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EXT. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 13 1984

date entered

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Charlestown Town Hall

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number ~~North side of Summer Street, off Main Street, west of the Taylor Residence~~ N/A not for publication

city, town Charlestown N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state New Hampshire code 33 county Sullivan code 19

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Charlestown

street & number P.O. Box 385

city, town Charlestown N/A vicinity of state New Hampshire

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sullivan County Court House / Registry of Deeds

street & number Main Street

city, town Newport state New Hampshire 03773

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Charlestown Town Hall is a rectangular building of two stories, measuring 42 by 90 feet and standing on a foundation of granite block. The building stands in a small square just east of Main Street; one of its gable ends, facing south, is treated as a facade.

The facade is divided into three bays by four rusticated brick pilasters which rise from the foundation stones of hammered granite to the cornice of the building. A belt course of corbelled brick separates the two stories. The first story is pierced by three openings, of which two are doorways and the third (at the right or east) is a window. Both doorways are reached by granite steps and have two-leaf doors with flat panels at their bottoms and tall panes of glass above. Above each door is a two-light transom sash. Both the doors and the windows are spanned by stilted segmental brick arches, with keystones; these are supported by corbelled brick impost blocks and are capped by brick fillet. The window opening is filled with two arched 6-over-4 sashes, separated by a wooden mullion. The three windows on the second story of the facade are identical in detail to the first floor window, though taller, and have 6-over-6 sashes. The keystones of their arches intersect to the back fillet of the lowest fascia of a corbelled brick architrave.

The entablature of the building, which extends around the entire structure, has a corbelled brick architrave and frieze and a wooden cornice. The latter has a deeply-projecting corona which is supported by a series of brackets in the form of consoles. The crown moulding, of a cyma profile, extends up the raking edges of the gable roof to enclose a tympanum on both the front and rear elevations. The tympanum of the facade has a recessed triangular panel filled with brick and bearing a granite tablet with a date "1872" carved in relief. The similar panel on the rear of the building is pierced by a bull's eye window which lights the attic of the structure.

The east side elevation of the town hall is divided into six bays by quoined pilasters identical to those on the front of the building; the belt course which separates the two stories of the facade extends along the sides and rear of the building as well. Each of the bays has a window which is identical to the corresponding windows on the facade.

The west side of the building is identical to the east except that the rearmost bay of the first story has a doorway in place of a window. This doorway is sheltered by a modern roof of corrugated steel supported on a framework of steel pipes. This elevation also has a modern steel fire escape (1922) extending from the second floor and a covered cellar bulkhead door.

The rear of the building, is divided into three bays. The northeast first-floor bay is a doorway. On the second floor, the middle window has been bricked up, though its archivolt remains, and the two flanking windows have been covered with wooden shutters.

The roof of the building is covered with slate. Two brick chimneys pierced the slopes of the roof, near the ridge, at the point where a partition separates the front stair-hall from the rooms behind; a third chimney rises from the rear wall of the building on the east slope of the roof.

The first story is composed of two major areas: the town hall (more recently used as a courtroom) and the stairhall. The latter has an expansive, open staircase to the second floor, and doors leading to the courtroom and to a room in the southwest corner of the building. This room, used through much of the twentieth century as a selectmen's office, was originally a grocery store.

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Continuation sheet #1 DESCRIPTION

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The town hall or courtroom is a large chamber with a pressed metal ceiling, a bench at the north end, and a semielliptical niche behind the bench. In the northwest corner of the building is a separate chamber, originally used for town purposes but more recently converted to a judge's chamber. This room is accessible from the outside through an exterior door. In the opposite corner of the building is another chamber, with a door in the rear of the building; this encloses a stairway which rises to the hall on the second floor.

The second floor hall, designed to seat 700 people, has a stage at the north end with a proscenium arch and with a forestage which has been enclosed by a second proscenium wall. Behind the stage are two small rooms, the one on the east accommodating a back staircase and a hatch leading to the attic. At the top of the main staircase at the front of the building is a small room intended as a ticket office and cloak room.

Original Appearance: The exterior of the building has changed relatively little since 1872. The southwest room on the first floor was originally the grocery store of Simeon Cooley, provided in exchange for some of Cooley's land taken for a site for the town hall. This room originally had an appropriate sign, which was removed when Edward Cooley died in 1907. The roof of the building was originally pierced by four symmetrically placed chimneys, which three remain. Of these, only the southwest stack retains approximately its original form. The exterior of the building remained unpainted until after 1940.

