

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Saint John's Episopal Church (Preferred)
other names/site number Ecumenical Center, Framingham State College

2. Location

street & number Maynard Road and Church Street N/A not for publication
city, town Framingham N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 01701

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Valerie A. Valmege 12/7/89
Signature of certifying official Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical State Historic Preservation officer Date Commission;
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Mark L. Barber Entered in the National Register 12 Jan. 1990

fn
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/CollegeVacant/Not in use**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century/ Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite, Concrete, Fieldstonewalls Graniteroof Slate, Ironother Wood, Brownstone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Rising from a sloping site, St. John's Episcopal Church--now the Ecumenical Center for Framingham State College--is a single-story, rubblestone, Gothic Revival structure following an asymmetrical plan, with varied roof forms covered with gray slate. Laid out according to the traditional east/west alignment, the nave and its reduced-width chancel form a dominant rectangular mass to which three subsidiary elements are attached: a narthex tower with a pyramidal roof on the north, and a mansard-roofed vestry abutting a hip-roofed transept arm on the south. The chancel elevation to the east is dominated by a large, tracery-laden, lancet-arched window, while the western nave elevation exhibits three narrow windows, also lancet-arched, one of which is high in the gable. The relatively low north and south walls are punctured by a series of narrow Tudor-arched windows, separated by buttresses. Buttresses also occur at all corners and in the center of the west elevation. Interior space consists of a small, square narthex, opening into a rectangular nave with a one-armed transept and slightly raised chancel. A small vestry is accessible from the chancel. Interior walls are of plaster painted white. The dark blue ceiling in the nave and chancel is populated with regularly spaced, exposed dark brown trusses with arches springing from slim engaged columns with foliated capitals. All windows are glazed with stained glass. Staircases at the rear of the nave and beside the vestry lead to a partially excavated basement consisting of several interconnected rooms. The church retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, with the exception of the loss of the original and early chancel furnishings.

St. John's Church stands in its original location, one block west of the Framingham State College campus, on the western slope of Bare Hill. It occupies an irregularly shaped, sloping lot of 30,238 square feet at the corner of Maynard Road and Church Street, to its north and east, respectively. The church's overall east/west dimension is 93 feet 4 inches and its overall north/south dimension is 54 feet. The exterior measurements of the various elements are as follows: nave, 73 feet 4 inches by 30 feet; chancel, 20 feet by 22 feet 1 inch; narthex tower, 13 feet 3 inches by 12 feet; transept, 16 feet by 12 feet; vestry, 14 feet 9 inches by 15 feet 2 inches. The nave is about 35 feet to the ridge at its eastern end and about 40 feet at the west, with the tower reaching about 55 feet.

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The structural composition is decidedly informal, with each of the subsidiary elements displaying the individuality of a semi-independent offspring in relation to the central mass of the building. All exterior walls are constructed of "Framingham Stone," a seam-faced granite with color variations ranging from yellow-brown to light and dark gray, laid in a coursed rubble pattern. Trim is in the form of window and door surrounds, and buttress coping is of coarsely hammered gray granite. A watertable of the same stone is quarry-faced.

The principal portion of the building, accommodating the nave, is six bays long, articulated on the north and south sides by steeply sloping stone buttresses separating narrow, 4-center pointed, Tudor-arched windows, single in bays 2, 3, 4, 6 and triple in bay 1. Projecting northward from bay 5 is a square tower, the base of which is stone to the eave line, chamfered at the two exposed corners, with diagonally projecting buttresses. Centered in this base, facing north, is the principal entrance to the church, five granite steps up from a sloping grade. Recessed slightly in a 4-centered, pointed-arched opening are large double wood doors, with wrought-iron hinges fanning out as elaborate flat, foliated ornaments. East and west elevations of the tower base each feature small, twin 4-center, pointed-arched windows set in hammered gray granite surrounds. Above its stone base, the tower rises as a rather stocky spire in three stages to a pyramidal point decorated with flat metal tracery. The first stage of the spire, clad in gray slate with slightly projecting pyramidal dormers on the three visible sides, slopes steeply from the eaves with its chamfered corners forming tall pyramids in order to arrive at the square base of an open bell deck, the second stage. The bell deck is framed by square wood corner posts, which spring to lancet arches with trefoil spandrels. The final stage is a tall pyramid covered with slate. This tower complex is clearly the most distinctive feature of the church exterior.

St. John's southern elevation repeats the buttress/4-center-pointed window alternation at bays 2 through 6 at its western end. Bay 1 extends southward as a transept arm, with a single centered window of the same type. Buttresses, flush with the west wall, project north and south. Abutting the transept to the south, the lower-eaved vestry nestles against the chancel wall. Rare deviations from the Gothic arch occur on the vestry with a flat-arched secondary entrance to the south and similar window openings to the east, both with heavy, quarry-faced granite lintels. The wooden door displays wrought-iron ornament similar to that on the narthex entrance. A small, pointed-arched window on the south wall, opening into a rest room, appears to be of later vintage.

Since the site slopes off to the west, two rectangular basement windows find space immediately under the watertable on the western elevation of the nave. Above each is an elongated lancet window, with both sets flanking a central

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buttress. A shorter lancet-arched window is located near the peak of the gable, above a gray granite Latin cross. Three belt courses of gray granite provide a counterpoint to the vertical elements. Around the corner in bay 6 of the south elevation, a small square window and a door are cut into the granite at the basement level. Concrete retaining walls line the path to the door.

The nearly square chancel enclosure, which abuts the eastern end of the nave as a narrower and shorter gabled structure, is dominated on its principal, or eastern elevation, by a large, lancet-arched window containing stained glass set in a combination of flowing and geometric wood tracery. Buttresses project north and south at the corners of this elevation. An additional buttress is centered on the opaque masonry north wall.

As a subtle decorative touch, square blocks of brownstone, each containing a deeply incised form'ee cross, are imbedded in the wall immediately under the eaves, over buttresses located at various corners of the structure.

The roof of the nave and chancel is steeply gabled, presenting a broad surface of alternating horizontal wide bands of dark and narrow bands of light gray slate. The banding continues on the hip roof of the transept and the mansard roof of the vestry, as well as on the slate segments of the tower. A simple red brick chimney rises from the southern slope of the nave at its junction with the chancel.

All exterior wood trim, including doors and casings, window frames and sash, gable and eave fascia, gutters and bell deck framing, is painted dark brown to contrast with the stone.

The primary interior space consists of a rectangular nave and a narrower, roughly square chancel at its eastern end, visible through a lancet-arched proscenium. This arch is repeated at a smaller scale at bay 1 on the south wall of the nave, opening on a single transept arm. The chancel floor is raised in two stages from that of the nave.

