

56-1886

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Fairport Public Library
other names/site number Fairport Historical Museum
name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 18 Perrin St

N/A	not for publication
-----	---------------------

city or town Fairport

N/A	vicinity
-----	----------

state New York code NY county Monroe code 055 zip code 14450

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide local
Roger Daniel Murray 9/25/17
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)
[Signature] 12/8/17
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Fairport Public Library
 Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
 County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/library

RECREATION & CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Early twentieth century: Georgian Revival

foundation: concrete
 walls: brick, concrete block
 roof: polymer shingle
 other:

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The former Fairport Public Library (now the Fairport Historical Museum) is located at 18 Perrin Street in the Village of Fairport in Monroe County, New York. Opened in 1938, the building is constructed of fireproof concrete block with brick facing and is an excellent example of WPA era Georgian Revival style building with its symmetrical T-shape form and character defining features, the most prominent being a pedimented entrance portico with Tuscan columns and raking cornice. The main entrance contains a double wood door set into a large surround with engaged columns and a large half-round wood and glass transom. The building is one-story with a two-story rear (west) section and a full basement. Windows are mostly double-hung sash, either twelve –over-twelve or nine-over twelve, with some casement windows. A major exception is the rear addition, which features a multi-light bay window with a tripartite multi-light window above. This elevation is also faced with flush installed wide wood siding. The interior retains its 1938 floorplan, with an entry vestibule opening into a center section flanked by two rooms to the north and south and a large former reference room in the west end. The interior is highly intact and includes original shelving and cabinetry, including a large, curved glass fronted case. Also prominent is a WPA mural by local artist Carl Peters over the entrance to the former reference room depicting Fairport’s role in agriculture and as an Erie Canal port. The second-floor area of the two-story west section is used for artifact processing and storage. The only changes made to the building were to install an access ramp at the rear and convert the librarian’s office into a handicap accessible bathroom. With so few changes, the building has a high degree of integrity, especially in terms of materials, workmanship and design.

Narrative Description

Fairport is a village in the Town of Perinton in southeast Monroe County, New York, approximately twelve miles southeast of the City of Rochester. It is bordered by the Monroe County villages of East Rochester to the northwest, Pittsford to the southwest, and Webster to the north. The Erie Canal, now the New York State Barge Canal (NHL listed 2016), runs along the western edge of the village and through its north end. The former Fairport Public Library is located at 18 Perrin Street on a one-half acre lot in the heart of the village within walking distance of the canal and the business district (Main Street between Church and High Streets). The building is on the west side of a largely residential street; however, the east side of the street, directly across from the library, has been redeveloped with a large public parking lot and underground parking garage bordered by chain retail stores.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

The library is set back from the street on a large square, grassy lot. Historic landscaping along the walk consists of boxwood shrubbery and mature trees planted at the edges of the lawn. The landscaping was designed by Edward G. Lawson (1884-1968), who was an assistant professor of landscape architecture at Cornell University from 1922 to the 1940s. An asphalt paved drive leads from the street to the rear of the building's southwest side. A wide Indiana limestone walk leads to a broad limestone portico floor and four shallow limestone steps. Four original iron fences evenly divide the steps and have narrow metal balusters and metal railings. Additional iron fencing is at the north and south ends of the portico.

Completed in 1938 as a WPA project, the Fairport Public Library was designed in the Georgian Revival style by Henry A. Martin of Martin and Wiard of Rochester, New York, reflecting a style commonly found in WPA projects. The façade is dominated by the centrally placed portico with its four round Tuscan-order columns, plain frieze with "Museum" in applied letters and a denticulated pediment with a raking cornice. The columns and pediment are wood but the center of the tympanum has a circular plaster bas relief of an open book and the inscription *Fairport Public Library 1937*. Two full-height pilasters are at the northwest and southwest corners of the pediment frieze band and flank two evenly placed casement windows and the central main entrance. The casement windows have six-lights set into wide moldings with molded wood sills and splayed brick lintels. The south casement window has a metal plaque underneath, donated by the Friends of the Fairport Public Library in 1995, commemorating the building's construction. The main entrance consists of a double wood door, each with nine upper lights and a lower recessed wood panel, set into a classical surround of engaged fluted Corinthian columns and a molded cornice with cornice returns. A decorative glass and wood half-round transom with delicate tracery is over the door, set into a wide wood surround topped by a wood keystone. The entire entrance rests on a narrow limestone sill. A small pendant lamp hangs from the middle of the portico ceiling. The double entrance door also retains the original metal hardware (mail slot, door handles and handle plates). Double-hung windows flank the portico, each being twelve-over-twelve wood sash with molded wood sills and splayed brick lintels.

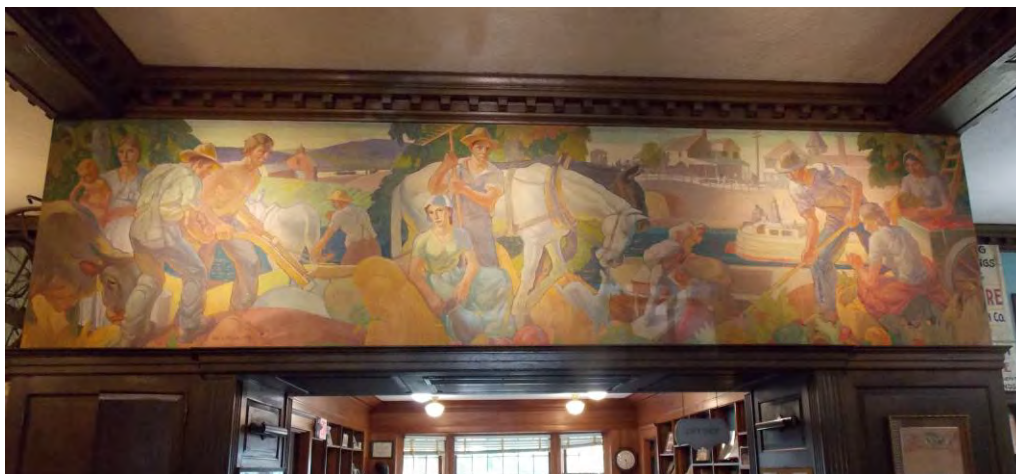
Fenestration is fairly even throughout the building. All windows have the same molded wood frames and sills with splayed brick lintels but differ in size. The north and south elevations have four, eight-over-twelve windows that are four feet-wide by six feet-high and one six-over-six window that is three feet-wide by five feet-high. One exception is the west elevation, which is dominated by a two-story wood faced center section. The first story has a three-part bay window with multi-light double-hung sash. Each section has a plain wood panel below and the entire window has a narrow denticulated cornice. The window in the second floor has two narrow four-over-six windows flanking a center eight-over-twelve window, all set into a wood surround with a common wood sill and lintel. Two three-light casement windows with splayed brick lintels flank the two-story section. The south side of the west wing has another six-over-six window and a raised secondary entrance

