

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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NOV 20 2015

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

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

### 1. Name of Property

historic name TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX

other names/site number TRACY MEMORIAL

### 2. Location

street & number 77 MAIN STREET

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	vicinity

city or town CHATHAM

state NEW YORK code NY county COLUMBIA code 021 zip code 12037

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Ruth A. Purpant DBHPO 11/12/15  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register  removed from the National Register

other (explain)

Jan Edson H. Beall 1.5.16  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: village hall, firehouse

RECREATION & CULTURE: work of art

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: village hall

RECREATION & CULTURE: work of art

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS:

Classical Revival, Colonial Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

roof: STONE (slate), SYNTHETICS

other: WOOD, GLASS, METAL, TERRA COTTA

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**Narrative Description**

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**Summary Paragraph**

*Synopsis*

Tracy Memorial Village Hall, located in the Village of Chatham, Columbia County, was built 1912-1913 to the plans of architect Horace W. Peaslee by the Torrington Building Company of Torrington, Connecticut. It is a load-bearing masonry building built above a roughly rectangular footprint and is covered in part by a hipped roof with central cupola; there is additionally a flat-roofed section across the rear which is slightly narrower in width than the front section. A monumental Ionic order portico fashioned from grey marble highlights the façade, which fronts on Main Street and is oriented to the northwest, towards Central Square, a roundabout with fountain that occupies a central position within the village. All four elevations of the building are faced with brick laid in Flemish bond and set off with cut marble dressings, while the broad steps that access the portico floor were fashioned from polished pink granite. The walls are of hollow terra cotta block construction, the brick serving as a veneer. The principal entrance leads into a small vestibule beyond which is a spacious central lobby around which the first-floor municipal office and meeting rooms are arrayed. A staircase situated at the rear of this lobby allows for vertical circulation, the staircase and second-floor landing being provided with natural light by means of a Palladian window that corresponds with the rear (southeast) elevation. Most of the second floor is given over to the town courtroom, which extends the full width of the building at the front of the plan and which is embellished with fully developed Neoclassical woodwork and struck plaster cornice work that helps define a coved ceiling. Though it now functions as the courtroom, when built this room was dedicated to the use of Chatham's fire company, with additional space on the second floor set aside for use by the General Logan Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. The basement includes a fireproof vault for storing municipal and health records in addition the building's heating plant. Many pieces of mahogany furniture with which the building was equipped when it opened are still in use, as are original lighting fixtures, doors, hardware, hardwood floors, window sash, radiators, and other decorative treatments. In addition to the village hall, this nomination includes a three-bay brick and steel frame firehouse, one-story, erected in 1925, and the 1914 fountain situated in front of the building, which was manufactured by the H.F. Jenks Company of Pawtucket, Rhode Island and installed as a sanitary drinking source for horses. These resources form a cohesive municipal complex which portrays the development of the Village of Chatham's civic infrastructure during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

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**Narrative Description**

*Location & Setting*

Tracy Memorial Village Hall is located on the east side of Main Street (State Route 66) in the Village of Chatham, Columbia County, New York. It is situated immediately southeast of Central Square, which is defined by a roundabout traffic feature where Main Street, Kinderhook Street, Center Street, River Street and Austerlitz Street (County Route 61) converge, east of Railroad Street (State Route 295) and the adjacent railroad right-of-way. Unlike the building stock located to the south of the edifice on Main Street, which is densely clustered with relatively uniform setbacks and largely comprised of multi-story commercial buildings, Tracy Memorial Village Hall is set back from Main Street and sited in such a way so as to be visually conspicuous, with open space being present between it and the adjacent properties to the immediate north and south. A driveway aligning the building's northeast side provides for vehicular access to a rear parking area, along the southeast side of which is the 1925 firehouse and, on the southwest side, a later non-contributing building (post-1945). The principal entrance to Tracy Memorial Village Hall is via the Main Street elevation, where a sidewalk leads to a broad flight of stairs which approach the central entrance, located underneath the portico. A mature conifer set within a small expanse of grass is present to the immediate south of the building, while a line of deciduous trees is present along the driveway that leads to the rear. This nomination includes, as contributing features, the H.F. Jenks drinking fountain and surrounding Central Square, located immediately in front of the village hall,

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the fountain having been installed in 1914 for use by horses, in addition to the village hall and the 1925 fire house.

*Tracy Memorial Village Hall, 1912-13 (contributing building)*

This two story load-bearing masonry building has exterior walls faced with brick laid up on all four elevations in Flemish bond. It is five bays wide across the front by three bays deep, the fenestration on the façade being symmetrically disposed, and was erected above a fully excavated basement. There is a subtle differentiation between the front section, which is two bays deep, and the one-bay rear section, the former being contained beneath a hipped roof, the latter under a flat roof; the rear section is slightly narrower in width than the front section and as such its southwest and northeast walls are set slightly back from that of the remainder of the building. The five-bay façade features a central entrance which is shielded beneath a monumental tetrastyle portico that corresponds with the three central bays. This portico was rendered entirely in grey marble, the monolithic columns rising approximately 20 feet. Dressings, among them window keystones and the entrance frontispiece, were also fashioned from marble, while the steps were rendered in polished pink granite. First and second-story windows on all four elevations were handled in like fashion, the openings being spanned by brick jack arches and having cut marble sills. Those on the façade and side elevations corresponding with the wider front section additionally incorporate a marble keystone into their spanning arches, and the four at first-story level on the façade also have decorative marble panels beneath. Window sash is of a six-over-six wood type. The exterior, like the interior, exhibits Neoclassical and Colonial Revival design features. The combination of a rectangular plan two-story block with hipped roof and cupola recalls early American academy buildings, while the monumental portico speaks to the renewed interest in classical forms of the early twentieth century period.

The façade has four windows and the central entrance at first-story level and five windows at second-story level, the upper and lower bays being aligned in the vertical plane. A cut marble water-table marks the transition from the basement level to the superstructure, the raised basement wall being punctuated by small rectangular-shaped windows spanned, like the principal windows, by brick jack arches. Above the water table is a brick rowlock course, which gives way to Flemish bond which rises to the level of the top of the jack arches, where a header course is present. Above this is a soldier course, followed by a second slightly projecting header course, and above that eight courses of Flemish bond which form a frieze and give way to the principal cornice. Rendered in marble, the cornice consists of a bed moulding, dentil course, and a moulded cymatium, and is continued in this form as part of the portico, the marble frieze of which is inscribed "TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL." The Ionic order portico is sustained by four columns which rest on double torus bases and square plinths and which have unfluted shafts and necks with acanthus-leaf enrichment; the capitals feature egg-and-dart and leaf-and-dart enrichment. The soffit of the entablature is paneled, as is the ceiling of the portico. Two engaged pilasters, also unfluted, mark the position where the portico engages the body of the building, and these have capitals patterned after those of the Tower of the Winds in Athens. The principal entrance, consisting of double-leaf glazed doors each of which is fitted with 10 lights, is recessed and framed by a marble surround that is surmounted by a projecting cornice with corresponding consoles. The frieze of this feature exhibits low-relief carving and carries the inscription "ERECTED A o D i 1912." A five-light transom is incorporated into the surround, and adjacent to it, and affixed to either side of the brick wall, are wrought-iron lighting fixtures fitted with opalescent glass.