A large tripartite stained glass window dominates the east wall of the chancel, featuring three religious figures. Engaged columns at the corners, and centered on the north and south walls, support arches which in turn support the gable roof. Two 4-center pointed-arched wood doors open to the vestry on the south wall. Chancel furnishings consist of an altar rail of wood with bracketed posts, an ornate metal and wood pulpit and two heavy wood chairs, related in design to the pews.

The six bays of the nave are defined by slim engaged columns that line up with the exterior buttresses. Each column stands on an octagonal wood base, the height of the horizontal-boarded dado on three sides of the nave, and is

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topped by a foliated cast plaster capital from which springs a curved arch, which gives way to a straight-membered truss with beaded edges supporting the steeply gabled roof. Lantern-type lights hang from the junctions of the arches and the trusses on either side. Each bay features an opening in the wall. On the north side, facing Maynard Street, bay 1 (nearest the chancel) is devoted to three narrow 4-center pointed-arched windows, while bays 2, 3, 4, and 6 accommodate a single, slightly wider window with the same arch. Four-center pointed-arched double doors in bay 5 lead to the narthex. The transept (currently furnished as a meditation room), with a typical single window and a flat ceiling, fills bay 1 on the south side, and bays 2 through 6 all contain windows similar to those on the north wall. The western end of the nave features twin lancet windows beginning slightly above the dado, plus a much shortened version in the apex of the gable. All windows are glazed with stained or colored glass, most picturing figures or animals plus a variety of patterns, and represent either class gifts or memorials to individuals, installed at various times.

Seating in the nave is in the form of two rows of fixed pews, numbering sixteen on the north and nineteen on the south, lining a center aisle. The pews are of walnut with ends of an irregular shape including beveled edges, a quatrefoil cutout and brass numbers. An open stair to the basement is located in the northwest corner of the nave. A marble cross, with incised lettering memorializing Alexander Esty, the architect, and a gable walnut board for listing hymn numbers flank the chancel at the eastern end of the nave.

In addition to the two sets of paired doors, the narthex features narrow, twin, pointed-arched windows on east and west walls plus a specially designed coat rack.

Opening off the chancel is a small vestry, with a flat ceiling and a secondary stair to the basement. A narrow hall, with a small washroom, separates the vestry from a secondary building entrance on the south exterior wall.

All interior wall surfaces, except the dado, are furred-out wood lath and plaster painted white. The nave and chancel ceilings are painted dark blue and the supporting structure is painted dark brown with red edges. All other woodwork is either walnut or dark-stained wood to match. Doors are vertical boarded, some with elaborate foliated metal ornamental hinges.

The basement, part of which is unexcavated, consists of one fairly large room at the western end, served by two windows, plus a series of smaller, largely utilitarian spaces. In addition to the two stairways, access is gained through an exterior door on the south and a bulkhead under the window in the transept. All rooms are essentially without detail.

Interior and exterior changes to the church have been relatively minor, since

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its completion in early 1871. Eleven years after that date, a range of horse sheds was approved as a separate structure. In 1892, a stone altar was installed, which was eventually removed. 1905 saw the installation of electric lighting, and in 1915 a new hardwood floor was laid out in the chancel. The basement was excavated for a choir room, the grade lowered to the west, new windows were cut into the western wall, and a new door installed on the south in 1925. A baptistry was built into the chancel floor in 1954, and the horse sheds were demolished. Part of the fieldstone foundation at the eastern end of the church was replaced with concrete between 1958 and 1969, and the iron cresting at the ridge of the roof was removed during this same period. The transept was redecorated as a meditation room after 1969.

Throughout the 117 years of its existence under three different ownerships, St. John's Church has retained its architectural integrity.

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Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property, it is possible that sites are present. Six prehistoric sites are recorded in the general area (within one mile) and the property's location near the Sudbury River and Baiting Brook indicates favorable locational criteria for prehistoric settlement and subsistence. In general, however, the potential for significant archaeological remains, either prehistoric or historic, is low as a result of small lot size and disturbance from church construction.

(end)

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Community Planning and Development
Religion

Period of Significance

1869-1934

Significant Dates

1871

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Esty, Alexander Rice

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

St. John's Episcopal Church (1869-1871), now the Ecumenical Center of Framingham State College, possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and meets National Register Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, St. John's is strongly associated with the town of Framingham's development as it is the fourth oldest church of any denomination still standing in Framingham. It is the first Episcopal church to be built in Framingham and it is located on Bare Hill, one of the oldest landmarks in Framingham Centre. Several of its founding members and lay leadership were persons prominent in Framingham's history. Since 1969, it has been associated with the present owner, Framingham State College, the first public teacher-training college in America. Under Criterion C, St. John's is a virtually unaltered example of the Gothic Revival style built to the designs of Alexander Rice Esty, a nationally known Framingham architect. St. John's Episcopal Church has undergone no alterations or additions that adversely affect its association with historical events, significant persons or architectural value. As a cultural resource, St. John's meets Criteria Exception A as a religious property which derives its primary significance from its association with the development of Framingham as well as architectural distinction as a representative building type by a well-known architect.

St. John's Episcopal Church was constructed in 1869-1871 at the end of the major church building period in Framingham that had begun in 1830. Framingham, now (1988) the largest town in Massachusetts and measuring 25.65 square miles, was known in the seventeenth century as "Danforth's Farms," after Thomas Danforth, a large land owner. Later the name was changed to Framingham, derived from Framlinham, England, and the town was incorporated in 1700. St. John's Episcopal Church appears to be the fourth oldest surviving church edifice in Framingham. The oldest is the First Baptist Church (1826), Worcester Road, Framingham Centre, followed by the Edwards Baptist Church (1855), 10 Franklin Street, Framingham. The major period of significance

9. Major Bibliographical References

Books

American Education: Its Men, Ideas and Institutions. The Alumnae Association of the State Normal School, Framingham, Massachusetts. Boston: Wright and Potter, 1926.

Barry, William. A History of Framingham, Massachusetts. Boston: James Monroe and Company, 1847.

Detwiller, Frederic R. "Estey (sic), Alexander R. 1826-1881." Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects. Vol. 2, 1982, p. 334.

Dewar, Martha and M. Joan Gilbert, eds. Framingham: Historical Reflections. Framingham: Town of Framingham.

See continuation sheet

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property Less than one acre (30,238 sq. ft.)

Quad: Framingham, MA.