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

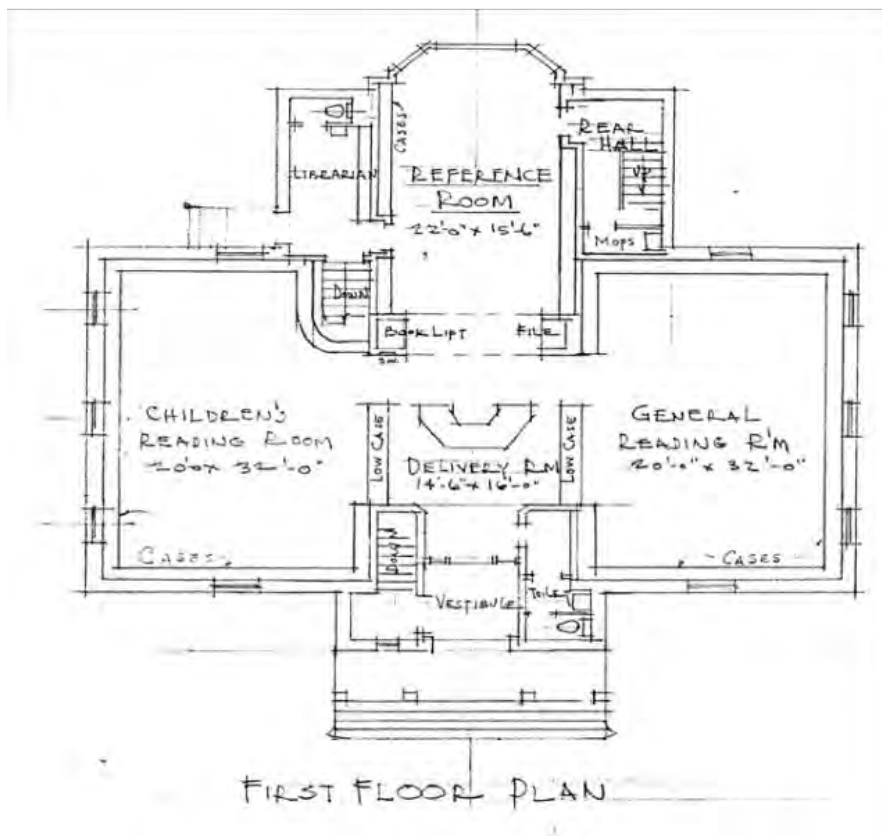
with a sill plate that meets the non-historic brick and concrete access ramp. The ramp has non-historic metal fencing/railings similar to the entrance portico.

The interior of the museum retains all of the original library features, which includes the floorplan, deep stained woodwork, shelving and brown and cream rubber tiled flooring. All of the interior trim and woodwork carry on the building's classical theme with fluted window frames and crown molding with dentils in the main rooms. As seen in the plan, the interior of the first floor is divided into four principle areas: the entry vestibule, the two main rooms (former children's and general reading rooms) to the north and south, and a former reference room, now used as the museum gift shop (west end). The archway to the former reference room features a WPA mural visible above the archway molding. Executed by well-known local artist Carl Peters, his signature is visible in the lower left. The mural is painted in muted pastel colors and depicts two scenes with farmers and farm animals in the foreground and the Erie Canal in the background. The right side of the mural's background emphasizes the village and canal, showing a canal bridge, village buildings, and men loading goods onto a docked canal boat.



Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State



Access to the interior is through a barrel-vaulted vestibule located between the exterior entrance door and the main interior; the space is divided in half by a wood and glass door. This door has a surround similar to the main entrance, consisting of fluted pilasters and a half-round glass and wood transom with a stylized sunrise pattern. The door also has glass sidelights with lower recessed narrow wood panels. To the south of the entrance is an opening for a metal staircase with wood railings that leads to the basement. A bathroom in the north side of the vestibule is accessible from a door just beyond the interior door. This end of the vestibule (past the door) has walls that are wood paneled. The ceiling is plaster in the entire vestibule. A large wood arch marks the west end of the vestibule and features fluted pilasters and a wood keystone. A large circulation desk was located opposite the vestibule arch; removed in the 1970s, it is the only original item missing from the building.

Directly opposite the vestibule are the Peters Mural and the former reference room, now serving as a gift shop. The entryway into this section retains an original book-lift and the original copper colored wall lights attached to wood panels. Also extant is the original card catalog, built in wood shelving, wood wall paneling and crown molding. The ceiling is plaster and has original metal and glass suspended lights, as does the rest of the first floor. On the south side, a door leads to the back hall/stair to the basement and what was originally the librarian's office, now remodeled as a bathroom. Another door on the north side leads to a janitor's closet, a small storage area and the stairway to the upper floor. This stair is wood with wood risers, railings and

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

balustrade. The upper floor consists of a large work room directly over the reference room/gift shop and has a small stair to a raised east end attic portion that is used for artifact storage. A large three section multi-light window faces to the west, over the lower bay window. A storage space in the eaves houses the textile/costume collection. Floors are wood and the room has wide window and ceiling moldings, wood wainscoting and built-in storage.

To the right (north) of the vestibule is the former main reading room separated from the center hall by a low wood paneled half-wall with shelving on the reverse side. The room features more built-in shelving between and underneath the windows. Window moldings and wood shelving is dark stained. Shelving is adjustable and is currently used for museum displays. Wood and glass display cases are in the center of the room and, while old, are not original to the library. The room features crown moldings with widely spaced dentils. The former children's room is directly opposite to the south and has the same features of shelving and moldings. It also has a large curved and glass fronted shelf unit that is original to the building

The remaining interior space is the lower floor/basement divided into a 31-foot-square meeting area on the north side; a restroom, lobby, kitchen, work room on the south side, and a utility area in the west end. The stair is original to the building, ending at the lobby on the south side. Stair treads are covered with rubberized tile, while the rest of the south side basement floor is asphalt tile. All doors in this section are original wood with large, single upper panels and single smaller lower panels. Painted doors are set into recessed stained wood surrounds. A wood stained picture rail runs along the wall roughly ten inches below the ceiling. The kitchen features period cabinetry and a wood panel Dutch door. The original book lift is in the north part of the workroom and was used to bring library materials to the first floor.

