

PH0229300

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 10 1975

DATE ENTERED SEP 5 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Peak House

AND/OR COMMON
same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 347 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Medfield

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
10th

STATE

Massachusetts

VICINITY OF

CODE
025

COUNTY

Norfolk

CODE

021

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
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Medfield Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

c/o Mr. Paul Hurd, President, 3 Westview Road

CITY, TOWN

Medfield

STATE

Massachusetts 02052

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, Norfolk County

STREET & NUMBER

650 High Street

CITY, TOWN

Dedham

STATE

Massachusetts 02026

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1967

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Peak House is a typical 17th century cottage of a one-room plan. Its most unusual and salient feature is its exceptionally steep pitched roof, which, according to Abbott Lowell Cummings of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, is the highest 17th century roof pitch on record. It was from this feature that the house derived the name "Peak" by which it has been known for a hundred years. The house is one and one-half stories and has an attic which has been formed by covering over the collar beams of the roof.

The Peak House is 24 feet long by 14 feet 10 inches wide and measures 10 feet from the ground to the eaves and 12 feet from the eaves to the top of the roof. The four exterior walls and the roof are covered with wooden shingles. The eight window openings are furnished with restored casement sash, having diamond-shaped leaded panes. The batten door at the southern facade of the house is characteristic of 17th century doors with vertical boards on the exterior and horizontal boards on their interior.

The large main room of the first floor is illuminated by three windows. A small room behind the fireplace wall contains another window and a door which opens to the cellar stairs.

The cellar has a dirt floor and walls of fieldstone set with lime mortar. In the northeast corner under the stairway there is a section laid dry (without mortar) which may well represent the original condition. In the center of the cellar is a stone and brick arch of the 18th century which supports the restored fireplace and chimney.

An enclosed staircase leads to the second floor from the first floor entry. The second floor consists of one large room with a window in each end and an exposed, tapering chimney. A steep, open, ladder-like set of stairs leads to the third or attic story which contains small, diamond paned leaded windows at the east and west ends.

All of the interior walls of the first and second stories are sheathed with horizontal boards, those at the west end of the house being original and nicely molded. Early, if not original, sheathing is also apparent on the southeast wall of the stairwell. The four corner posts are shouldered or flared, having a "gunstock" profile. The central summer beam is chamfered, and the joists which are framed into it and which form the support of the floor of the second story appear to have been cut by an early up-and-down sawmill. The first and second floors are laid with wide boards in double layers.

The frame of the roof is exposed and noteworthy for the sophistication of its jointing system. The rafters are bridle-jointed at their apex. Mortise and tenon joints are used for those collar beams which are footed in the end girts (serving as tie beams) and which, therefore, resist compression. Dovetail tenons are used for those collars which are housed in rafters bird-mouthed over the plate and which, lacking a tie beam, are in tension.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			Early example of historic preservation

SPECIFIC DATES 1677

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural significance of the Peak House is noteworthy on several counts. First, the house is one of the few surviving examples of the one-room, one-and-one-half story type which was once the most common form of dwelling built by the early settlers in the 17th century. Today the majority of these cottages have been added to or drastically altered through the years.

There is no surviving evidence that the chimney of the Peak House was originally located in its traditional position at one end of the single-room house. Current opinion is that the Peak House may exhibit an unusual planning convention as yet little known.

In addition to its unusually high pitch, the roof of the Peak House may be the earliest known example of a roof form consisting entirely of principal rafters without purlins. According to Abbott L. Cummings, no immediate English precedent for such a roof form is known and it may be an innovative development of inland Massachusetts communities.

In 1924 the Peak House was thoroughly restored with the advice of William Sumner Appleton of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and his photographic and documentary records of that restoration are on file in the SPNEA library. Thus the house takes its place among the earliest examples of historic preservation and is a tribute to Mr. Appleton's forethought and wisdom in recognizing the kinds of questions which might be asked by later generations.