Scale: 1:25 000

UTM References

A 19 298930 4685460
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

St. John's Episcopal Church occupies an irregular lot at the corner of Maynard Road and Church Street in the town of Framingham, Massachusetts. It is bounded on the east by Church Street, 120'; on the south by another lot, 75'; again on the east by the same lot, 70'; on the southwest by two other lots, 220'; on the northwest by another lot, 132'; on the northeast by Maynard Road, 52'; and on the north again by Maynard Road, 111'.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary defines lot 2 of block 32 according to Assessors Plan, Sheet 217, Town of Framingham; traced 7/18/81. Also, the legal boundary was established in Middlesex County Deed 1102:224, James W. Brown to St. John's Church, recorded November 15, 1869.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Minxie J. Fannin/Leslie Larson, Consultants w/Betsy Friedberg, NR Director
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date August 10, 1989
street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone (617)727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02116

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extends from 1869-1871, when it was conceived and built, until 1934, the year the church doors were closed and members joined St. Andrews Church in South Framingham, St. Paul's Church in Natick, or St. Paul's Church in Hopkinton.

Episcopal services were introduced to Framingham in the 1850s and were first held in the Hollis Evangelical Church on the Centre Common and later in the Town Hall. St. John's Episcopal Church was incorporated on November 28, 1860. In 1864, St. John's purchased the Centre Universalist Meeting House on the corner of Main and Granite Streets (no longer extant) and met there until 1869, when the building was sold to the Right Reverend John J. Williams and Mr. James Fennessy for \$8,000.

The land for the new St. John's Church was donated by Dr. James W. Brown and the deed recorded on November 15, 1869. The site chosen was Bare Hill, occasionally called Bear Hill, and later referred to as Normal Hill after the arrival of the State Normal School, now Framingham State College, in 1853. This prominent Framingham Center topographical landmark was marked on the 1699 "Plan of Framingham Plantation," compiled by Josiah H. Temple. Bare Hill is also described by Temple: "When the first explorers visited the spot, it was without trees, except a few stunted pines., Height above tide level, 289 feet." (History of Framingham, Massachusetts, 1887, p. 27). Modern historian Stephen Herring also mentions Bare Hill: "A century and a half before [c. 1700], sentinels had stood on this hill watching for Indians while Sunday services were being held in the meetinghouse below." (South Middlesex: A New England Heritage, 1986, p. 65).

Although it may not appear so today (1988), because of its wide separation from the Common by the deep moat of the enlarged and depressed Route 9 (1968), St. John's Episcopal Church was always considered part of Framingham Centre (see Reference to "Centre Village" in deed of James W. Brown to St. John's Church, November 5, 1869, 1102-224). One of the few areas in Framingham where historic buildings are clustered in a group, Framingham Centre achieves an architectural harmony of scale, size, and detailing. This area became the nucleus of Framingham with the erection of the first meetinghouse in 1698, attaining additional importance in the first third of the nineteenth century with the construction of the Worcester Turnpike in 1806. As the Centre Village was the halfway point between Boston and Worcester on the new turnpike, it was here that horses were changed and repairs made to the coaches. Between 1806 and 1843 as many as seventeen coaches a day stopped at Framingham, and the Centre Village became the focus of the town's activities.

The initial plan for the Boston-Worcester Railroad was to parallel the Boston and Worcester Turnpike through Framingham Centre. However, the Worcester Turnpike Corporation and residents of the Centre mounted such a stiff opposition that when the new railroad opened in 1834, it had been diverted to pass through South Framingham, the branch line to Framingham Centre not being

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completed until 1850. This proved to be a seminal decision in the development of Framingham. By 1843 the Worcester Turnpike Corporation divested itself and by the 1880s, 100 trains a day were passing through South Framingham. It was clear that South Framingham was becoming the most important civic and commercial area of the town and in 1895, the last Town Meeting was held at Village Hall before the town functions were moved to South Framingham.

On Easter Sunday of 1871, St. John's Church celebrated its first service. With much pomp and circumstance and favorable notice in the local press, it was consecrated in 1872. Supported by a group of affluent and successful Framingham citizens, the first quarter century of St. John's went relatively smoothly. But by the 1890s, sufficient operating funds were a problem. Beginning in the early 1900s, there were sporadic talks about combining ministers with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (began meetings in 1882, established as a Mission Church in 1888, new church built in 1898) in Framingham and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Hopkinton. Perhaps in a move to strengthen the church, women choir members were approved to sing in pews in front of the organ in 1912, and in 1921 women were welcomed as incorporators of the church. The unfortunate combination of the Depression, the continued success of St. Andrews in South Framingham, the passing of St. John's once powerful lay leadership, and St. John's diminishing membership were too much and the Church sadly voted to close its doors on January 10, 1934.

After eighteen years of remaining vacant, St. John's Church was sold in 1952 to the Southern New England Conference Association of Seventh-Day Adventists. In accordance with the original stipulation of the deed of Dr. James W. Brown in 1869, the \$7,000 St. John's received was used for the purchase of land for a new edifice at Buckminster Square in Framingham Centre. In 1969, the Seventh-Day Adventists sold the Church to Framingham State College, and used the \$111,000 proceeds to build a new church at 250 Edgell Road in Framingham.

St. John's Episcopal Church has an important place in the social history of Framingham as so many of its early incorporators and lay leaders were distinguished Framingham citizens. The names Dr. James W. Brown, Charles R. Train, Alexander Rice Esty, Theodore C. Hurd, Walter Frank Hurd, Walter Adams, and Frank Alexander Kendall stand out, although many more could be mentioned.

Dr. James W. Brown (1813-1892), a graduate of Williams College and Framingham's first Superintendent of Schools, as well as representative to the General Court and selectman, gave the land for St. John's Church. The present pulpit in St. John's Church, the gift of his wife, Mary Jane Brown, and his son-in-law, Dr. Henry F. Moore, was installed in 1892 and bears the following inscription: "To the Glory of God and in Memory of James W. Brown, M.D. Senior Warden of this Church from its Incorporation in 1860 until his death, July 7th, 1892."

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Distinguished attorney Charles R. Train (1817-1885), son of the well-known Reverend Charles Train (1783-1849), was also an incorporator of St. John's Church. A Brown University graduate who made Framingham his home until 1863, Train was a U.S. representative, Middlesex County district attorney, Massachusetts attorney general, and honored as a "Former Distinguished Citizen of Framingham" in the 1900 Bi-Centennial. An Eagle lectern (no longer extant) was given in "Hon. C. R. Train's" memory to St. John's Church in 1888, and there is a stained glass window in St. John's Church dedicated to Martha A. Train, Charles R. Train's widow.