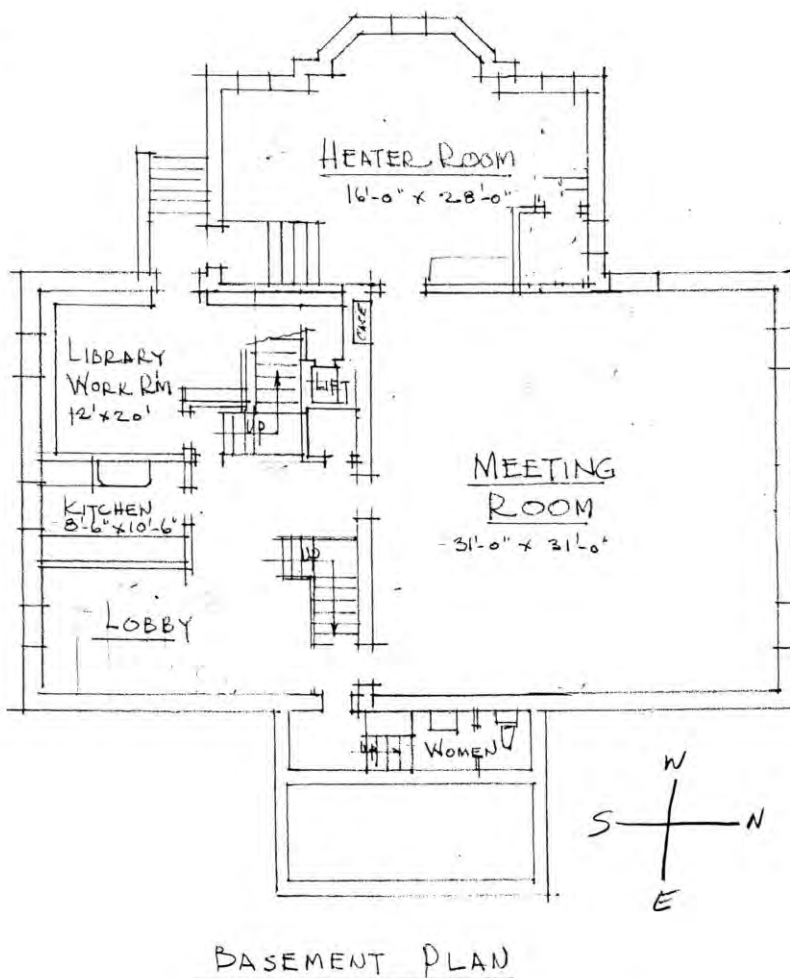
Located on the north side is the basement meeting room, renovated to accommodate audio-visual and computer equipment for presentations. This room has a lower, rough coated plaster ceiling, but the historic picture railing is still visible, as is the painted wood baseboard. The floor is carpeted and the windows have room darkening curtains, but the original metal and glass casement windows are intact and operable. Just to the south of the meeting room entrance is another restroom with asphalt tiled floors, tiled ceiling and rough textured plaster walls.

The west end of the floor has a separate area for utilities and storage. The walls are exposed masonry block, some being concrete (possibly replaced when the concrete access ramp was added) and darker colored blocks showing the cinder added to the cement. The floors are a combination of exposed concrete and tile. The room contains duct work for the main floor and has a brick chimney stack that was originally connected to an older heating unit (no longer extant) indicated by covered and infilled round flue openings and a floor level

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

metal grate. The room has a south exterior door is at the end of a short flight on concrete steps with a metal pipe hand railing. The door is wood with a twelve-light upper section and a recessed lower panel. It has a concrete sill and non-historic crash bar.



The layout of the building was easily adapted for use as a museum without the need for renovating the spaces, except for the basement meeting room. The open areas are used for free standing exhibits and additional low display cases. Extant shelving is also used for displays and storing research materials accessed by the general public. Windows in the north and south wings have blinds to block direct sun from damaging displays and artifacts. Extant shelving in the former reference room is used for retail display. As previously mentioned, the need for limited renovation (meeting room, handicap bathroom, exterior access ramp) resulted in the building retaining a high degree of integrity.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education

Architecture

Art

Period of Significance

1936-1967

Significant Dates

1936, 1938, 1967

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Henry A. Martin, architect

Carl Peters, artist

Period of Significance (justification)

The period begins with the construction of building (1936-38) and ends with 1967, representing its continued use as a public library for the benefit of the village. The library remained in this building until 1979, at which time it moved to a larger space.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Opened in 1938, the Fairport Public Library is significant under Criterion A in the area of education as the culmination of a long struggle to establish a permanent free public library in Fairport to augment education and offer reading materials beyond the classroom for all ages. Efforts to establish a library in Fairport dated to the earliest days of the village's history, when the first documented library started as a collection of books along the walls of the Dickinson Tavern. The library was created by Julia and Emma Dickinson, who charged a small fee for borrowing. The Dickinsons intended to expand the library through co-operative efforts of like-minded villagers. The library moved twice before closing around 1890. In 1895, a group of citizens revived the public library idea by formally creating the Fairport Public Library; however, the collections again moved several times before a permanent home was acquired on Perrin Street. The nominated building was constructed with funds provided by the local Perinton Patriotic League and the federal WPA program, one of the federal government's ambitious Depression-era ventures to keep people employed by funding public works projects. The building is significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a representative and highly intact Georgian Revival style building designed by local architect Henry A. Martin. Used for schools, post offices and other public buildings in this period, the Georgian Revival was a familiar, recognizable "American" style that blended with the architecture of the residential street, giving it "a more gracious and homelike feeling."¹ Colonial Revival or Georgian Revival was also one of the common styles utilized for WPA buildings, and the economical concrete block with brick facing kept construction costs affordable for the citizens of the modest sized village. The library is additionally significant in the area of art for its local history themed WPA mural, painted by prominent regional artist Carl Peters. The WPA also funded local artists to paint murals in posts offices and libraries, among other buildings. Like most, Peters memorialized a local scene, depicting the village's role as a canal port, in a spot visible by all upon entering the building. Peters was an especially prominent artist who painted at least thirteen local murals with the Fairport Public Library mural depicting the Erie Canal.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Local Historic Context