The interior of the building has undergone several changes. The original furnaces were replaced in 1913 and 1944. The second floor hall was provided with a steel ceiling and hardwood floor in 1903, and with electric light fixtures in 1908. The deepened proscenium wall of this room was added in 1934, along with new stage fixtures. A first-floor ticket office became a kitchen in 1917 and was modernized in 1948. A hardwood floor was installed in the first-floor hall in 1954. The northwest room on the first floor was used briefly as a jail.

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates 1872-1873

Builder/Architect A.P.Clifford / Edward Dow

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Charlestown Town Hall is one of the lesser-known designs of Edward Dow, one of New Hampshire's most prominent architects in the years between the Civil War and the turn of the century. Built in an economical yet substantial manner, the building adapts the form of mid-century academic structures and the vocabulary of the Italianate style to the needs of a public meeting place.

Architecture: The Charlestown Town Hall was designed early in 1872 and was completed about a year later. The structure was built by A.P.Clifford, a contractor who resided briefly in Charlestown, at a cost of \$13,500.¹ Additional expenses eventually brought the cost of the completed building to nearly \$20,000.²

The building was designed by Edward Dow (1820-1894), a native of Lemington, Vermont, whose father and grandfather had lived in towns near Charlestown. Dow grew up in Newport, N.H., close to Charlestown. He settled in Concord, the state capital, in 1847, and commenced to work as an architect in 1854. Dow was paid \$103.00 for plans for the town hall in January, 1872, and an additional \$66.87 for revised plans in February.³

Dow established a solid reputation as a designer before planning the Charlestown building, and by the time of its construction was one of New Hampshire's leading architects. In 1859, he designed St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Concord, still considered one of the state's best Gothic Revival buildings. In 1866, Dow designed Penacook Academy in Boscawen, north of Concord, a relatively simple building which shares its general appearance with the latter Charlestown building. In 1869, Dow was employed to design Culver Hall for the College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts at Hanover, N.H. Though treated a Mansard roof, this building shared a number of stylistic features with the Charlestown structure of three years later.⁴

At the same time that the Charlestown structure was being erected, another town hall designed by Dow was rising in the neighboring town of Newport. Larger and more costly than the Charlestown building, the Newport town hall included a courtroom and, when completed at a cost of nearly \$40,000, was considered one of the finest structures of its kind in the state. The Newport building, like Dow's earlier Culver Hall at Hanover, utilized the Second Empire style, yet shared a number of stylistic features with the Charlestown town hall. The newspaper which served both Newport and Charlestown referred to Dow in 1872 as "that prince of architects."⁵

Following the design of these town halls, Dow was entrusted with many major commissions, including the Concord Board of Trade building (1873), the state prison (1878) and Nesmith, Conant and Thompsons Halls (1894) at the University of New Hampshire.

Being constrained by a strict economy in his Charlestown commission, Dow returned to a simple Italianate design that echoed his own designs and those of others in the pre-Civil War era. In particular, Dow adapted both the form and the stylistic vocabulary common to high school buildings of the 1850s. Probably influenced by several designs shown in

-continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

Tolles, Bryant F., Jr. New Hampshire Architecture Pub. for NH Historical Society 1979
 Saunderson, The Rev. Henry H. - The History of Charlestown, New Hampshire. The Old No.4
Town of Charlestown, 1876.
 Frizzell, Martha McD. & Others - The Second History of Charlestown, New Hampshire. The Old
Number Four. Town of Charlestown, 1955.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/4 acre ±

Quadrangle name Bellows Falls N.H./Vermont

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A	<u>18</u>	<u>7108510</u>	<u>47910009</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The boundaries of the nominated property are indicated by a yellow line in the attached map. This nomination includes the Town Hall and portions of lot #40 which are its immediate grounds. The adjacent Water Department building is not historically or architecturally associated nor included with the Town Hall.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gladness Wharton Luce, Historian

organization N/A date July 15, 1983

street & number 107 South Main Street P.O.Box 348 telephone _____

city or town Charlestown state New Hampshire 03603

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 [Signature]

title Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development date JAN 26 1984

title NH State Historic Preservation Officer

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] Entered in the National Register date 3/15/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet #2 SIGNIFICANCE

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the second edition of Henry Barnard's School Architecture (1848) -notably Gridley J.F. Bryant's Putnam Free School in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and Thomas A. Tefft's plans for Rhode Island high schools - New Hampshire school designers often favored gable-roofed Italianate designs for high school buildings of the mid-century. Both Nashua (1853) and Portsmouth (1858) had such buildings, and Dow had used a similar design for his 1866 academy building in Boscawen.

Inasmuch as the Charlestown structure essentially required only two large halls contained within an economical yet impressive fabric, Dow's choice of a proven format for the town hall was highly successful. The building remains one of the most imposing structures in Charlestown, and stand as an important example of the work of one of New Hampshire's best post-Civil War designers.