Alexander Rice Esty (1826-1881), of the prominent Esty family (see below), gave not only of his talented architectural services for St. John's Church but also made a sizeable donation to the building fund, and supervised its construction. An incorporator of St. John's Episcopal Church in 1860, and its first Junior Warden, he served in that capacity from 1861 until his death twenty year later.

The brothers Theodore C. Hurd (1837-1911) and Walter Frank Hurd (1842-1900) were also associated with St. John's Church. Theodore Hurd, an incorporator of the Church, had the honor of being the Orator of the Day at the 1900 Bi-Centennial. A Lieutenant in Co. F. 45th Reg. Inf. M.V.M. during the Civil War, he was a representative to the General Court as well as selectman. Architect Walter Frank Hurd, who trained in the office of Alexander Rice Esty and designed with William A. Rice the Framingham Memorial Library (1873), was clerk of St. John's from 1864. The owner of land adjoining and nearby to the church, he too was honored in the 1900 Bi-Centennial.

Harvard graduate Walter Adams (1848-1923), Toastmaster of the 1900 Bi-Centennial Banquet, was for many years a vestryman and warden of St. John's Church. A lawyer, Adams was Associate Judge of the District Court of South Middlesex and representative to the General Court as well as a Selectman. He was described as "the leading citizen of his time foremost in every undertaking" in Sketches of Framingham, 1950, p. 123.

Architect Frank Alexander Kendall (1865-1934), son-in-law of Alexander R. Esty, carried on the tradition of Esty's service to St. John's until he died. He was treasurer of St. John's from 1896 to 1912 and Junior Warden following 1914. He also owned the property at 5 Church Street adjoining St. John's. Educated at Harvard University, Kendall donated his services for the design of the choir room which was installed in 1925.

At the time St. John's Episcopal Church was built in 1869-1871, the shifting focus of the town from Framingham to South Framingham was just becoming clear. Most of the buildings at the Centre Common were constructed between 1830 and 1890, with Framingham Centre gradually becoming the wealthier residential district of the Town. This realization was certainly in the minds

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of the Town fathers in welcoming the State Normal School in 1853 to Bare Hill and in the minds of the St. John's Committee appointed to evaluate different lots for the new church. This committee described the proposed Maynard Road and Church Street lot thusly in 1869: "It is beautifully located, easy of access, and pleasantly situated in a part of the town which in our opinion will be in the future sought for fine residences." It was, in addition, a natural place for St. John's to be built: James W. Brown had already been one of the donors of the land for the State Normal School on Bare Hill (deed of December 30, 1852) and Alexander R. Esty had designed and supervised its first structure, the State Normal School, in 1853 (later replaced by May Hall in 1889). When Framingham State College purchased St. John's Church in 1969, the two institutions shared similarities in history and had already been neighbors for 100 years.

Framingham State College's importance to the town of Framingham is symbolized by the prominence accorded the College on the Town Seal. Previous locations of the first State Normal School, established when Horace Mann headed the State Department of Education with Cyrus Pierce the first principal, had been in Lexington in 1839 and West Newton in 1844. Framingham was so anxious to have the State Normal School that private citizens donated the necessary land, and both the Boston and Worcester Railroad and the town of Framingham contributed toward the erection of its first building in 1853. A year later, the State Normal School started its well-known teacher training program for the children of Framingham Centre. First located at the campus, the practice or laboratory school was later moved to the Jonathan Maynard Training School, on Vernon Street (Charles M. Baker, 1916). Both the School and Maynard Road, which forms the northern boundary of St. John's Church, honor the distinguished Jonathan Maynard (1752-1835), cited as a "Noted Citizen" in the 1900 Bi-Centennial. A Harvard University graduate, Maynard fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill, became a justice of the peace, selectman, representative to the General Court, a State Senator, first master of the Middlesex Lodge of Masons, Framingham's first postmaster in 1810, all the while maintaining a lively interest in education as a trustee of the Framingham Academy.

With the purchase of St. John's Church, Framingham State College became the first State College in Massachusetts to own an interdenominational facility. Renamed the Ecumenical Center, the building was greeted with heartfelt enthusiasm by the College administration, faculty and alumni. Almost every class since 1969 has made a gift to the Ecumenical Center or contributed to the Chapel Restoration Fund; the meditation room and seven stained glass windows have been among the many class presentations. In continual use as an interdenominational religious center as well as for seminar classes, St. John's was a vibrant part of the Framingham State College campus until it was closed for deterioration reasons in 1985.

(continued)

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Continuation SheetSaint John's Episcopal Church
Framingham, MASection number 8 Page 5

St. John's Episcopal Church is a distinctive and highly personal work of an important Massachusetts architect with a national reputation. As a founder of the parish and its Junior Warden for 20 years, Alexander Esty doubtless took particular care in producing a design, rooted in the tradition of the English country church, which would provide both inspiration and a sense of intimacy for the congregation, as well as enhancement of its semi-rural setting. By grouping the elements informally, he developed a lavish profile that successfully weds itself to its sloping site.

The unusual rustic-appearing tower is the most dominant and original element in the ensemble. Esty's sensitive use of Gothic forms is enriched by the warm color and texture of the Framingham stone in counterpoint with the cool gray roof slate. While the structure is an inheritor of the earlier Gothic Revival tradition in its overall design and use of stone, it also anticipates the soon-to-emerge High Victorian Gothic mode, in the narrow and wide bands of its light and dark gray roof slate and in its picturesque tower.

Alexander Rice Esty was the son of carpenter/builder Dexter Esty (1791-1860), who settled in Framingham in 1814 and married Mary E. Rice in 1819. Alexander was early in the company of architects, as his father had built the 1834 Village Hall on the Common according to the design of the well-known architect Solomon Willard (1783-1861). Alexander attended common school and the Framingham Academy, where he began sketching local Colonial and Greek Revival buildings. After graduation, young Esty apprenticed for several years to Boston architect Richard Bond, boarding at Bond's house in Roxbury during this period. At age 21 he joined the office of Gridley J.F. Bryant, remaining until 1849 when he established his own practice. Boston City Directories list Esty's architectural office at 2 Change Avenue from 1850 to 1874, and at 35 Congress Street until 1881, with his residence in Framingham.