Following the American War for Independence, settlers looking for plentiful farmland moved steadily west into the newly opened territory. Fairport and the Town of Perinton were originally part of the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, a section of Western New York between Seneca Lake, the Genesee River, Lake Ontario, and the Pennsylvania border consisting of 1.6 million acres of land that was being sold off for settlement. Glover Perrin, one of the early surveyors of the purchase, settled in the area with his family on a small farm in 1793,

¹ "New Building is Last Word in Modern Library Construction," *Fairport Herald-Mail*, 10 March 1938, 1.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

and the township of Perinton was named after him in 1812. The hamlet of Egypt was a settlement to the east, established in 1806, that became the agricultural hub of Perinton. Egypt was on the east-west stage coach route between the communities of Rochester and Canandaigua, the two largest settlements in the region. The completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 drew people to settlements along the canal, creating new villages such as Fairport, officially incorporated as a village in 1867. In 1822, the small settlement was described as consisting of seven cabins, a block house and a frame house at a crossroads. The nearby canal stopover at Fullam's Basin was soon eclipsed by the rapid growth of the village, which became known to canal boatmen as a "fair port." Due to its close proximity to the canal, stables, stores and inns quickly appeared in the village. In 1852, the DeLand Chemical Works built a large factory along a straight stretch of the canal in the village. This was the beginning of Fairport's industrial heritage, which continued well into the twentieth century.

Around 1850, the arrival of two railroads through the village combined with the canal to stimulate an increase in freight and passenger traffic. This was a boom time for the businesses that chose to locate in Fairport, including Taylor's Patent Medicine, Cox Shoe Manufacturing Company, Cobb's Preserving Company (Sanitary Can/American Can Company), Certo, Crystal Rock Mineral Water, Crosman Arms and Crosman Seeds and DeLand Chemical. Many of the industries were innovative, inventing and improving new products and processes. The Trescott Company developed fruit and vegetable sorters; Cobb's Preserving marketed a solderless tin can that revolutionized food storage. DeLand's made saleratus and baking soda and Certo developed a preserving agent using pectin. Many of these products were marketed around the world. Fruit growing was an important cash crop for many area farmers throughout the nineteenth century, as it was directly related to the canning and fruit processing businesses.

In 1918, the canal was substantially enlarged and renamed the New York State Barge Canal (NHL 2016) to accommodate larger ships and compete with the railroads. However, by the early twentieth century, more efficient trucks replaced both the canal and railroads, and businesses along the canal and rail lines either moved or closed. By the early twentieth century, the rapid growth of urban Rochester eclipsed that of outlying communities, and many of them became bedroom communities for the city. Fairport and Perinton grew rapidly during the latter half of the twentieth century with new home developments taking over farm land. This population boom again increased traffic in Fairport, but in this case, with automobile and truck traffic. Today, the canal is once more important to Fairport as a recreational waterway, largely due to new investments in its preservation and maintenance. New businesses cater to boaters' needs and new housing developments are locating along the village waterfront. Today, the village remains a "fair port".

Criterion A: Libraries in Fairport

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

Early libraries were found in odd places in many early towns and villages across America and Fairport, the earliest library started out in the late 1820s as a collection of books along the walls of an upper hall in what was the Dickinson Tavern in Fullam's Basin.² The library was the creation of Julia and Emma Dickinson, who saw a need for the betterment of both travelers and residents in the village. For a small fee, a book could be borrowed, which became the basis for the sisters' dream of opening a much larger lending library that would become a treasured resource in the community. After the tavern was moved to East Church Street, the original building became the Dickinsons' home and private lending library.

In 1839, the Perinton School District #9 resolved at an annual meeting to levy a \$10 tax for purchasing a library and a committee was formed to oversee its creation. Charles H. Dickinson (of the former Dickinson Tavern) was named the first librarian for the collection, located in the school at 36 East Church Street. In 1848, the library was open to the public on alternate Saturday afternoons. Along with the school library, the community now had access to two private libraries: the Dickinson collection and a library operated by a John H. Hardick and William T. Fonda on South Main Street. The school library collection quickly languished, due to the school board being distracted by a rapidly growing population and the need for expanding the school system. In 1876, the *Fairport Herald Mail* newspaper made an impassioned plea for a free public library that would provide "good solid reading, free or nearly so, available to all."³

Hardick and Fonda's South Main Street Library lasted for 20 years. Another private library that operated on South Main Street closed in 1894, and the books were moved to an unknown location. By this time, a national free public library movement was underway across the country that "evolved from a number of antecedent institutions, most notable so-called social libraries and school district libraries...Nevertheless, school district libraries set important precedents, establishing the legitimacy of taxation in support of free public library service, and linking libraries and public education (in this case, adult education) in the mind of the public."⁴ In 1895, the State of New York passed a law that permitted the transfer of school libraries to local library boards, which could then make the books available to the general public. In November 1895, a group of villagers met to establish the Fairport Public Library, and received a provisional charter formally creating the village's first free public library. The Fairport Public Library maintained a unique public school/public library arrangement, which continues in Fairport to the present, even after the larger national the school partnership movement faded as an option for the free public library movement.

² Bertha Bruner Bown, "Facts and Reminiscences About the Dickinson Library," *Fairport Herald-Mail*, 10 March 1938, 1.

³ Helen P. DeLand, "History of the Fairport Public Library Over Period 1839-1938," *Fairport Herald-Mail*, 10 March 1938, 1.

⁴ Michael Kevane and William A. Sundstrom, "Expansion of Public Libraries in the United States, 1870-1930" (10 May 2006), 6-7.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

In 1897, the book collection residing in the new high school on West Church Street moved to a room in the Hawkins Block (the earlier home of the Hardick and Fonda libraries). As the collection grew and required more space, it was moved to a room in the Bown Block and then moved again to a larger room. The library was granted a permanent charter as a public library in 1906. By 1914, the expanding collection outgrew the larger space. At least 1,600 residents borrowed books during those years and it was noted that more than 100 of the patrons were of Italian heritage. The community was home to a large number of immigrant families who worked at the nearby car shops and canning factories, and borrowing books was an important aid to learning the language and the customs of their new, chosen country. The library movement was bolstered by the presence of immigrant population, and by the 1920s, Fairport once again needed a larger, permanent, independent library building.