FOOTNOTES

1. Reports of the Selectmens and Other Town Officers of Charlestown, N.H....for the Year Ending March 1, 1873 (Claremont: Claremont Manufacturing Company, 1873), p.3.
2. Rev. Henry H. Saunderson, History of Charlestown, New Hampshire...(Claremont, N.H.: Printed for the Town by the Claremont Manufacturing Company, 1876), p.717.
3. Reports of the Selectmens and Other Town Officers of Charlestown, N.H....for the Year Ending March 1, 1873, p.3.
4. History of the University of New Hampshire, 1866-1941 (Durham, N.H.:by the University, 1941), pp. 25,55.
5. Granite State Journal, March 9, 1872.

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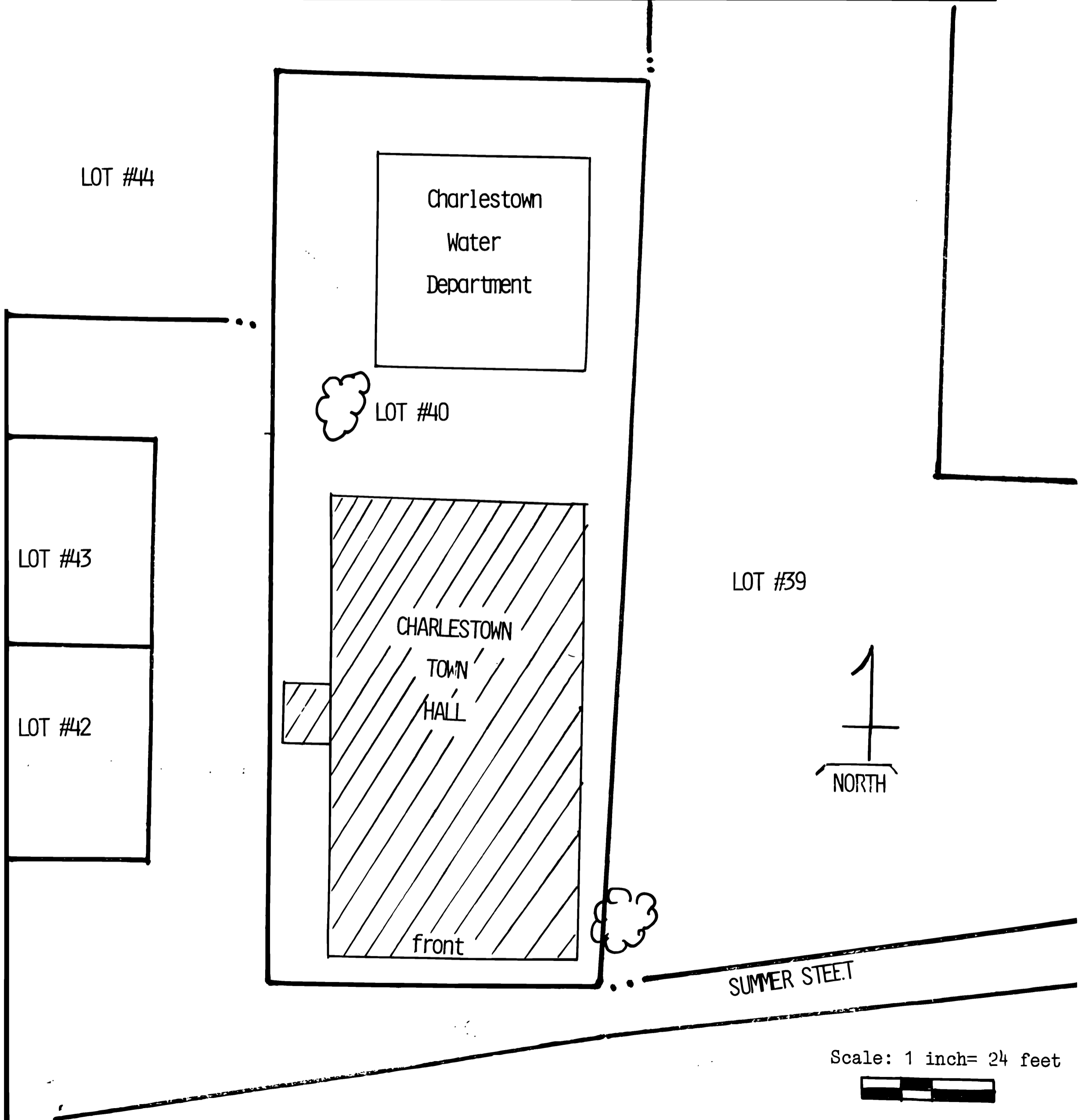
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Continuation sheet #3

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Scale: 1 inch= 24 feet