Rising from the hipped roof that covers the front section of the building is a cupola, consisting of a square base, body, and a ribbed bell-cast roof surmounted by a weather vane. The principal section, which has angled corners, features sections of blind balustrade at its base and large arched openings fitted with louvers; the panels in which the openings are placed are framed by pilasters and a denticulated cornice, and the arch openings have fully articulated surrounds with pilasters and keystones.

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The northeast and southwest elevations are similarly conceived, each being three bays deep with a total of six windows per elevation, three each at first and second story. Exceptions are the central window at second-story level on the southwest elevation, which corresponds with a metal fire escape and which is fitted with a six-panel door, and a door at first-story level on the northeast elevation, which is located adjacent to the rearmost window and which corresponds with a wheelchair ramp. Although the principal cornice of the front part of the building was executed in marble, that corresponding with the rear section is simpler and was executed in wood; above it is a low parapet wall. The rear elevation, which is five bays wide, is the least formal of four, though it does include the Palladian window that lights the principal staircase.

The principal entrance leads into a narrow vestibule which opens into a large lobby, the transition between the two being marked by unfluted columns of Tuscan order derivation in an *in antis* arrangement. Against the rear wall is the staircase to the second floor, an open stringer type based on early American precedents. In form it rises to a landing, turns ninety degrees to a second landing, then turns again to rise to second floor level. Railing consists of attenuated turned balusters and a heavy moulded handrail, which terminate in a curtail step at the base; console-form brackets embellish the stringer. The stair was juxtaposed with a large Palladian window that provides natural light from the northeast wall. The doors into the principal rooms, such as the west meeting room, feature large double-leaf hardwood doors, each leaf being three-paneled so as to form a six-panel unit, which are set within an enframing consisting of a moulded architrave and a projecting cornice with consoles. Walls and ceilings are finished with plaster, and historic images indicate this room originally had hardwood strip flooring, and not the ceramic tile that is presently in place, which is laid in a herringbone pattern. Individual rooms at this level, and at second-floor level, reflect similar and related treatments.

What is now the courtroom at second-floor level is a keynote interior space. Rectangular in plan, it features original maple strip flooring and plaster walls and ceilings, a cove marking the transition between the two. The plaster walls extend downward only to window sill level, below which is paneled wood wainscot. Struck plaster cornice work marks the beginning and terminus of the ceiling cove. Window openings on the southwest, northeast and northwest walls (inclusive of the door corresponding with the fire escape) have fully developed Neoclassical wood casings with a terminal cornice with corresponding consoles and dentils. The principal door between this room and the adjacent hallway has paneled jambs and soffit and a shouldered casing above which is a pulvinated frieze and moulded cornice. There are additionally two smaller doorways punctuating this wall, flanking the main door and symmetrically placed, which provide access to adjacent rooms flanking the hallway; these have eared casings and paneled jambs and soffit and are fitted with six-paneled doors. Three moulded circular medallions with decorative grilles align the ceiling and from them hang chain-suspended electric lights with frosted globe shades. The room presently is painted in a vibrant scheme: walls are pumpkin hued, which contrasts with the olive-toned cove, the off-white ceiling and woodwork, and the natural wood finish of the maple flooring and doors. Finish work in the adjacent hallway includes a moulded cornice with running fret band.

The basement includes a fireproof storage room which is accessed by means of a door manufactured by the Mosler Safe Company of Ohio, which is painted on the door along with "VILLAGE RECORDS."

*Firehouse, 1925 (contributing building)*

The firehouse is a brick-walled building erected above a concrete foundation; it is rectangular in plan and measures roughly 40' by 52.' The building was oriented in the same manner as the village hall, with its façade facing northwest. Three large bays fitted with overhead doors mark the façade and continue to reflect the original configuration. Brick is laid up in common bond and there are two decorative brick panels on the façade, corresponding with the location of the piers between the bays, between which is centered a marble tablet inscribed "CHATHAM FIRE DEPT 1925." The interior features an open plan and the full expression of

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the roof framing, which consists of cement-encased steel I-beams arranged longitudinally, their ends resting on brick piers that project forward from the walls. Windows are arranged along the flank elevations in the bays between the piers.

*H.F. Jenks Company Cup Fountain, 1914, and Central Square (contributing structure)*

This water fountain for horses was manufactured by the H.F. Jenks Company of Pawtucket, Rhode Island and installed in 1914. It is situated as the central feature of a small landscaped parcel, circular in plan with a raised stone border, which is at the center of Central Square. The fountain is of tripartite design, consisting of a circular and octagonal base, a fluted shaft, and a ribbed bowl, and rests of an octagonal foundation. Of metal construction, it includes a small panel that is embossed "ANTI-GERM INDIVIDUAL CUP FOUNTAIN MF BY THE H.F. JENKS COMPANY, PAWTUCKET, R.I. PATENTED."

*Garage, ca. 1960 (non-contributing building)*

This is a concrete block-walled building of utilitarian construction; of rectangular plan, it is oriented with its façade facing northeast, and is situated between village hall and the fire station. The façade is fitted with two large bays with overhead doors.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

**ARCHITECTURE**

**COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

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**Period of Significance**

1912-1925

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**Significant Dates**

1912-13; 1914; 1925

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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**Architect/Builder**

Peaslee, Horace W. (1884-1959); architect (village hall)

Torrington Building Company; contractors (village hall)

Burnap, George (1885-1938)-; landscape architect (village hall)

Kline & Crosby, contractors (firehouse)

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**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The cited period of significance, 1912-1925, is initiated with the construction of Tracy Memorial Village Hall and terminates with the construction of the nominated firehouse in 1925. This date range includes the installation of the fountain in 1914.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