Criterion C: Building the Library at 18 Perrin Street

By the turn-of-the-twentieth century, the local public library became an American institution, an outgrowth of the Public Library Movement that began in the 1870s and continued to 1930, with support from industrialist Andrew Carnegie. Scottish immigrant Andrew Carnegie arrived in America at the age of twelve and turned to local libraries for his own self-improvement and education, but resented the subscription fees he had to pay to get the desired books. After making his fortune in the steel industry, one of his first efforts in philanthropy was to build free public libraries, both in America and abroad with the first being in his hometown of Dunfermline, Scotland. In 1914, the Fairport Chamber of Commerce petitioned the Carnegie Foundation for a gift to erect a new library building. The Carnegie Foundation granted \$11,000 to the village and 18 Perrin Street was proposed as the site since it already belonged to the school district. Unfortunately, the community could not agree on the site; several proposals were offered and rejected, including 18 Perrin Street, and eventually the grant was forfeited.⁵ By 1917, the need for a new library was so critical that the local chamber of commerce proposed, for the sake of expediency, that the library move into the old house located at 18 Perrin Street, where it remained until 1930, when a gift from the estate of Robert Douglas, the founder and owner of the Certo Corporation, reopened the discussion of a new, permanent library in Fairport.

Robert Douglas was born in Scone, Scotland, in 1859, and, as a young man, invented a special thermometer that measured the correct temperature for making jam. He moved to the United States in 1887 to sell his thermometers and, by 1906, partnered with two other businessmen to establish a cider and vinegar manufacturing business located in the former DeLand Manufacturing works in Fairport. Douglas and other chemists began experimenting with the extraction of pectin from apple pomace, a product left over from

⁵For a full description of the Carnegie story, see the Perinton Historical Society *Historigram* Vol XLVII No. 5 (February, 2015), online at <http://www.perintonhistoricalsociety.org/images/stories/Historigrams/Historigram2015-02.pdf>.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

vinegar production. When added to fruit and sugar, the pomace blend developed into a jelly. After perfecting the process, he applied for a patent. In 1921 the product was named Certo and later became known as Sure-Gel. In 1929, seriously ill and fearful that the company would founder after his death, Douglas sold the business to General Foods. Recalling the dispute over the Carnegie Library, he set aside 500 shares of Certo stock for the sole purpose of funding a new public library. The bequest was sufficient to build a new library building, but by the time the stock was transferred, the stock market collapsed and the shares were devalued to half of the original worth. With the advent of the Great Depression, the building of a new library was relegated to the back burner; however, some progress was made between 1930 and 1932. The school district overwhelmingly voted to build a new library at 18 Perrin St and hired an architect to draw up the plans. The books were removed from the old house prior to demolition and divided between the high school and the Schummer Block in the village. The Perinton Patriotic League offered the balance of its World War I War Chest to help defray the decreased value of the Certo stock, which was enough to pay for the cost of the materials with some left over to purchase equipment.

The Perinton Patriotic League was formed in April 1917 to care for local soldiers as they left for training to fight overseas. After the five Liberty Bond drives, the league had raised an astonishing \$636,000. By 1931, residual money in the fund amounted to approximately \$8,000. In February of that year, the league decided to donate the money to the Library Board in a unanimous decision by the executive committee, but with a caveat: "The funds subscribed by the membership of the Perinton Patriotic League during the World War have had their part in building this library as a memorial to the soldiers of the Town of Perinton, and especially to those who made the supreme sacrifice for their country."⁶ The deal was done, but within a few weeks, a newly formed group of ex-servicemen met at the local American Legion Brooks-Shepard Post and vigorously protested the granting of the War Chest Fund to the Library Board. They requested that the library refrain from using any of the money from the Patriotic League for any purpose. Three years later, the post was still lobbying for control of the funds and was seeking a preliminary investigation into the facts and circumstances of the original donation. The veterans stated that the money should be used to provide aid and comfort to men and women in active service and proposed to establish a trust fund to be known as the Veterans Memorial Fund. In the end, the money went to the library and the World War I veterans were honored with an engraved dedication panel located in the vestibule of the new library.

Architect Henry A. Martin was commissioned to begin drawing up plans for the library in 1930, but the project stopped when the Certo stock lost its value. He resumed his task after new construction funding was secured,

⁶"War Chest Fund of \$8000 Will Help Build New Public Library," *Fairport Herald-Mail*, 26 February 1931, 1.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

augmented by federal and local, private monies. Martin (1898-1958) was from the area, born in nearby Canandaigua. After studying at Syracuse University, he worked in Watertown, eventually moving to Rochester in 1925 where he worked for the firm of Thompson, Holmes and Converse and C. Storrs. He formed his own architecture firm in 1930, joining with partner Walter Vars Wiard to form Martin and Wiard, which lasted until 1942. After the war, Wiard rejoined the firm along with Robert McGraw, which continued until McGraw died in 1957. Martin continued working independently until his death in 1958. Martin and his wife, Helen, resided in the village on South Main Street and were active in community affairs. Martin served on the Library Board and as a village trustee. Prior to construction of the library, he designed the Fire Hall, village residences, and oversaw the renovation of the Village Hall. His firm went on to design several schools in the Monroe County area and several prominent buildings in Rochester.

Additional construction funding came from the federal government through the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Organized in 1935, it was the most ambitious of the New Deal projects developed during the administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. With a \$4.9 billion subsidy from the federal government, the program aimed at putting the unemployed to work on municipal projects. For Fairport, the new program seemed to be the answer to the persistent library dilemma that would give the village a much sought after public library while providing local jobs. The library board applied for and received WPA funding that would cover half of the construction cost, and ground was broken for the new library in 1936.

