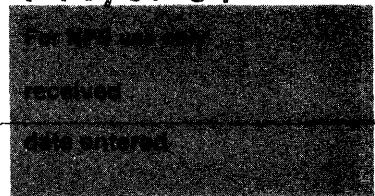


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



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5. K-1692:

Property Name: OLD FIRE HOUSE

Location & Verbal Boundary Description:

The Old Fire House is located on the southeast corner of Church Avenue and S. W. Front Street. The lot is triangular in shape, bounded by the two streets and by the Mispillion River, being approximately 218 feet by 215 feet by 120 feet. It occupies .3 acres.

Owner: Thomas Draper, T/A Milford Plaza Shopping Center, Milford, DE.  
(obtained 12/8/81 at Kent County Board of Assessments).

Property Description:

The Old Fire House was built in 1925 as a combination fire house and community center. It is a 2-story brick building that is square in shape with a projecting 2-story entrance wing and stair tower on the west side. The door and window arrangements have been altered to some degree during 1979 as the building was converted completely into a commercial property. Solar panels were added to the flat roof and the twelve-over-twelve windows were replaced with single-light thermal windows. The three main vehicle doors on the north side were retained, but the two doors on the west side were filled-in to allow for more interior space. The brick bond is unglazed Flemish bond throughout and there is a brick corbelled cornice at the roof line. The door surrounds and decorative items such as signboards, keystones and lintel end pieces are all done in pre-cast concrete. The cornice is also capped with pre-cast concrete blocks.

Historical Background:

The Old Fire House was built in 1925 to serve a dual function to the City of Milford. The first was to house the Carlisle Fire Company, and the second was to serve as a community center and library building for the town.

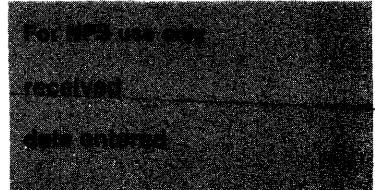
The fire company bought the land in 1921, held very successful fund-raising drives, and completed the building in 1925 at a cost of \$87,000. The "mortgage burning ceremony" was in 1945. The Charles E. Varney Auditorium, which could seat 400, was improved periodically and used to accommodate many Milford activities.

The Carlisle Fire Company has recently moved to new quarters and the building is being renovated for re-use.

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APR 16/83

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OLD FIRE HOUSE CONTINUED

Property Significance:

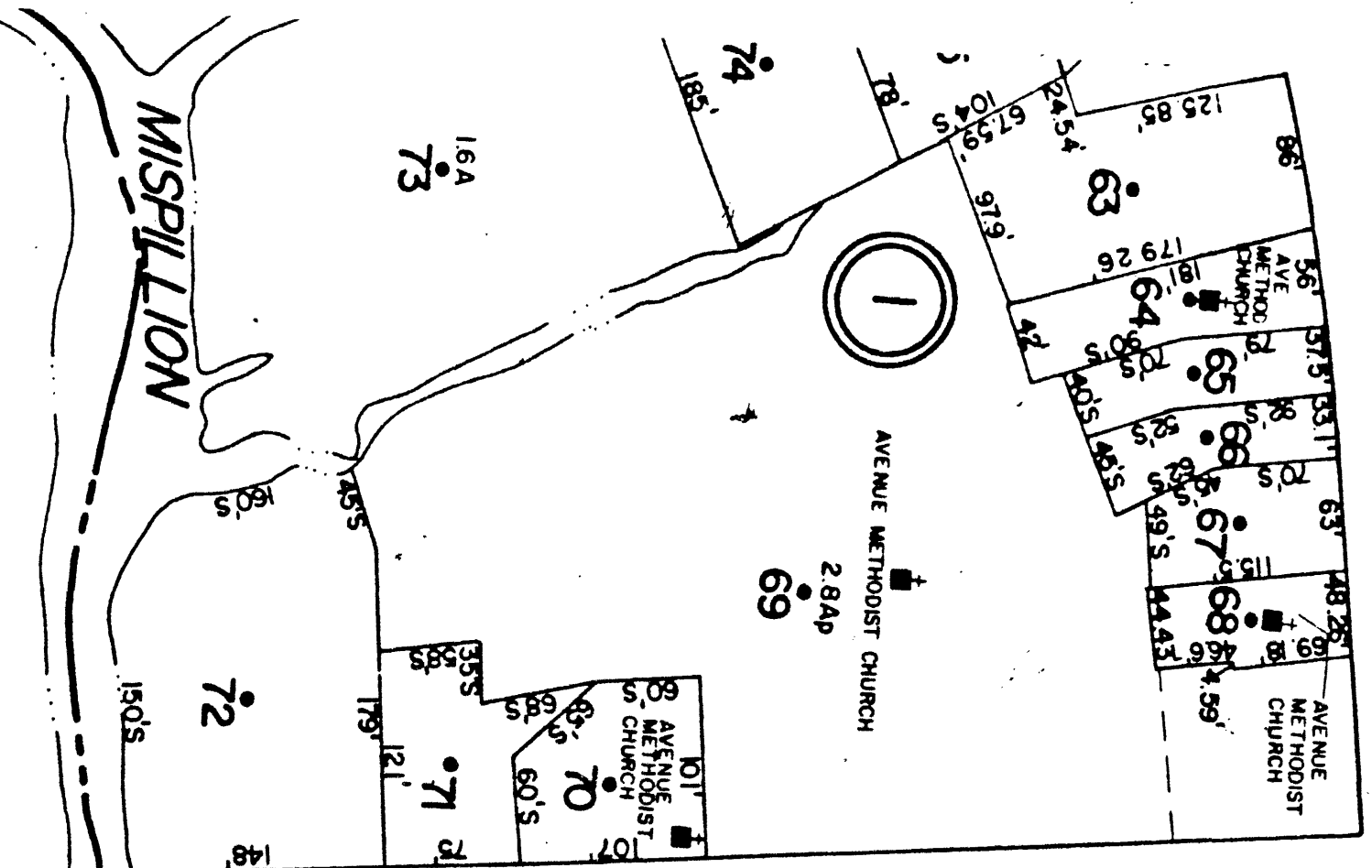
The fire company has always served an important social as well as humanitarian function in Milford and is thus eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. Milford has had a fire company since 1802. This particular building was erected in 1925 to serve as the home for the Carlisle Fire Company and also to serve the town of Milford as a community center.