Through all of his adult years Esty was active in the civic, religious, and business life of Framingham. He was Chairman of the Board of Selectmen during the Civil War, a representative to the General Court in 1866, and a trustee of the Edgell Grove Cemetery. Alexander Esty was involved in many real estate transactions, including a number with his older brother, Constantine Canaris Esty (1824-1912), the prominent Yale-educated lawyer, representative to the General Court, Congressman, local judge, and selectman as well as historian for the Town of Framingham's 1900 Bi-Centennial. Constantine's son, barrister Frederick M. Esty (1852-1931), was chairman of the Transportation Committee for the 1900 Bi-Contennial, and his grandson, Charles Alexander Esty (1883-1947) the talented president of the Framingham Historical Society. The brothers Constantine and Alexander were influential in the residential expansion of Natick and South Framingham, laying out subdivisions including the expansion of house lots in South Framingham, recorded at the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, November 18, 1872. One of the properties they owned in Framingham Centre was the Esty Block (before 1830), 931 Worcester Road.

(continued)

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6Saint John's Episcopal Church
Framingham, MA

Alexander apparently remodeled this two-story frame commercial building into its present Italianate form in the 1870s and the annual meetings of St. John's Episcopal Church were frequently held in its "Guild Room."

Alexander Esty was married three times and fathered six children. He died of stomach cancer on July 2, 1881. Among those attending Esty's funeral were Boston architects Gridley Bryant, Nathaniel J. Bradlee and Samuel J.F. Thayer, as well as William A. Rice, W. Frank Hurd, and Ernest Boyden, who trained in Esty's office.

The architectural practice of A.R. Esty encompassed a variety of building types designed in several of the revival styles popular during his 33-year career. Esty was the master of these styles, following to some degree the changing tastes of the time, but more often selecting the style to fit the building type. Churches were Romanesque or Gothic, residences Italianate, education, public and commercial buildings ranged from Renaissance Revival to High Victorian Gothic.

Hammatt Billings' Gothic First Parish church in Framingham of 1847 doubtless influenced Esty's decision to add a spire and Gothic detail to that town's Hollis Evangelical Meeting House the following year. From then on, Esty's churches alternated between Gothic and Romanesque modes. Examples of the former include Emmanuel Church in Boston (1861-1862), Church of Our Savior in Brookline (1866-1868), St. John's Church in Framingham (1869-1871), and the Union Congregational (now Union United Methodist) Church in Boston's South End (1872). Romanesque examples include the Prospect Congregational Church in Cambridge (1851), Methodist Episcopal Church in Burlington, Vermont (1861) and the Baptist Church in North Billerica (1870).

While his churches raised their spires as far west as Illinois, Esty's residential work was concentrated in Framingham. Although the David Fisk House (ca. 1848-1849) combined a Greek Revival form with Italianate details, its successors were Italianate without dilution, well composed and proportioned, consistent with the taste of the time.

Esty's educational structures ranged from modest schoolhouses at Framingham and Clinton to the principal buildings on such campuses as the University of Rochester, Colby University, Newton Theological Institution, University of Vermont, and Shurtleff College in Upper Alton, Illinois. His first college commission was for the State Normal School in Framingham in 1853, an elegant Romanesque/Renaissance Revival structure with a two-story columned portico. Normal schools at Worcester and Westfield, Massachusetts subsequently acquired Esty-designed buildings as well. Anderson Hall, the University of Rochester's first major building, was probably Esty's most sophisticated educational design. The three-story, stone Renaissance Revival structure, sporting a French mansard roof, was designed in 1859 and completed in 1861. In a letter to Dr. M. B. Anderson, dated August 24, 1959, Esty referred to the building,

(continued)

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Continuation SheetSaint John's Episcopal Church
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which contained a chapel, library, and lecture rooms, thusly: "...and in fact as I said before the whole arrangement is better than anything yet produced from my office." The university was sufficiently appreciative to award the architect an honorary M.A. degree in 1866.

Anderson Hall was followed by two more impressive stone structures: the Library Building at Newton Theological Institution in 1863-1864, and Memorial Hall at Colby University in Maine, in 1867-1869. Both continued the Renaissance Revival mode of Anderson Hall, but with towers added to slate mansard roofs. All three structures were built of rugged-looking stone laid in rubble pattern (of which Esty was particularly fond), trimmed with dressed stone, in the case of Newton being Cumberland Bay sandstone from Nova Scotia. Colby subsequently acquired two more Esty buildings: Champlain Hall (a remodeling of an 1837 Thomas U. Walter design) in 1870, and Coburn Hall in 1872.

Among Esty's few known commercial buildings, the 1873 Monks Building at E Street and West Broadway in South Boston stands out as a spectacular example of High Victorian Gothic commercial architecture, contrasting vividly with his more chaste Gothic Revival churches of the previous decades.

In 1867 Gridley Bryant and Alexander Esty were invited by a committee appointed by Governor Alexander H. Bullock to prepare plans and estimates for enlarging or replacing the Massachusetts State House. Three schemes were developed, but the project was abandoned for financial reasons. Nine years later, Esty was appointed superintendent of construction for a major addition to the U.S. Post Office and Sub-Treasury Building in Boston. In 1877, his duties were extended to include all federal government construction in Boston, plus the Marine Hospital in Chelsea. Continuing his federal association, Esty, along with architects Edward Clark and J. L. Smithmeyer, was appointed by a senatorial committee to consider extending the U.S. Capitol, recommending instead a separate building. The three men subsequently submitted designs, along with H. H. Richardson, Thomas U. Walter, and others; Smithmeyer's plans, including Esty's interior, were those selected.

Esty's final project was the Boston and Albany Depot on Kneeland Street in Boston, an elaborate Renaissance Revival structure of pressed brick and heavy granite trim with sizeable iron porticos. It opened in September of 1881, two months after his death.

There are five memorial stained glass windows that relate to people prominent in the church. These include windows dedicated to Alice Ellesmere (installed after 1877), Frances Fox, Mary Ann and William Nicholson (installed 1929), Ellen Louise and Charles Richardson (installed after 1877), and Martha A. Train. It is not known who designed the windows.

(continued)

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Continuation SheetSaint John's Episcopal Church
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There are seven stained glass windows which were gifts of the Classes of 1920, 1921, 1928, 1946, 1947, 1948, and 1949 of Framingham State college. These were installed between 1970 and 1984. The four vestibule windows, which are devoted to a choir of musical angels, were made by Charles J. Connick Associates of Boston in 1971 and 1973, the gifts of the Classes of 1946 and 1928, respectively. Another window, a colorful symbol of the Virtue of Truth, the gift of the Class of 1921, was designed by Orin E. Skinner, the president of Connick Studio, and installed in 1971. This last window is located in the fourth bay of the south side of the church.

St. John's Episcopal Church, now Framingham State College's Ecumenical Center, is presently in poor condition, and will soon be rehabilitated according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards For Preservation Projects. The Ecumenical Center is expected to retain its original exterior appearance as is its interior configuration and detail. It appears that Framingham State College is the first four-year state college in Massachusetts to attempt a major restoration of a National Register building.