Designs for WPA construction projects were left to the local community and the associated architect. Federal guidelines required that the building “be in compliance with local building codes, or with good practice where such codes do not exist. They must make adequate provision for sanitation, light, and air, and for the reduction of fire hazards to buildings and occupants.”⁷ When it opened in 1938, the Fairport Public Library was described as having a brick exterior and a slate roof with the brick “made in Virginia from the same clays as used in the University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson’s home at Monticello and in the recent building of the historic city of Williamsburg.”⁸ The construction was actually cinder block faced with the brick, and to make the building even more fireproof, the fuel tank for the oil burner in the basement was buried in the rear of the building. Furthermore, the main library floor was of concrete slabs on steel framing. Basement flooring was asphalt mastic tile laid over a waterproof membrane

As for ventilation, the heating system was the latest in technology, “bringing the air from each room to the unit, washing and filtering and returning it properly warmed and humidified to exactly the right degrees for the

⁷C.W. Short and R. Stanley-Brown, *Public Buildings Architecture Under the Public Works Administration 1933 to 1939* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), VI.

⁸ *Ibid.*

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

comfort of the occupants and the preservation of the books.”⁹ To provide adequate light, “the lighting of the meeting room has been carefully designed to prevent glare during meetings and study periods...The treatment at the windows has been studied to relieve the necessity of expensive draperies which would cut down the natural lighting of the day time. The control of sunlight is accomplished by Venetian blinds in all the window recesses.”¹⁰

As for the overall design, the news article stated:

The design of the building is suggested by the southern colonial development which has a more gracious and homelike feeling than the austerity of the New England public buildings. With its white columned portico, graceful leaded glass fan light in the recessed doorway and the soft tones of Virginia brick, it suggests an invitation to enter and enjoy...The interior arrangement, design and details have been subjected to the most careful inspection during the period of design. Many drawings were used and discarded to arrive at the finished plan.¹¹

The building’s form reflected the eighteenth-century American colonial period, when figures like Thomas Jefferson represented the American drive for learning and exploration in the Age of Enlightenment. Other libraries built with federal funds in the 1930s also combined a historic exterior with a modern interior, including the Lockport Public Library in Lockport, New York, which was featured in a 1939 report about federally funded projects. Like Fairport, the Lockport Library was initiated by the local community with bequests from local citizens. The Lockport Library also featured a prominent entrance portico and a design reminiscent of Colonial Williamsburg, with its symmetrical appearance, rounded windows and cornice outlined with dentils. Several other libraries featured in the report displayed the Georgian and Colonial Revival exteriors, indicating that the style as a popular choice for a public building.¹²

The library construction continued through 1937 and the doors opened to the public in February 1938 amid much fanfare in the Fairport community. Immediately after the opening, the residents embarked on an intense drive to raise money for new books and collected \$3000 by May of that year. Library borrowing steadily increased and the collection stood at 7,000 books by 1939. By the 1970s the Fairport Library outgrew its capacity yet again and in 1978, it moved to larger quarters across the street. Four hundred volunteers transferred 30,000 books to the new location. In 1979, the Fairport School District gave the nominated property to the Village of Fairport, which then turned it over to the Perinton Historical Society for use as museum with the caveat that: “The Society will make the museum available to meet the needs of the school curriculum and with the aid of community groups and with input from the school district, work to provide

⁹Ibid, 12.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid, 1.

¹²Short and Brown, *Public Buildings Architecture*, 114.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

programs and educational opportunities for the school district and the public.”¹³ In 2015, the current Fairport Public Library underwent yet another expansion at its current location. Today, the library is one of the busiest libraries in Monroe County.

Criterion C: Art

Part of the ambitious works program by the Roosevelt Administration was providing employment for artists (painters, writers, musicians) who were out of work. In August 1935, the federal government organized the Federal Art Project as part of the WPA. One of the artists benefiting from the program was Carl W. Peters (1897-1980), a successful landscape painter who resided in the village of Fairport and was well known in the art world. He was born in Rochester, grew up in Fairport, and enrolled at the Mechanics Institute (now the Rochester Institute of Technology) to study art. In 1917, he enlisted in the Army, where he painted camouflage. After the war, he continued his studies at the Art Students League in New York City for a year, and then spent two summers at Woodstock, NY, choosing to work under the tutelage of landscape painter John F. Carlson. He quickly made a reputation for himself as an impressionist as well as an American Scene painter. Soon after Woodstock, Peters began exhibiting his work at the Memorial Art Gallery in Rochester, New York. He was selected for several local art awards and, in 1926, he won the National Academy of Design Hallgarten Prize for his painting *From a Window*. His success continued with more local exhibitions, teaching and awards.

His relationship with the Memorial Art Gallery became extremely important once nation's economy worsened after the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and relief rolls and bread lines became a part of the American experience. In 1930, Peters was living on the family farm in Fairport, struggling to support his wife and two small daughters when he was commissioned to paint a mural for the Genesee Valley Trust Company bank in downtown Rochester. This gave him recognition as a muralist and Peters was recommended for additional Federal Art Project, with the local program administered by Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery. When the Rochester Board of Education was looking for an artist to paint a set of murals intended for district schools, Peters was recommended for the work. The Memorial Art Gallery also exhibited four of his WPA murals in 1937. His work was described in the local paper as showing “imaginative idealism and youthful lyricism in his mural art. All his sketches...breathe a buoyant faith in American values.”¹⁴

Peters was also commissioned to paint a mural in the new Fairport Public Library to cover an 18.5-foot by 5.5-foot panel above the opening leading to the reference room. The mural was in a prominent place, directly

¹³ Fairport Village Board Meeting Notes, October 1978.

¹⁴ Jessica Marten, “Carl W. Peters and the Rochester WPA Murals,” *American Art Review*, vol. XXVII No. 5 (October 2015), 68.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

visible to those entering the building. The canvas was set in plaster and then painted in place from a scaffold. The mural was described in a newspaper article by Helen M. Martin (wife of architect Henry A. Martin) as depicting "...strong figures of the pioneer settlers, surrounded by the products of their farms, in the foreground, and the view of the great embankment, and of the little village with its busy canal landing, in the background, show the important elements that combined to create Fairport."¹⁵ Also depicted were the Main Street Bridge, with its distinctive slant; families working the land with their animals; two notable village structures, the Fairport Hotel and the Cottage Hotel (now gone); a local barn and the Erie Canal with packet boats in the background.