Today the Peak House is a museum of colonial living administered by the Medfield Historical Society. The basic framework of the house which was essentially unaltered during the restoration serves as an important laboratory for the study of colonial construction methods. The position of the house (facing south) further illustrates the wisdom of the original settlers in taking advantage of solar heat. Demonstrations of various aspects of colonial life, such as spinning and weaving, also contribute to the understanding of early American culture.

The Peak House, built in 1677 for Benjamin Clark, remained in the Clark family until 1818. For three generations members of the Clark family played an active role in local and state government. Benjamin Clark was a Selectman from 1685 to 1712 and Seth Clark was Town Treasurer and

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Appleton, William Sumner. Annual Report to Society for Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1924, 141 Cambridge Street, Boston.
 Barber, John Warner. New England Antiquities. Worcester: Dorr Howland & Co., 1839.
 Cummings, Abbott Lowell. Notes on visits to Peak House, July 25, 1974 and October 21, 1974, at 141 Cambridge Street, Boston.
 Leighton, Barbara. Chimney Report. July 1974, Medfield Historical Society, 6 Pleasant Street, Medfield. (Continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/10 acre (4465 square feet)

UTM REFERENCES

A	19	310300	4673200	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CQDE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Judy Dobbs, National Register Editor

ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

May 1975

STREET & NUMBER

40 Beacon Street

TELEPHONE

617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Elizabeth R. Amador

TITLE

Mass. State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

6/4/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *[Signature]*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/5/75

DATE

SEP 4 1975

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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SEP 5 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Selectman in the Medfield town government. William S. Tilden's History of Medfield (1887) described Seth, Jr. as "one of the most influential men in town." Seth, Jr. also served as a Representative to the General Court in 1765 and in 1768, and was a delegate to the historic Provincial Congress in 1775.

The Peak House was occupied by other families throughout the 19th century and a photograph of the 1880's shows it attractively furnished in the current Victorian fashion. In 1924 the house was donated by the owner, Frederick M. Smith to the Medfield Historical Society who restored it for future generations.

ITEM NUMBER 9

Society for Preservation of New England Antiquities. Vital Records of Medfield, Mass. to 1850. Boston, 1903, at Medfield Historical Society, 6 Pleasant Street, Medfield, Massachusetts.

United States Department of Interior, Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations. Branch of Plans and Design. 2 blueprints of Peak House, Historic Buildings Survey #2-77; 2 photographs by Arthur C. Haskell, October 1934, Library of Congress numbers 34907-1-1 and 34907-1-2.

Property Prak House

Norfolk

State Mass.

Working Number 6.10.75.1066

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 1

Maps 2

1 continuation: sheet (4, 8, 9)

OK 6.11.75

HISTORIAN

Accept
E. Smith
8-21-75

Very good nomination.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ACCEPT
LEBOVICH
6-16-75

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

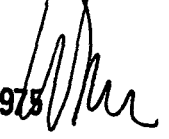
REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
Cole
9/2/75

BRANCH CHIEF

accept
Hulgo
9.4.75

KEEPER

SEP 4 1975 

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered SEP 5 1975

Federal Register Entry 11-4-75

Re-submit _____

INT:2106-74



1870
MILL HOUSE
This mill house was built by
John S. Smith in 1870. It was
the first mill house built in
this town. It was used for
many years as a mill house.
It is now a museum.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

4-7-74
Peak House
347 Main St
Medfield, Ma 02052
(Medfield Historical Society)

Form No. 10-301a
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

JUN 10 1975

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED SEP 5 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*

TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC Peak House

AND/OR COMMON
same

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Medfield

____VICINITY OF

COUNTY Norfolk

STATE MA

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Medfield Historical Society

DATE OF PHOTO April 7, 1974

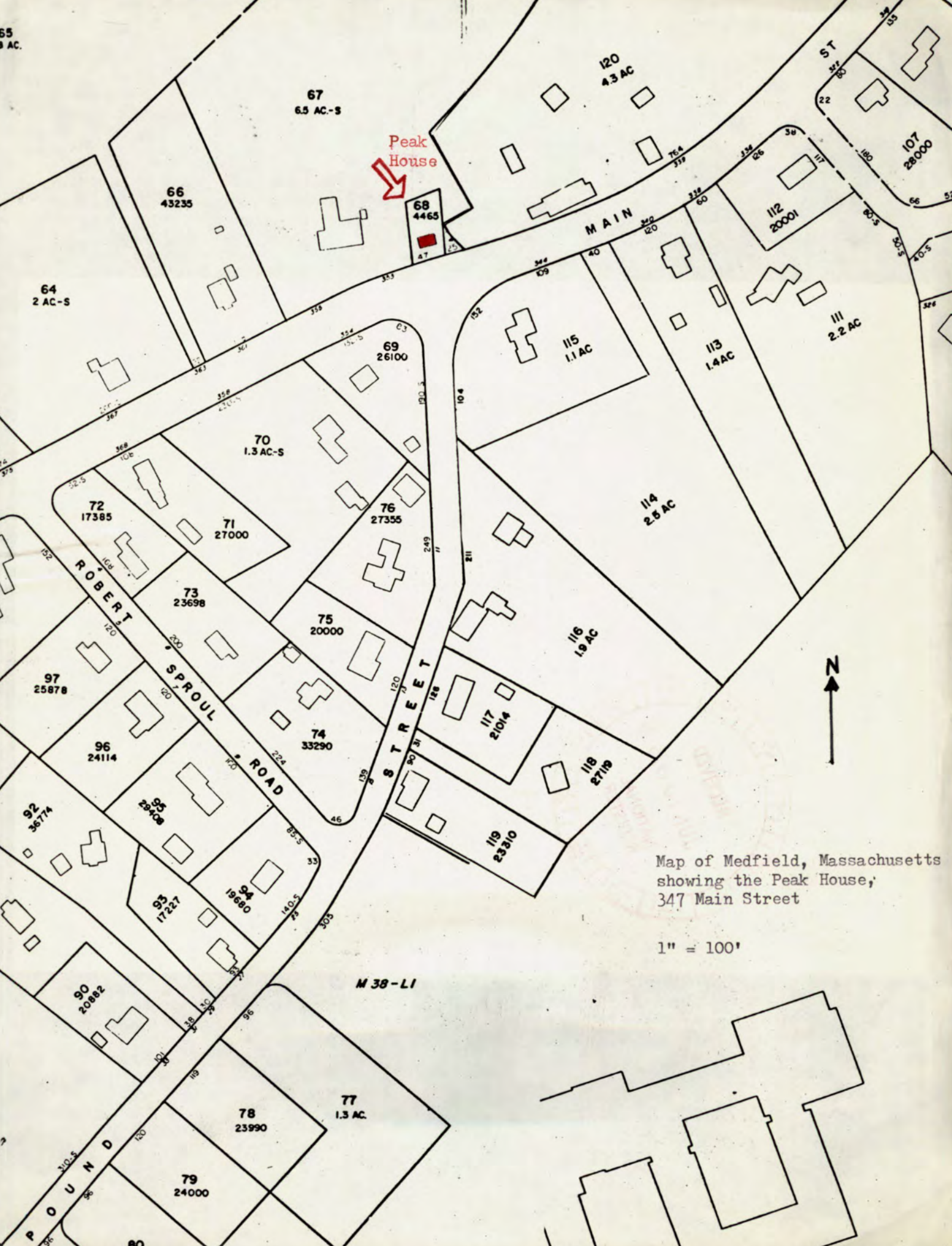
NEGATIVE FILED AT Medfield Historical Society
347 Main Street, Medfield 02052

4 IDENTIFICATION

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

Southwest view

PHOTO NO 1



Peak House



68
4465

Map of Medfield, Massachusetts showing the Peak House; 347 Main Street

1" = 100'

M 38-L1

Form No. 10-301
(Rev. 10-74)

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 Peak House

AND/OR COMMON
same

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Medfield VICINITY OF COUNTY Norfolk STATE MA