In summary, St. John's Episcopal Church is a significant element in the development of the town of Framingham and a distinctive work of a noted architect. Due to the great success of Framingham State college, many new buildings have been added to the campus.

Therefore, an individual National Register listing for St. John's Episcopal Church is more appropriate at the present time than a National Register District for the entire Framingham State College campus.

(end)

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Continuation SheetSaint John's Episcopal Church
Framingham, MASection number 9 Page 1Government Documents: State

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April 12, 1864 (Recorded April 20, 1864): Jas. W. Brown to Alex R. Esty - St. John's Church. (923-367).
Oct. 12, 1869 (Recorded Oct. 19, 1869): John J. Williams to St. John's Church. (1098-103).
Nov. 5, 1869 (Recorded Nov. 15, 1869): James W. Brown to St. John's Church. (1102-224).
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(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Saint John's Episcopal Church
Framingham, MA

Section number 9 Page 2

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United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation SheetSaint John's Episcopal Church
Framingham, MASection number 9 Page 3

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Location of primary materials (cont.)

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(continued)

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

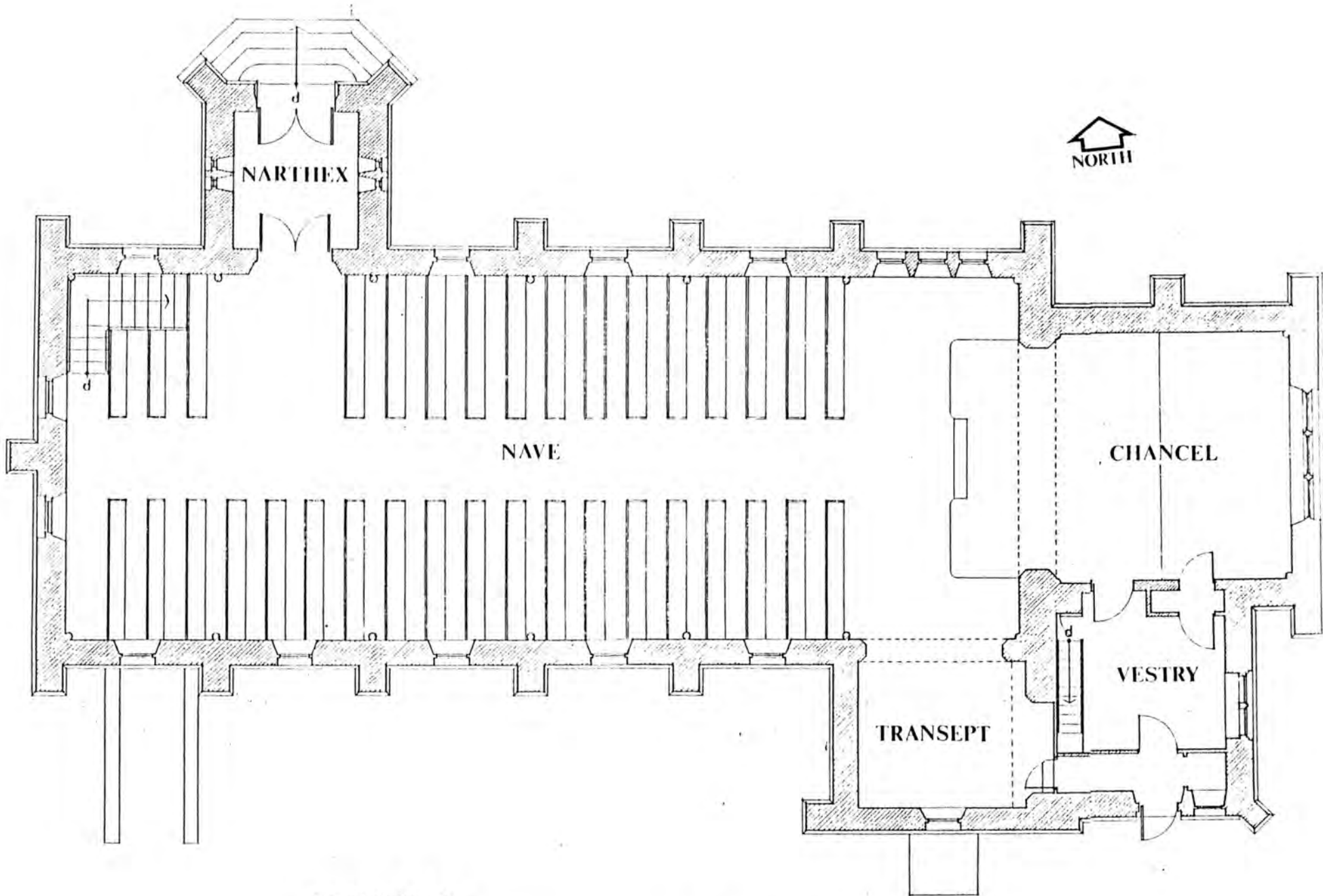
**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 **Page** 4

Saint John's Episcopal Church
Framingham, MA

Boston Public Library
Framingham Public Library
Framingham State College Archives
Town of Framingham, Planning Department

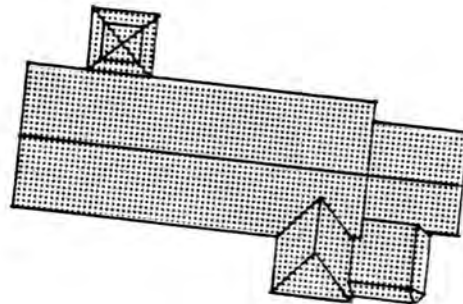
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FLOOR PLAN
ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, FRAMINGHAM, MA



MAYNARD
ROAD



CHURCH
STREET

SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 40'

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, FRAMINGHAM, MA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Saint John's Episcopal Church

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 12/11/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/27/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/12/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/25/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89002300

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1/12/1990 Entered in the
DATE National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph
 completeness
 clarity
 applicable criteria
 justification of areas checked
 relating significance to the resource
 context
 relationship of integrity to significance
 justification of exception
 other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