Peter's murals for the Rochester Schools included two murals titled *Active Life* and *Contemplative Life* for Madison High School that were moved to the Joseph C. Wilson Foundation Academy after Madison High School was demolished in the 1980s. Two other murals were commissioned for West High School (now the Wilson Commencement Academy) and portray two figures from Rochester's early history: settler Indian Allen and Mary Jemison, known as the White Woman of the Genesee. Peters did an addition eight murals for the auditorium of the Charlotte High School on the common theme of the "Triumph of the American Ideal," completed in 1942. Of Peter's WPA era murals, only the bank mural was lost.¹⁶

Peters was also a member of The Rationalists, later known as the Genesee Group, a group of western New York artists who first exhibited as a group in October 1939, intent on being a counterpoint to the various *avant garde* movements and returning the world of art to "**soundness and sanity**" by painting what they experienced. The group continued to exhibit until 1955. Peters also continued to paint, teach art and exhibit throughout the rest of his life, although, it was hardly a lucrative existence. In 1964, he was awarded **a veteran's disability**, stating that his income that year was \$2,000. Often, after purchasing paint and canvas, he had barely enough money to ship his paintings to exhibits. One of his last exhibitions was a one man show at the Rochester Century Club in 1979 that displayed twenty-one works.

With the opening of the library at 18 Perrin Street, the people of Fairport had the permanent free library that they had labored for since the beginning of the village. Furthermore, it was designed by a local architect, had a mural honoring Fairport's historic past, and was made possible by money provided by the local community, augmented by federal funds. The building was constructed with local labor and local "labor" was honored on the mural painted by one of Fairport's own residents. Both the mural and building portrayed "American values of freedom and progress under the government's New Deal programs...[It was] meant to [remind citizens] of

¹⁵ Helen M. Martin, "Significance of Mural Painting in Fairport Public Library," *Fairport Herald-Mail*, 19 January 1939, 1.

¹⁶ Information about the murals and various scenes and sketches can be viewed online at <https://mag.rochester.edu/murals/>.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

the success and prosperity wrought by America's tenacious spirit from the earliest days of the pioneers. It was hoped this spirit would elevate the average American citizen of the 1930s from the intractable depths of the Great Depression".¹⁷ Now as the historical museum, the building and the mural continue to display the values and spirit of Fairport's citizens to new generations. Each school year, the museum and the Perinton town historian host events and local history school tours that reach out to children from nearby school districts. For the general public, the historical society continues to collect, preserve and interpret the history of Fairport and Perinton with exhibits and publications, while proudly serving as caretakers of the former library building and the Peters mural.

¹⁷Ibid.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- Bown, Bertha Bruner. "Facts and Reminiscences about the Dickinson Library." *Fairport Herald-Mail*, March 10, 1938, 1.
- DeLand, Helen P. "History of the Fairport Public Library Over Period 1839-1938." *Fairport Herald-Mail*, March 10, 1938, 1 & 12.
- Kevane, Michael and William A. Sundstrom. "Expansion of Public Libraries in the United States, 1870-1930." (May 10, 2006). SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1104046> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1104046>.
- Love, Richard H. *Carl W. Peters American Scene Painter from Rochester to Rockport*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1999.
- Martin, Helen M. "Significance of Mural Painting." *Fairport Herald-Mail*, January 19, 1939, 1.
- Marten, Jessica. *Art for the People: Carl Peters and the Rochester WPA Murals*. Rochester, NY: Rochester Institute of Technology Press, 2015.
- Nasaw, David. *Andrew Carnegie*. New York: Penguin Press, 2006.
- Perinton Historical Society. *Images of America: Perinton, Fairport, and the Erie Canal*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2001.
- Schmidt, Carl and Ann Schmidt. *Architecture and Architects of Rochester, New York*. [Rochester, NY:] Rochester Society of Architects, 1959.
- Short, C.W. and R. Stanley-Brown. *Public Buildings Architecture Under the Public Works Administration 1933 to 1939*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1939.
- Spevak, Jeff. "New MAG Show Presents WPA Murals." *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*, October 12, 2015.
- "War Chest Fund of \$8000 Will Help Build New Public Library." *Fairport Herald-Mail*, February 26, 1931, 1.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Perinton Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>301094</u> Easting	<u>4774864</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is the same as for the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Catherine Angevine and Sam Bartolotta (edited by Virginia L. Bartos, Ph.D., DHP-NYS OPRHP)
organization Perinton Historical Society date September 2017
street & number 18 Perrin St telephone 585-377-4916
city or town Fairport state NY zip code 14450
e-mail virginia.bartos@parks.ny.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Fairport Public Library

City or Vicinity: Fairport

County: Monroe State: New York

Photographer: Virginia L. Bartos

Date Photographed: 29 June 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 0014: East elevation of library building viewed looking southwest from Perrin St.
- 0002 of 0014: Detail view of entrance portico, view looking west.
- 0003 of 0014: West and south elevations, view looking northeast.
- 0004 of 0014: West elevation and partial view of north elevation, view looking southeast.
- 0005 of 0014: North elevation and partial view of east elevation, view looking southwest.
- 0006 of 0014: Interior view looking west at entrance vestibule.
- 0007 of 0014: View into former reference room, west end of building.
- 0008 of 0014: North room (General Reading room), view looking toward northeast corner.
- 0009 of 0014: View looking south into former Children's Reading Room.
- 0010 of 0014: Original curved case in northwest corner of former Children's Reading Room.
- 0011 of 0014: West staircase, view from second floor work room to first floor.
- 0012 of 0014: Second floor work room, view looking west.
- 0013 of 0014: Carl Peters WPA Mural over entrance to former reference room.
- 0014 of 0014: Mural detail showing date and artist signature.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name N/A
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