3 MAP REFERENCE

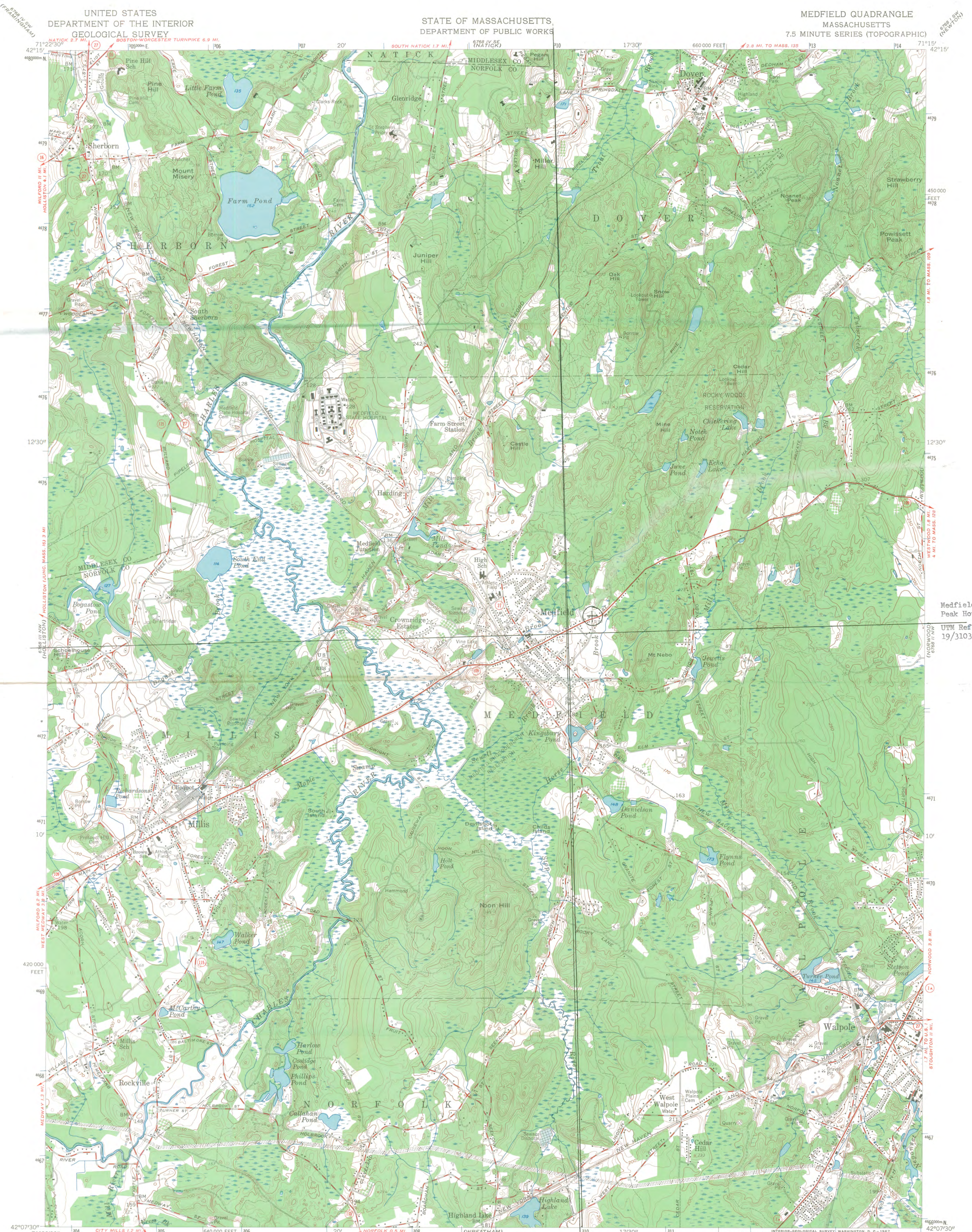
SOURCE Town of Medfield Assessor's Maps #43 and #44