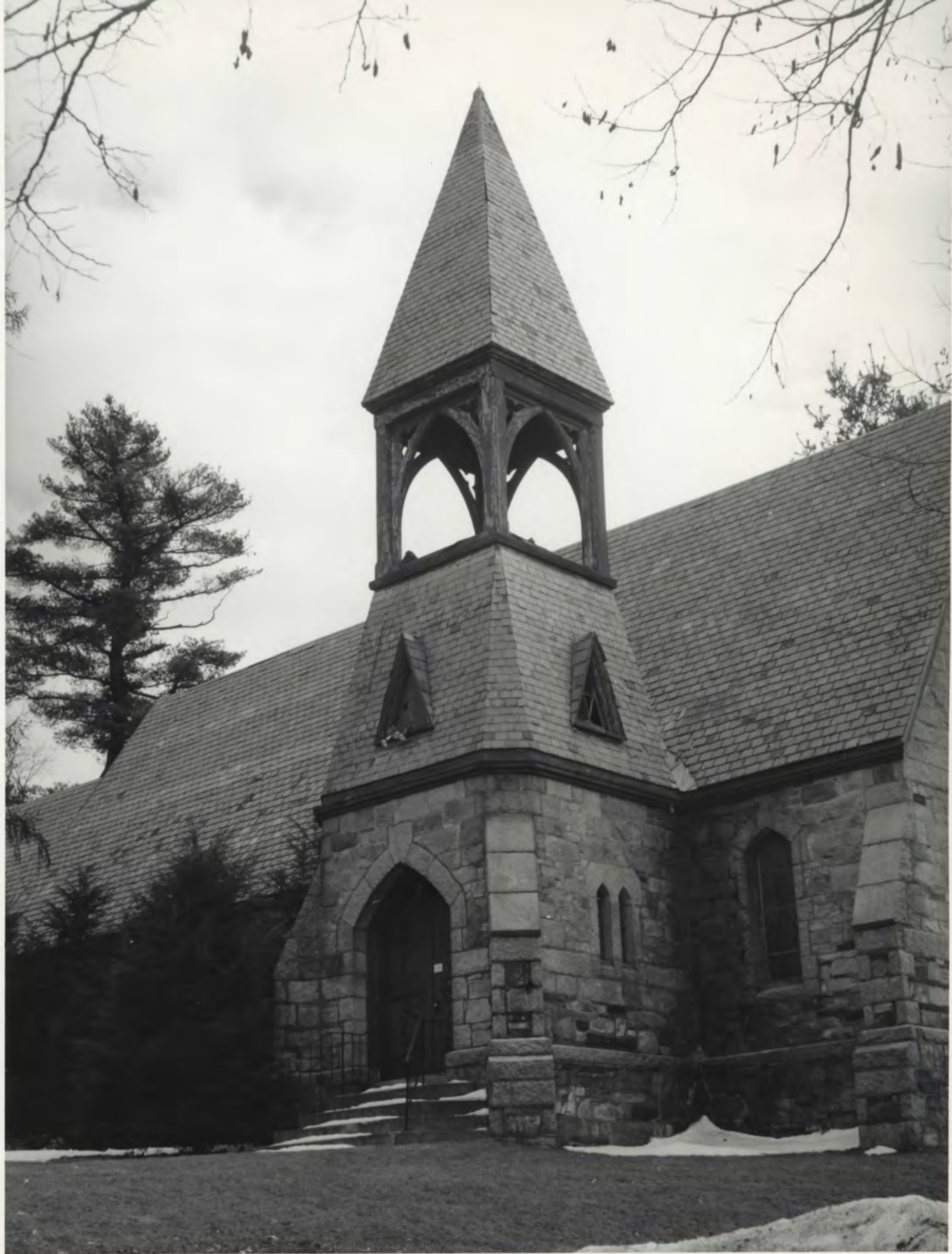
Signed _____ Date _____



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 DY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ①
VIEW: CHURCH IN CONTEXT, MAYNARD ROAD; FROM NORTHWEST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (2)
VIEW: CHANCEL, NAVE, TOWER, MAYNARD ROAD, FROM NORTHWEST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH ST., FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 1-22-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (3)
VIEW: TOWER AND NAVE ; FROM NORTHWEST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH ST., FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 1-22-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ④
VIEW: DETAIL OF TOWER; FROM NORTHWEST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (5)
VIEW: CHURCH IN CONTEXT, MAYNARD ROAD AND CHURCH STREET;
FROM NORTHEAST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ⑥
VIEW: CHANCEL, NAVE, TOWER, CHURCH ST., FROM NORTHEAST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ⑦
VIEW: NAVE, TRANSEPT, VESTRY, CHANCEL, CHURCH ST.; FROM SOUTHEAST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ⑤
VIEW: DETAIL OF VESTRY AND CHANCEL; FROM SOUTHEAST



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH ST., FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 1-22-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: ⑨
VIEW: INTERIOR: CHANCEL FROM REAR OF NAVE



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 1-22-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, 6 JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (10)
VIEW: INTERIOR: NAVE, TOWARD REAR, FROM CHANCEL



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH STREET, FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 2-20-88
NEGATIVE: LESLIE LARSON, @ JOY ST., BOSTON, MA 02108
PHOTO NO: (11)
VIEW: INTERIOR: DETAIL OF CEILING TRUSSES, TOWARD REAR OF NAVE

TO THE
Glory of
God
and in
memory of

ALEXANDER RICE ESTY.

WARDEN AND ARCHITECT
of this Church.

Born in Framingham.