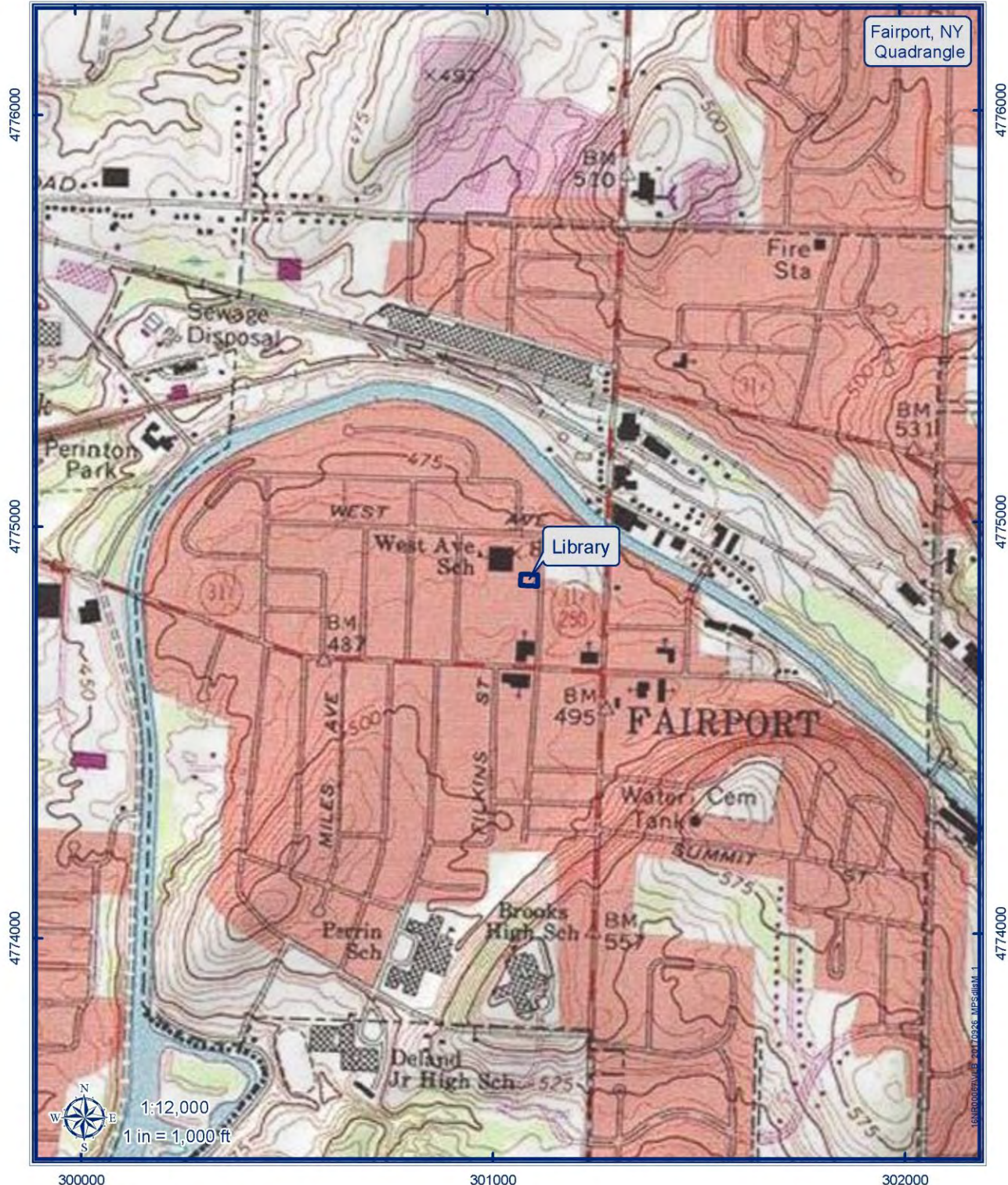
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

Fairport Public Library
Fairport, Monroe Co., NY

18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

Fairport Public Library
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

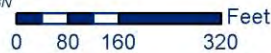
Fairport Public Library
Fairport, Monroe Co., NY

18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450

$\Sigma = .28$ Acres



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation



MUSEUM

18

FAIRPORT
HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Home of
The Perinton Historical Society



MUSEUM

18













THE SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE
DRUG STORES, GOODS
DRUG STORE SERVICE

GOOD MORNING
WHY WE PAY EVERYTHING
THEY ASK IN A BULKY MARKET
AND THEN SAY
WE WANT THE GOODS
JOHN D. WEBB
PURE FOOD MARKET

HARDWARE Metal Work
Sporting Goods

MUSEUM LIBRARY
Dedicated to the memory of
Helen T. Butler and
Elma N. Gaffney





DOMESTIC AND
SOCIAL LIFE





Make JAM JELLY CERTO
With

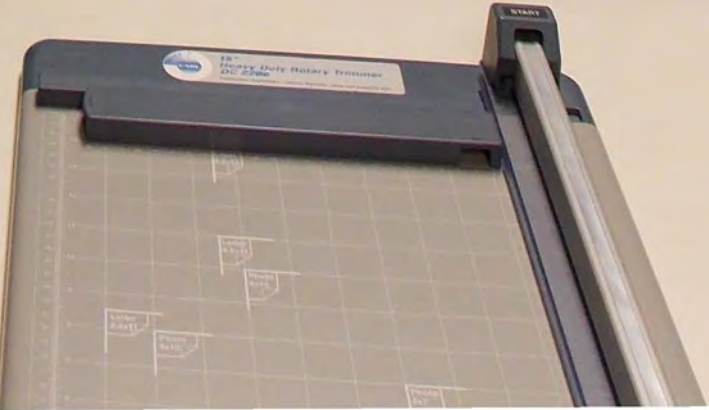
Wally's Green-Jelly
CERTO

SAPOLIO

IN FOR A BITE
THE GREAT
BY LATHROP

H
F









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 10/27/2017 Date of Pending List: 11/14/2017 Date of 16th Day: 11/29/2017 Date of 45th Day: 12/11/2017 Date of Weekly List: 12/14/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 12/8/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

MAYOR
Frederick H. May
DEPUTY MAYOR
H. Kevin Clark



TRUSTEES
Kenneth G. Rohr
Timothy J. Slisz
Debra Tandoi



September 8, 2017

Michael F. Lynch
Director, Division for Historic Preservation
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Director Michael F. Lynch, P.E., AIA:

I strongly support the nomination of the Fairport Public Library (Fairport Historical Museum) located at 18 Perrin Street, Fairport, New York 14450 for placement on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The well maintained structure is an excellent example of the twentieth century Georgian Revival style as identified by its form and defining features. The interior is intact and includes a WPA sponsored mural by local artist Carl Peters and has been featured in books and tours. I encourage the acceptance to both Registers at your September 14, 2017 meeting.

Sincerely,

Fritz May, Mayor
Village of Fairport



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

20 October 2017

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following four nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Shea's Seneca Building, Buffalo, Erie County
Kreiner Malt House and Grain Elevator, Buffalo, Erie County
Fairport Public Library, Fairport, Monroe County
Talcottville Cemetery, Talcottville, Lewis County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office