The desire on the part of the Carlisle Fire Company to physically incorporate a community center into the building in 1925 signifies the central role that the fire company played in the social life of the town and its environs. When the building was constructed, there were a few commercial establishments that could accommodate large numbers of people for meetings and cultural performances, but they were older structures and none was of the size of the fire company auditorium. The community center was well used and served as a focal point which the residents could look to as a place in which to hold large public events.

The exterior changes to the building are actually minor. They consist of replacing the original window lights with modern thermal panes. Also two of the garage doors have been closed in. However, the change was done so that the brick and glass fill gives the visual impression of closed doors with a brick lower portion and glass upper portion. The rooftop solar panels are not highly visible from the street level.

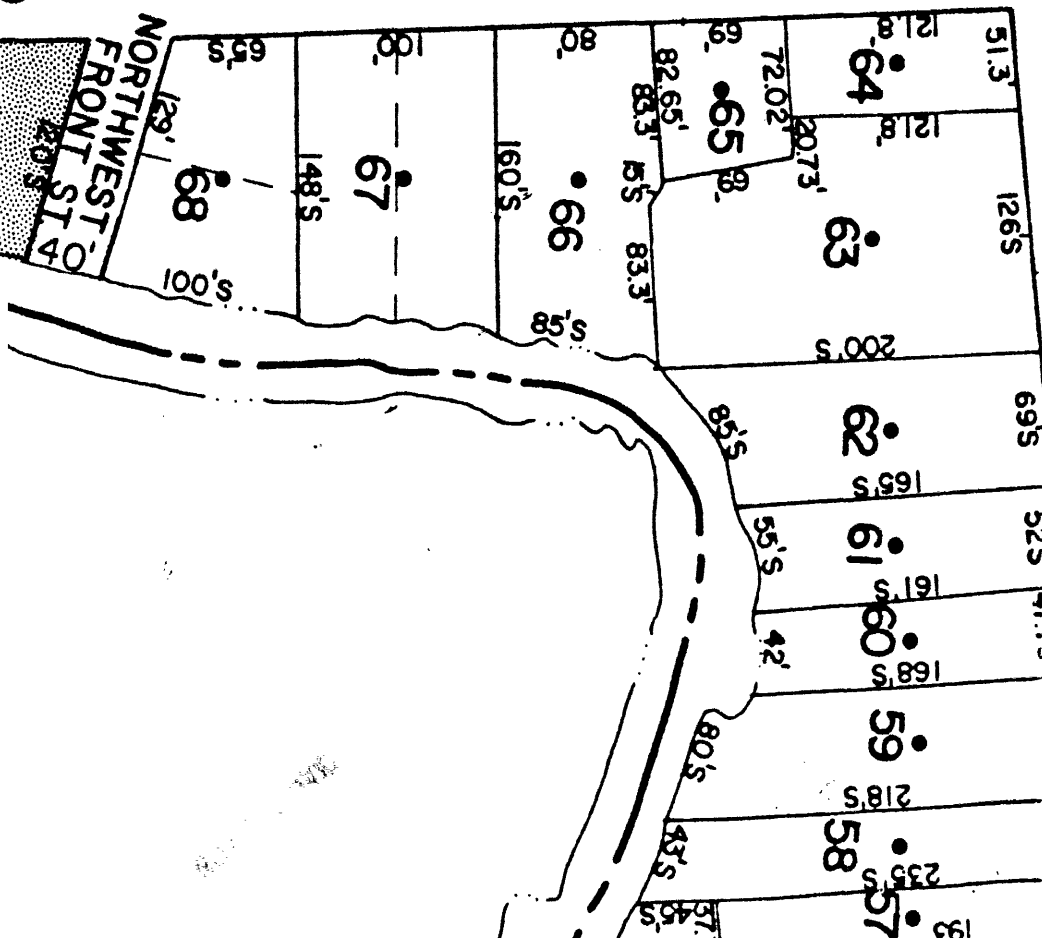
SUSSEX

MISPILLION



STREET - 60'

80' CHURCH



K-1692 Old Fire House