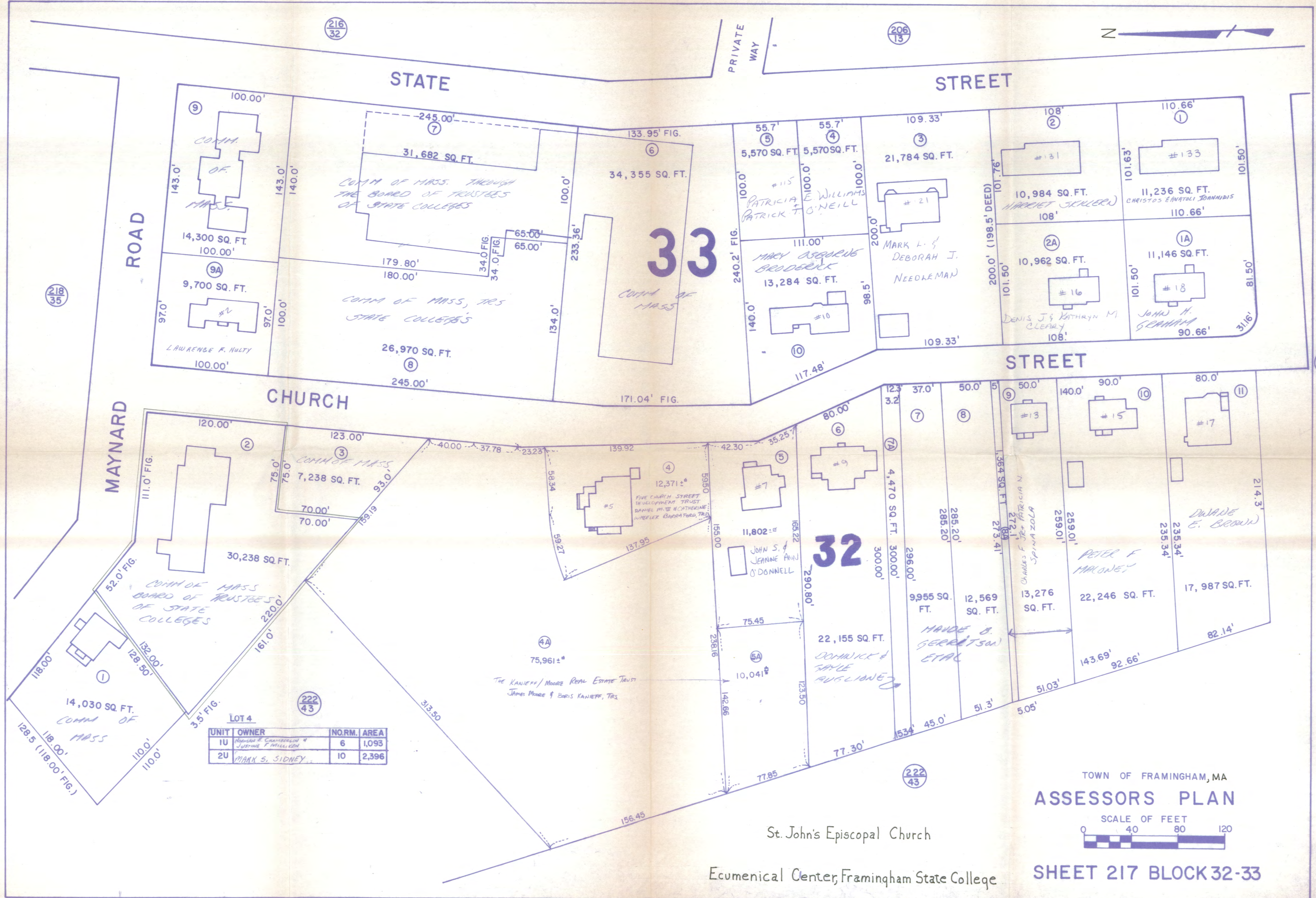
Oct. 18, 1826,

Died

July 2, 1881.



PROPERTY: ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADDRESS: MAYNARD ROAD AT CHURCH ST., FRAMINGHAM, MA
PHOTOGRAPHER: LESLIE LARSON
DATE: 1-22-88
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PHOTO NO: (12)
VIEW: INTERIOR: ESTY MEMORIAL TABLET AT EAST
END OF NAVE



LOT 4

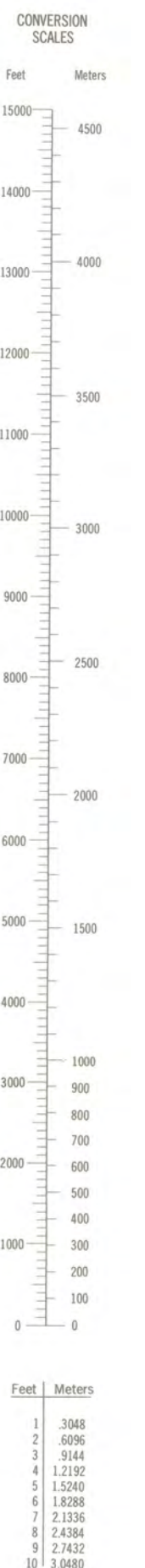
UNIT	OWNER	NORM. AREA
1U	ROBERT E. CHAMBERLIN & JUSTINE F. WILLIAMS	6 1,093
2U	MARK S. SIDNEY	10 2,396

TOWN OF FRAMINGHAM, MA
ASSESSORS PLAN
 SCALE OF FEET
 0 40 80 120

SHEET 217 BLOCK 32-33

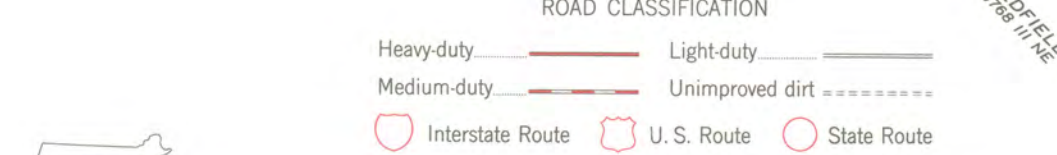
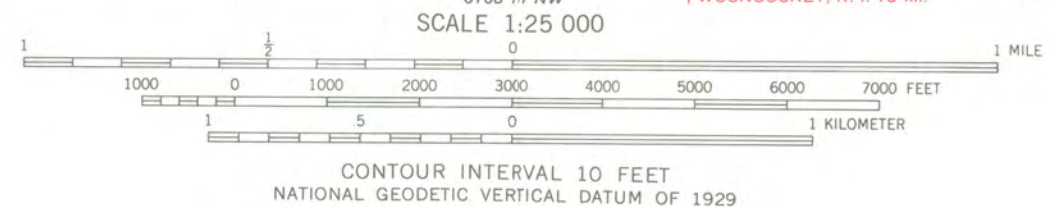
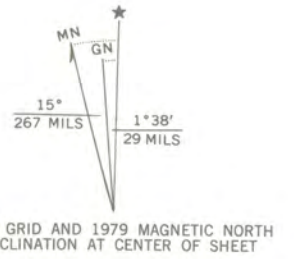
St. John's Episcopal Church
 Ecumenical Center, Framingham State College

TRACED + J.C.S.
 7/19/01



St John's
Episcopal Church →
MAYNARD ROAD and
CHURCH STREET
FRAMINGHAM, MA
19/298/930/4685/460

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geological Survey
Planimetry in part by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1940
Revised 1965
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



FRAMINGHAM, MASS.
N4215—W7122.5/7.5
1965
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6768 IV SW—SERIES V814

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST
St. John's Episcopal Church
(Ecumenical Center, Framingham State College)
Maynard Road and Church Street
UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator)
19 298/930 4685/460
Zone Easting Northing



DEC 11 1989

December 7, 1989

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

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination:

Saint John's Episcopal Church, Maynard Road and Church Street, Framingham
(Middlesex County), Massachusetts, 01701

There has been no owner objections for the above mentioned property.

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

Sincerely,

Anne E. Tait
Acting National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure: