5                   | unknown - 6                   |
| not applicable - 7            | not applicable - 8            | Not applicable - 9            |

CONDITION - Interior exterior, environs not intact-0

|                  |              |               |               |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <u>EXCELLENT</u> | DETERIORATED | UNALTERED     | ORIGINAL SITE |
| GOOD             | RUINS        | ALTERED       | MOVED         |
| FAIR             | UNEXPOSED    | Reconstructed | Unknown       |
|                  | Unexcavated  | Excavated     |               |

ACCESS - Yes-restricted Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown

historic district? YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO  
IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO  
IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)

then- *church*  
now- *educational, art center*

## SIGNIFICANCE:

|                                |              |                        |                     |                |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| <u>ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC</u> | CONSERVATION | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <u>RELIGION</u> -22 | entertainment  |
| ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC           | ECONOMICS    | LAW/Gov't/politics     | SCIENCE             | health         |
| AGRICULTURE                    | EDUCATION    | LITERATURE             |                     | recreation     |
| <u>ARCHITECTURE</u> -4         | ENGINEERING  | MILITARY               | SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN | settlement     |
| <u>ART</u> -5                  | EXPLORATION  | MUSIC                  |                     | socio/cultural |
| COMMERCE                       | INDUSTRY     | PHILOSOPHY             | TRANSPORTATION      | urban & commun |
| COMMUNICATIONS                 | INVENTION    | POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | OTHER (SPECIFY)     | planning       |

## Claims

"first" YES NO "oldest" YES NO "only" YES NO



ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: ~~GEORGIAN~~ *Greek Revival with English Baroque elements*

architect/m.builder:

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

(label role

&

appropriate date)

events

institutional

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): *1961*

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S): *1961*

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

*1/2*

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

*rusticated*  
FRAME, CLAPBOARDING, HORIZONTAL

~~SIDING; CUT TO RESEMBLE RUSTICATION~~ 2 STORIES, RECTANGULAR, GABLED

ROOF, FRONT CENTER ROUND-ARCHED ENTRANCE <sup>WITH</sup> FLANKING <sup>blind-</sup> ARCHED

~~BLIND RECESSES~~, SET IN 4-STAGE ENGLISH BAROQUE BELL TOWER WITH

OCTAGONAL OPEN ARCH BALUSTRADED BELFRY; AND FINIAL; EXTERIOR AND

EXTENSIVE INTERIOR ALTERATIONS, 1958. FINE EXAMPLE OF *Greek Revival with English Baroque elements* ~~GEORGIAN~~ <sup>style</sup>

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

~~AN~~ IMPORTANT VISUAL LANDMARK FROM THE  
~~SEA AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY.~~