SCALE 1 inch = 100 feet DATE 1972 revision

4 REQUIREMENTS

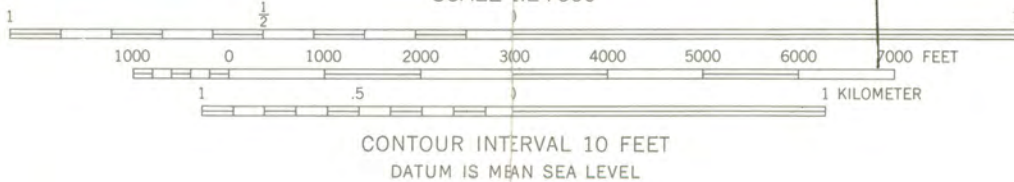
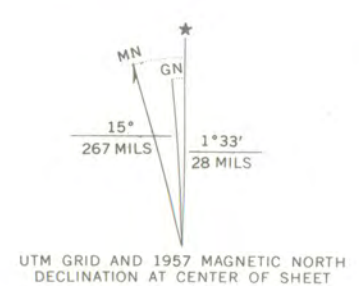
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

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



Medfield
Peak House
UTM Reference:
19/310300/4673200

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, Massachusetts Harbor and Land Commission
and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1937-1938
Culture revised 1957
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
State Route	

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

MEDFIELD, MASS.
N4207.5-W7115/7.5

1957
AMS 6788 III NE-SERIES V814



Medfield - Petta

Form No. 10-301
(Rev. 10-74)

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 Peak House

AND/OR COMMON
Name

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Medfield VICINITY OF COUNTY Norfolk STATE MA

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE United States Geological Survey, Medfield Quadrangle

SCALE 1:24000 DATE 1957

4 REQUIREMENTS

- TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
 2. NORTH ARROW
 3. UTM REFERENCES

INT: 3464-75

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered SEP 5 1975

Name

Location

Peak House

**Medfield
Norfolk County**

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Margaret M. Heckler

Regional Director, North Atlantic
Region

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

TO *John*
BETH *BGL*
NR Data Sheet

DATE: *3/29/77*
Reviewer INITIALS: *DW*
NR DOE Sept. 5, 1975

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: *Peak House*

OTHER NAMES:

LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER *347 Main Street*
CITY, TOWN *Medfield*
STATE *Massachusetts*
VICINITY OF
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT *10th*
COUNTY *Norfolk* code *021*

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

ADMINISTRATOR (underline) FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):
NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST
SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

FEATURES:

INTERIOR EXTERIOR ENVIRONS
- Substantially intact-1 - Substantially intact-2 - Substantially intact-3
- unknown - 4 - unknown - 5 - unknown - 6
- not applicable - 7 - not applicable - 8 - Not applicable-9

CONDITION - EXCELLENT - 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- *residence*
now- *Museum*

SIGNIFICANCE:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW/Gov't/politics | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE | <input type="checkbox"/> health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE -4 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING -11 | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION | <input type="checkbox"/> settlement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | <input type="checkbox"/> socio/cultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> urban & commun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | | |

Claims

"first" YES NO "oldest" YES NO "only" YES NO
early example of historic preservation

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Colonial

architect/m.builder:

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

Benjamin Clark - orig resident
Selectman, 1685-1712

(label role & appropriate date)

events

Seth Clark - Town Treasurer, Selectman
delegate to Provincial Congress 1775
(later resident)

institutional

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1677

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS: 1924 restored

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

1/10

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

frame, shingling. 1 1/2 stories ^{with attic}, rectangular, steeply gabled roof, interior chimney, off-center ^{vertical} plank door with simple lintel, diamond pane leaded casement windows, field stone cellar with stone and brick fireplace arch, enclosed stair, chamfered summer beam; Restored, 1924. One of few surviving examples of colonial one-room, 1 1/2-story dwellings; noted for unusual ^{early} roof framing without ^{purlins} purlins; early ^{beneficial} example of historic preservation efforts. Museum.

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

Restored, 1924. One of few surviving examples of colonial one-room, 1 1/2-story dwellings; noted for unusual ^{early} roof framing without ^{purlins} purlins; early ^{beneficial} example of historic preservation efforts. Museum.