Tracy Memorial Village Hall, located in the Village of Chatham, Columbia County, is a Neoclassical-style civic building erected 1912-13 to the designs of architect and landscape designer Horace Whittier Peaslee (1884-1959), a native of Columbia County who rose to national prominence in the field of American design in the first half of the twentieth century. Funding for this building, in excess of \$40,000, along with a maintenance fund for its continual upkeep was provided by the locally prominent Tracy family in memory of Albert E. Tracy, who died in 1910. The nominated edifice is one of two important civic buildings which were presented as gifts by prominent local families to the Village of Chatham in this period; the other, the Morris Memorial building, was dedicated for use in 1910, its costs borne by Jane Cady Morris in honor of her late husband, George Morris. Tracy Memorial Village Hall was conceived of as an ornament to the village and as a signature feature of the Central Square area of Chatham, which the following year was further improved with the installation of a fountain. A fire station was erected behind the village hall in 1925, thereby rounding out the historic features of this municipal complex. Peaslee garnered the commission following an open competition, and by his own account the successful execution of the project helped to launch his career, which ultimately encompassed both landscape design and architecture. Landscape architect George Burnap (1885-1938), who like Peaslee was associated with the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds in Washington, D.C. and who was also a Cornell alumnus, collaborated on the site plan. Although a native of Columbia County, Peaslee moved to Washington, D.C. in 1911 and his professional work is most closely associated with that area and its public parks and monuments. Notable among his body of architectural work were the designs for the Korean and Peruvian embassies in Washington, D.C.; landscape projects included the Meridian Hill Park in Washington, D.C., and the grounds of the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Virginia. For the Chatham building Peaslee combined a hipped roof building with distinctive Colonial Revival-style features with a monumental Ionic order portico executed in grey marble, thereby affiliating the design with the prevailing Neoclassical sentiment of that period. The building remains in large measure as designed by Peaslee and dedicated for service in 1913, with the bulk of its character-defining features and historic plan remaining intact. It is a building that continues to satisfy the functions for which it was conceived and one that speaks to an important period of civic munificence in the Village of Chatham's history. It is being nominated in association with National Register of Historic Places Criterion A and C, in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning & Development, respectively, at the local significance level.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance**

*Historical & Architectural Analysis*

The Village of Chatham is contained within the eponymously named town, which was formally organized in 1795 from lands previously contained within the towns of Canaan and Kinderhook. Known earlier in its history as Groat's Corners and later yet as Chatham Four Corners, Chatham assumed its present name in 1869 and was described in the history of Columbia County published in 1878 as "[a] flourishing incorporated village."<sup>1</sup> A modest mercantile center during the first part of the nineteenth century, its growth was greatly accelerated by development of railroad infrastructure in the second half of that century: "The growth of the place was slow and unimportant until it became a railroad center, since which it has assumed a substantial and village-like aspect."<sup>2</sup> By the 1870s the Boston & Albany, New York & Harlem, Hudson & Boston, and the Harlem Extension railroads all had stations in the village, and more than one hundred trains moved through it daily, marking it as a place of no small importance in regional transportation and commercial affairs. Chatham was incorporated as a village in 1869 under the name "Chatham Village" since another place within the town already bore the name "Chatham." The first election was held in April of that year and village officers were

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Columbia County, New York* (Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878), 291.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



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elected, among them trustee William A. Woodbridge, the first to serve as presiding officer.<sup>3</sup> Prior to the construction of the nominated building village business was conducted in an edifice purchased in the 1870s for that purpose at a cost of \$5,500. Located near the center of the village it was described as "...well adapted for its purposes. The hall is triangular in shape, of brick, three stories high, with a front tower containing a good clock and bell. In it are the engine-house, rooms for the police court, fireman's hall, and a hall for the village meetings."<sup>4</sup>

The construction of the Tracy Memorial Village Hall was made possible by the philanthropy of the Tracy family, one of Chatham's leading families in that era. Construction costs were borne, in honor of Albert E. Tracy (1866-1910), by his mother, Delia R. Tracy, and his widow, Margaret T. Tracy, who financed both the construction campaign and the establishment of a trust for the building's future maintenance. Born in Chatham, Albert Tracy had attended the common schools there and later the Hartwick Seminary in Cooperstown. When illness kept him from attending college he instead devoted himself to his family and his farm and awaited a considerable inheritance from the estate of his father. An obituary provided the following details of his life:

Albert E. Tracy died in Kline Kill, Wednesday, in the 44<sup>th</sup> year of his life, after a lingering illness of Bright's disease and complications. His life, especially for the last eight or 10 years, had been one of ease, with his trotting horses and automobiles. He lived on one of the best farms in Columbia county, about two miles from Chatham, and in the town of Kinderhook, and bred trotters. He bought the first automobile to be kept in that part of the county.

Mr. Tracy was a son of the late Albert S. Tracy, from whom he inherited mines in Missouri. The son realized considerable money from the sale of these.<sup>5</sup>

Along with the construction of the Morris Memorial, ca. 1910—a community building of Neoclassical lines erected to the plans of the New York City architectural office of Jackson & Rosencrans and dedicated to the memory of George L. Morris, a one-time president of the State Bank of Chatham Village—the erection of Tracy Memorial Village Hall was central to a period of civic improvement in Chatham and an era of considerable optimism made possible, in part, by the munificence of two of its leading families. The village hall was built adjacent to Central Square, a preeminent location in Chatham, while the Morris Memorial was erected a short distance to the south, west of Main Street, on Park Row. Both continue to serve the important purposes within the community that they were intended to by their projectors. In addition to these two privately funded civic projects, in 1915 a new \$75,000 school was completed in Chatham, capping a five-year span that witnessed the completion of three important public buildings and tangible progress in the improvement of the village's infrastructure.

Although the details of the design competition are not presently known, many aspects of the building campaign to erect the Tracy Memorial Village Hall survive as captured in period newspaper accounts. In May 1912 it was reported in the *Chatham Courier* that "a sizeable force of workmen" were busy with the excavation for the basement, in advance of preparing the foundation. This account also indicated there had been "a change in plan so as concerns the material of which the building is to be constructed," indicating that the edifice as built was not as originally conceived by Peaslee.<sup>6</sup> It was anticipated at that time that the building would be completed by mid-December; however, the construction campaign ultimately spilled over into the first months of 1913. In November 1912 it was noted by the *Courier* that the building was "rapidly assuming proportions that will give an

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 291-92.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 292.

<sup>5</sup> "Albert E. Tracy Dead," *Columbia Republican* (Hudson), n.d.

<sup>6</sup> *Chatham Courier*, 29 May 1912.

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adequate idea of the beauty it will possess when completed,” the marble columns having been completed and the Italian stone carvers busily at work with remaining decorative details; the exterior work was well at hand by late January, as the exterior scaffolding, save for that surrounding the cupola, was removed, the cupola and roof work as yet not completed.<sup>7</sup> In late March the foreman for the Torrington Building Company indicated that the building was nearing completion and would probably be finished in a month’s time, the interior woodwork having been installed and painting underway, though delays were being caused as the wood flooring had not arrived on time.<sup>8</sup>

Considerable attention was clearly paid to the new building by Chatham residents as it was erected, with one observer noting that the site’s construction fence would benefit from a cushion along its top “where we spectators could rest our chins.”<sup>9</sup> The building campaign was not without at least one calamity, as in January 1913, W.E. Lewis, the master mason and a resident of nearby East Chatham, fell from scaffolding and was badly injured.<sup>10</sup>

Tracy Memorial Village Hall was formally presented to the Village of Chatham on May 23, 1913. Attorney John C. Dardess, representing Albert E. Tracy’s mother and widow, recalled for those gathered at the dedication ceremony Albert Tracy’s fondness for Chatham and his desire to contribute to the village’s welfare. Dardess presented Mayor William B. Daley with the keys and a deed for the building, which was free from encumbrance and complete with an insurance policy which protected it and the contents for three years. A trust for the building’s maintenance was also set aside by the Tracy family and with it a Board of Trustees, which continues to operate today, was established to oversee its upkeep.

In addition to being a handsome and purpose-built piece of architecture which would serve as a visual anchor for the village’s Central Square, the new building incorporated important and up-to-date features, among them a fireproof basement vault in which municipal and health records could be safely stored.<sup>11</sup> The first floor included space for the police and court, a detention room, a meeting room for village trustees, and a clerk’s office, these being clustered around the large central lobby, while the second floor included the large room originally set aside for the use of the fire company—now the court room—and also office space for the General Logan Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. Additional features included bathrooms on both principal levels and showers for the use of the fire company. Stylistically the building exhibits a distinctive Neoclassical design vocabulary seemingly drawn from both antique and early American sources. The monumental portico affiliates the building with the Classical Revival of the early twentieth century period, at which time there was a renewed interest in Neoclassicism which was particularly manifest in public and civic architecture. The execution of the portico entirely in marble, an archaeologically “correct” material, required both considerable resources and skill and lends the building a distinction that might otherwise have been absent had lesser materials been employed.

A brief photographic essay on Chatham’s new building was published in a 1913 edition of *The American Architect*, which provided the following descriptive passage:

This building is of hollow tile construction, faced with repressed Colonial brick of small size showing a considerable variation in color with dark reds predominating. Marble is from Vermont, columns monolithic, base stone is granite. Interior trim is poplar, painted white, with doors of birch stained in imitation of mahogany. Stair treads and rail of cherry. The large assembly hall has been featured in

<sup>7</sup> “The New Village Hall,” *ibid.*, 20 November 1912; *ibid.*, 22 January 1913.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 March 1913.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May 1912.

<sup>10</sup> “Mason Has Fall,” *ibid.*, 29 January 1913.

<sup>11</sup> “Fire Proof Vault,” *ibid.*, 26 February 1913.

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the door and window trim, paneled wainscoting, plaster cornice and coved ceiling. A special feature of the work is the landscape development by Mr. Burnap which determined the location of the building, and in the planting the future effect rather than the immediate present is considered. The building is the first prominent feature belonging to a proposed village center at present projected. The architect was selected by completion.<sup>12</sup>

The architect, Horace W. Peaslee, was a native of nearby Malden Bridge born in 1884. He was educated at Chatham High School and received his higher education at Cooper Union in New York City and later at Cornell's School of Architecture, where he developed a particular interest in landscape design. He graduated Cornell in 1910 and received a fellowship the following year. His successful garnering of the Tracy Memorial Village Hall commission marked the successful launching of his practice, which was based in Washington, D.C., where he had relocated in 1911. Although he designed buildings, Peaslee's principal interest was by his own admission landscape architecture, and to this end he studied garden design abroad in both Italy and France.<sup>13</sup> He was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and an honorary member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Peaslee's landscape design work in the Washington, D.C. area included the Meridian Hill Park and the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, among other work. For the Marine memorial he was able to replicate the black volcanic sands of Iwo Jima by mixing volcanic rock and black sand with concrete. As for George Burnap's landscape plan for the Chatham building, it appears that the plan was implemented; however, the placement of the fire station behind the village hall in 1925 obviated the removal of landscape components as laid out to the north and east of the building in Burnap's plan, thereby diminishing this aspect of the comprehensive design. Burnap was, like Peaslee, a Cornell alumnus and a designer in the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds in Washington, D.C.

The H.F. Jenks Anti Germ Individual Cup Fountain, which was manufactured in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, was installed in Central Square late in 1914. The design relates to contemporary concern for the spread of disease among horses, which remained the principal source of motive power in the 1910s, at the outset of the automobile age. As noted in a contemporary advertisement published in *Our Dumb Animals*, published by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, "The Jenks Anti-Germ Individual Cup Fountains are considered in the light of an improvement in drinking places for horses as an aid in preventing infection. They are substantially built, convenient to use and sanitary to the last word, and eventually must prevail."<sup>14</sup> The fountain was purchased by Chatham's Women's Improvement League and delivered in October 1914, as indicated by a small news item in the *Hudson Register*, "[The fountain] is decidedly attractive and will be a great improvement on the portion of an old steam boiler which has done duty as a watering tub for a number of years."<sup>15</sup> The manufacturer, Henry F. Jenks (1837-1904), was a member of an old Pawtucket family, a Civil War veteran, and an inventor who patented any number of designs.

The threat of fire was a constant threat to communities like Chatham, and the destruction of large commercial areas not unusual, given the limitations of firefighting technology at that time and the typically dense nature that characterized these areas. The threat of fire was exacerbated in Chatham by the presence of the railroads, a leading cause of man-made conflagrations and one that destroyed 75 acres of the City of Troy, Rensselaer County, in the 1860s. A 1925 editorial in the *Chatham Courier*, entitled "The Lack of Fire Protection," illuminated the issue locally, in this instance spurred by the destruction of the Henry Tilden homestead in New Lebanon, a community which lacked the means by which to combat fire.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the construction of

<sup>12</sup>"Tracy Memorial Village Hall, Chatham, N.Y.," *The American Architect*, vol. CIV, no. 1961 (23 July 1913).

<sup>13</sup>Entry for Horace W. Peaslee, *Baldwin Memorial Archive of American Architects*, dated 19 May 1954.

<sup>14</sup>Jenks advertisement, *Our Dumb Animals*, vol. 47, no. 5 (October 1914).

<sup>15</sup>*Hudson Register*, 2 October 1914.

<sup>16</sup>"The Lack of Fire Protection," *Chatham Courier*, 12 November 1925.

**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

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the firehouse in 1925 came only after Chatham village residents voted down proposals for the necessary expenditure—including both the construction of the building and the purchase of a corresponding parcel—on three separate occasions. This circumstance led to a somewhat biting editorial in the *Chatham Courier*, in which residents were chided for their previous refusal to fund the project and implored to act to rectify the situation which was, so far as the author was concerned, becoming a matter of local embarrassment:

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, the taxpayers of the village of Chatham are to vote upon the question of the erection of a fire house and the purchase of land for this purpose.

On three occasions in the past a negative vote has been rendered on the sites suggested. The proposition to be submitted a week from next Monday involves a location which would seem to be the most favorable of any so far recommended. Besides occupying a central position in the village it has the further advantage of being so situated that a fire house built upon it can be heated from the Tracy Memorial hall. All of this should be taken into consideration by those qualified to vote, to say nothing of the fact that the valuable apparatus now owned by the community should have a proper place to be housed.

To be frank, the knowledge that the taxpayers have refused to build a proper building for their apparatus has spread abroad and has brought Chatham into a most unfavorable and ridiculous light. This should now be dispelled and all of those who hold the village welfare at heart, who believe that Chatham has a future, and who confess to a feeling of civic pride should lend their support to the proposition.

Personal views and personal opinions may differ as to the best location and unanimity of opinion on such a subject is naturally impossible, but the village trustees have acted wisely and it would now seem time for Chatham taxpayers to vote affirmatively for a fire house. Otherwise the day may come when they have no apparatus to house.<sup>17</sup>

Chatham voters ultimately approved the expenditure and the building was constructed, adjacent to Tracy Memorial Village Hall, thereby creating a municipal center for Chatham where its government and services were located. In December 1925 the *Courier* announced that the building was rapidly approaching completion under the auspices of Chatham contractors Kline & Crosby; "...Members of Ocean fire company number one are making arrangements for moving the two-motor driven engines [there]." Ocean Engine and Hose Company No. 1 had been organized in 1858 with Chauncey H. Peak as foreman.

The total cost of the new station, inclusive of siren and equipment, was \$14,000. Heat for the building was provided for by the heating plant of the village hall, which was upgraded for this purpose, and conveyed by means of underground pipes.<sup>18</sup> In September 1925 the *Courier* noted that the architect had completed the plans, however that individual was not identified by name. The new fire station was a building of straightforward utilitarian design, erected with load-bearing walls of brick and fireproof steel framing. Today it looks much as it did in a depiction published in the *Courier*, save for the replacement of the original doors with the current overhead doors.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

N/A

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<sup>17</sup>"The Fire House Proposition," *ibid*, 3 September 1925.

<sup>18</sup>"Chatham's New Fire House Ready for Occupancy on Monday Next," *ibid*, 16 December 1925.

**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**  
Name of Property

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**  
County and State

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

*The American Architect*. vol. CIV, no. 1961 (23 July 1913).

*Baldwin Memorial Archive of American Architects*. 19 May 1954.

*History of Columbia County, New York*. Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** .61 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>615697</u>	<u>4691138</u>	3	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>18</u>	<u>615724</u>	<u>46911102</u>	4	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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

The boundary for this NRHP nomination is depicted on the enclosed mapping, which is rendered at a scale of 1:24,000, 1:12,000 and 1:2,400; all mapping is entitled "Tracy Memorial Village Hall Complex, Chatham, Columbia Co., NY."

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary has been drawn to reflect historic-period conditions and includes the village hall building and firehouse, in addition to the fountain that was conceived as part of this historic ensemble. No additional or buffer land has been included within the nomination boundary.

**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William E. Krattinger, Historic Preservation Program Analyst

organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation

date May 2015

street & number Peebles Island State Park, PO Box 189

telephone (518) 268-2167

city or town Waterford

state NY zip code 12188

e-mail [William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov](mailto:William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov)

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs:**

Photographs by William E. Krattinger, April 2015; TIFF file format, originals at NYS Division for Historic Preservation, Waterford 12188.

- 001 EXTERIOR, view south showing northwest façade with portico and northeast elevation
- 002 EXTERIOR, detail view of marble portico
- 003 EXTERIOR, southwest flank elevation
- 004 INTERIOR, memorial plaque in vestibule
- 005 INTERIOR, principal staircase
- 006 INTERIOR, Palladian motif lighting second-floor stair landing
- 007 INTERIOR, main room second floor showing characteristic treatments
- 008 INTERIOR, main room second floor door and architrave detail
- 009 EXTERIOR, firehouse, principal elevation
- 010 EXTERIOR, view looking to southeast showing fountain in traffic circle in front of village hall

**Property Owner:**

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

name William E. Krattinger, NYS Division for Historic Preservation

street & number PO Box 189

telephone (518) 268-2167

city or town Waterford

state NY zip code 12188

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

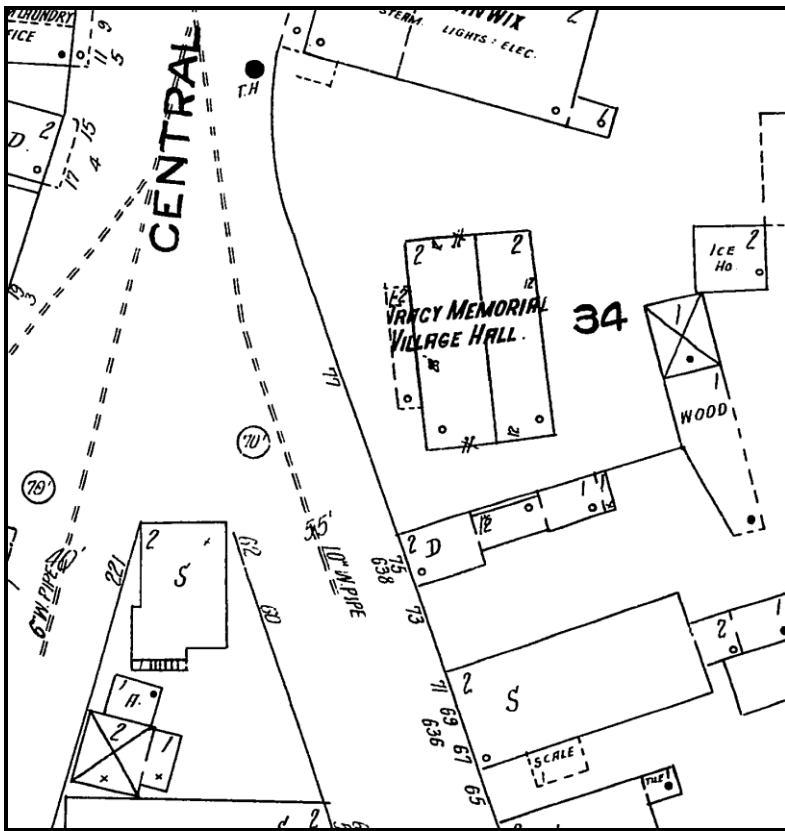
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form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

**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

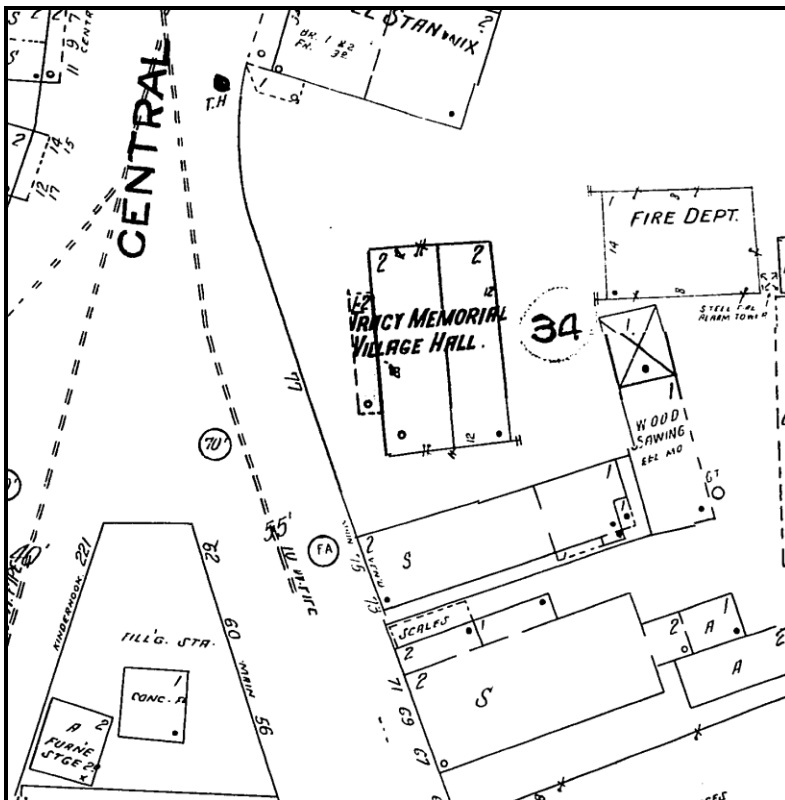
Name of Property

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1923 (above) and 1945 (below)

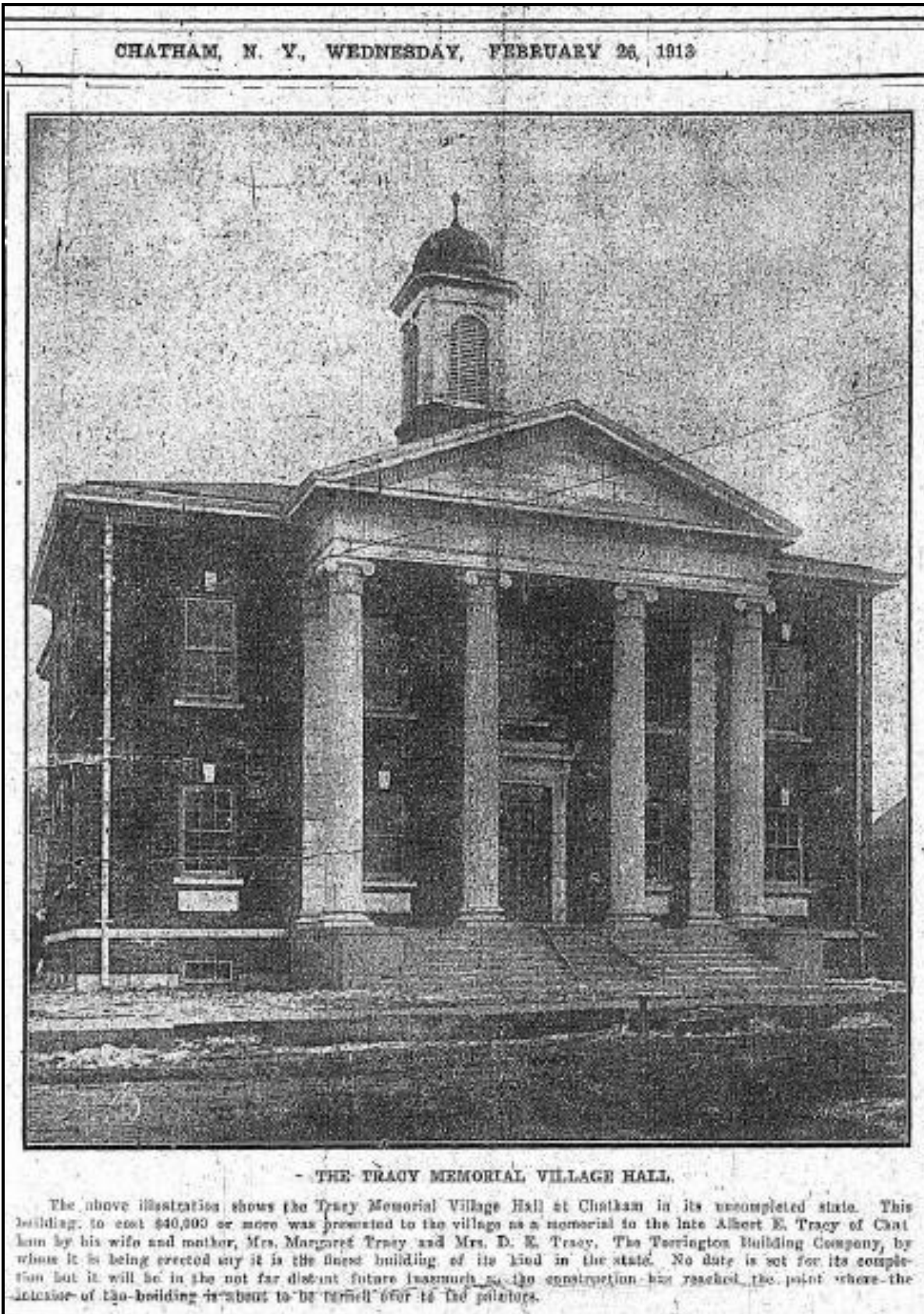


**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

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**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**

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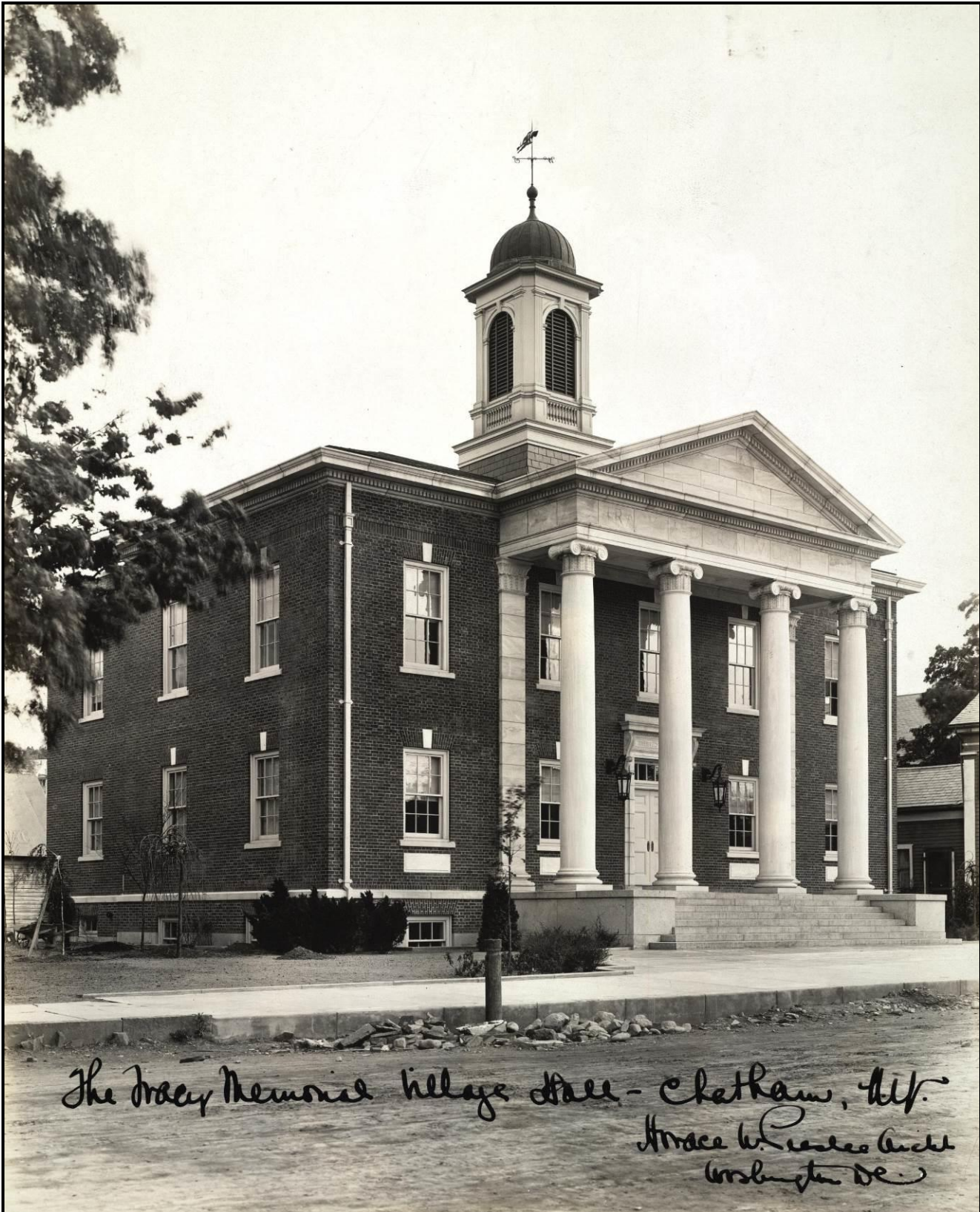


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TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX

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COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY

County and State



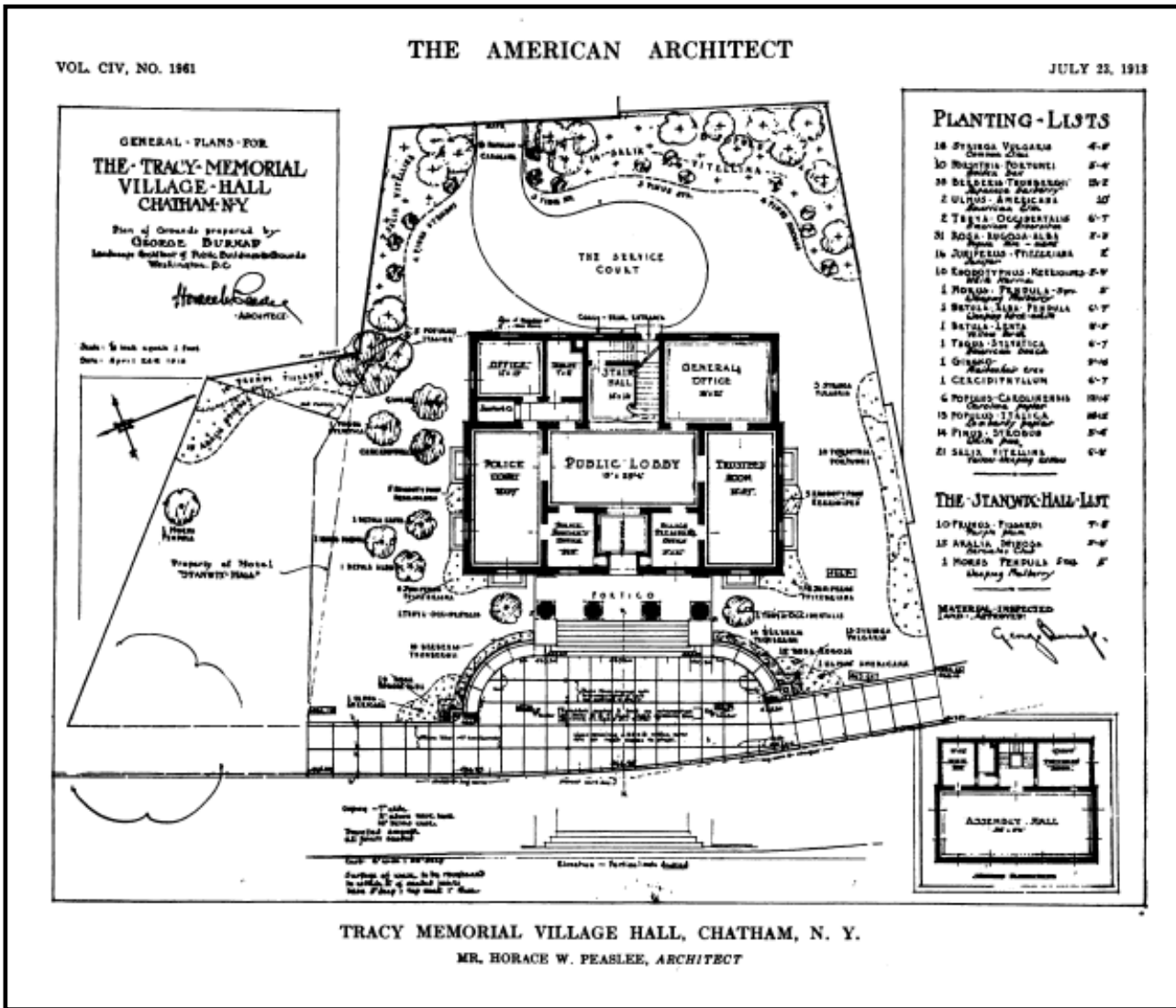


**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

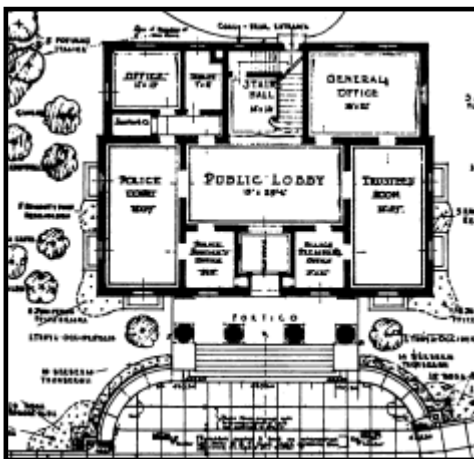
Name of Property

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**

County and State



ABOVE & BELOW: building and grounds plan for Tracy Memorial Village Hall from *The American Architect*, July 1913.



**TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL COMPLEX**

Name of Property

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY**

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**EVENTUALLY—WHY NOT NOW?**



This cut was used by an advocate of the hydrant to emphasize the danger in the use of open fountains. It is not an individual cup fountain, therefore should have no place in the discussion going on as to the relative merits of an up-to-date open fountain and the inconvenient hydrant.

Seldom does trouble come to one without warning.

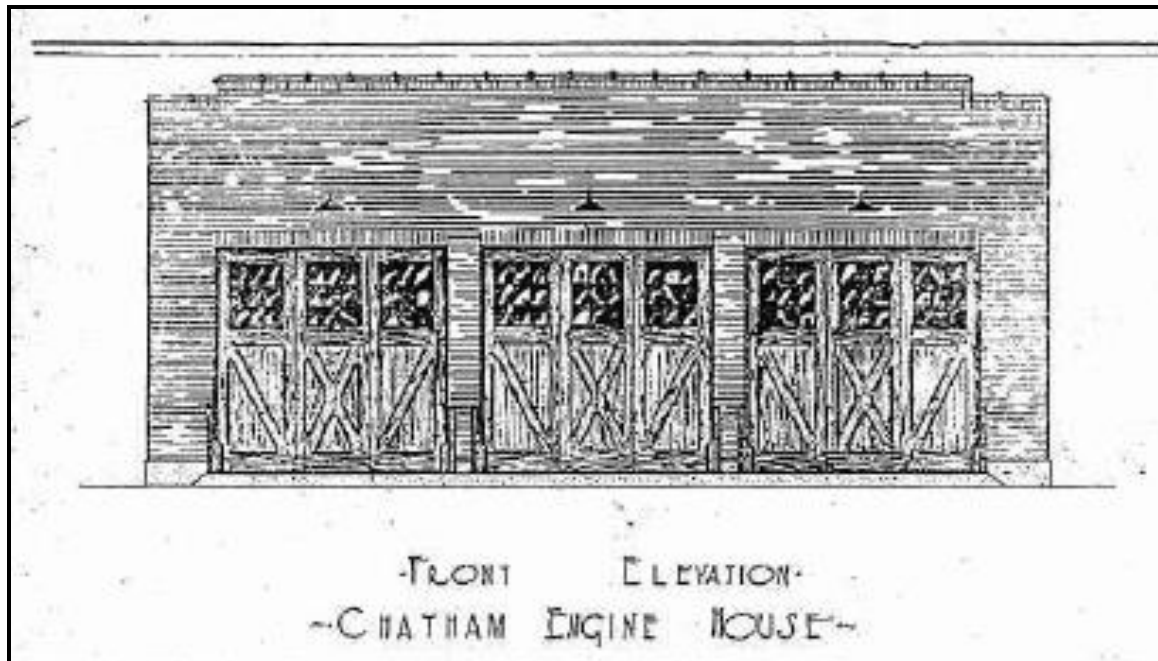
The Jenks representatives are in touch with every section of the country and we realize fully the danger of having the open trough fountains closed. It would cause untold suffering among hard working horses.

Animal Bureau officials and others who are striving to do away with the humane open fountains thinking thereby to prevent the spreading of glanders, practically admit in so doing that their methods employed to stamp out this disease are not as efficient as those practised in England and Canada where glanders has been reduced to a minimum without closing a single trough.

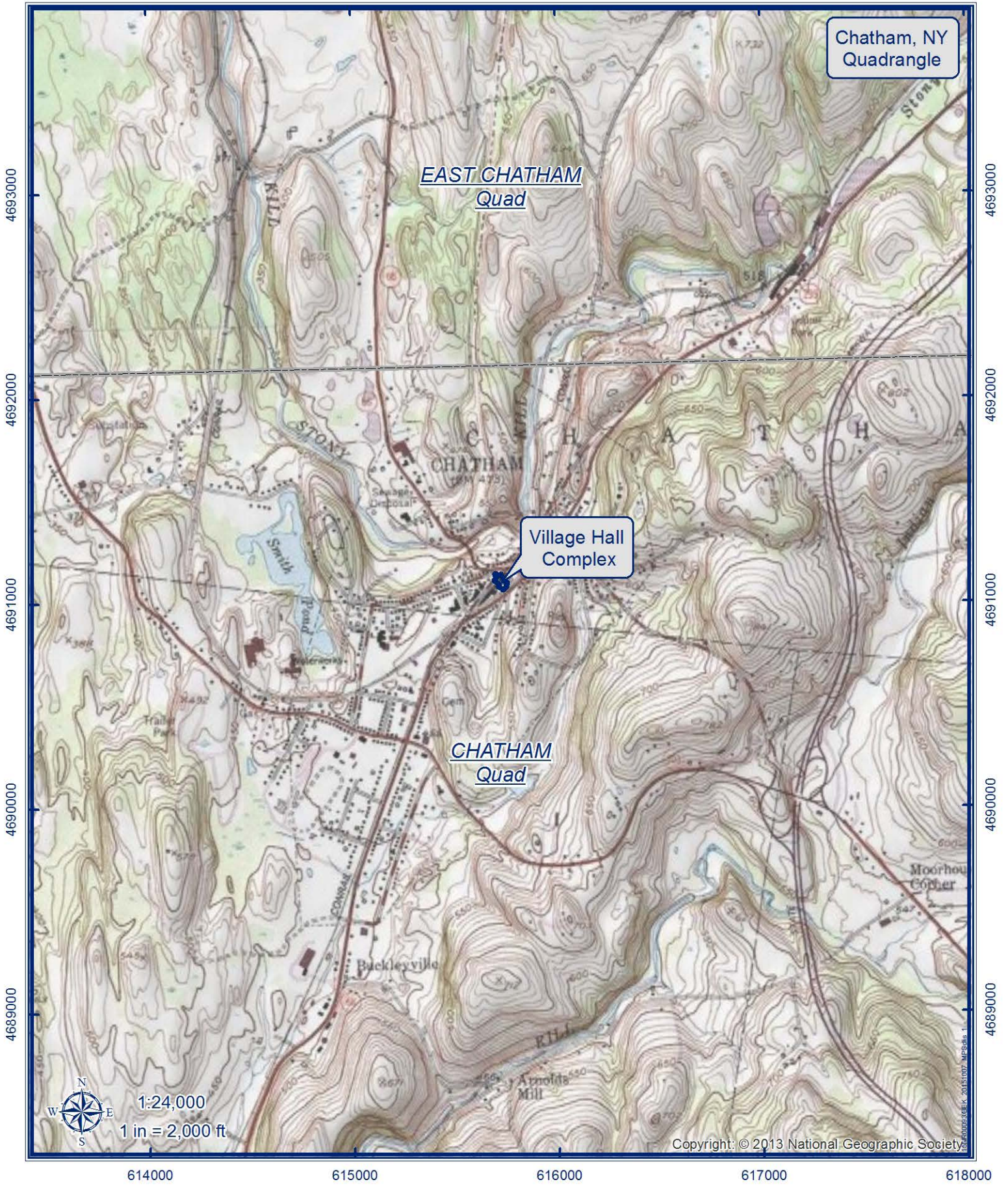
The Jenks Anti-Germ Individual Cup Fountains are considered in the light of an improvement in drinking places for horses and as an aid in preventing infection. They are substantially built, convenient to use and sanitary to the last word, and eventually must prevail.

**The H. F. Jenks Co., Inc. PAWTUCKET, R. I., U. S. A.**

ABOVE, H.F. Jenks Co. advertisement for Anti-Germ Individual Cup Fountains from *Our Dumb Animals*, 1914; BELOW, rendering of firehouse included in *Chatham Courier*, 1925.







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

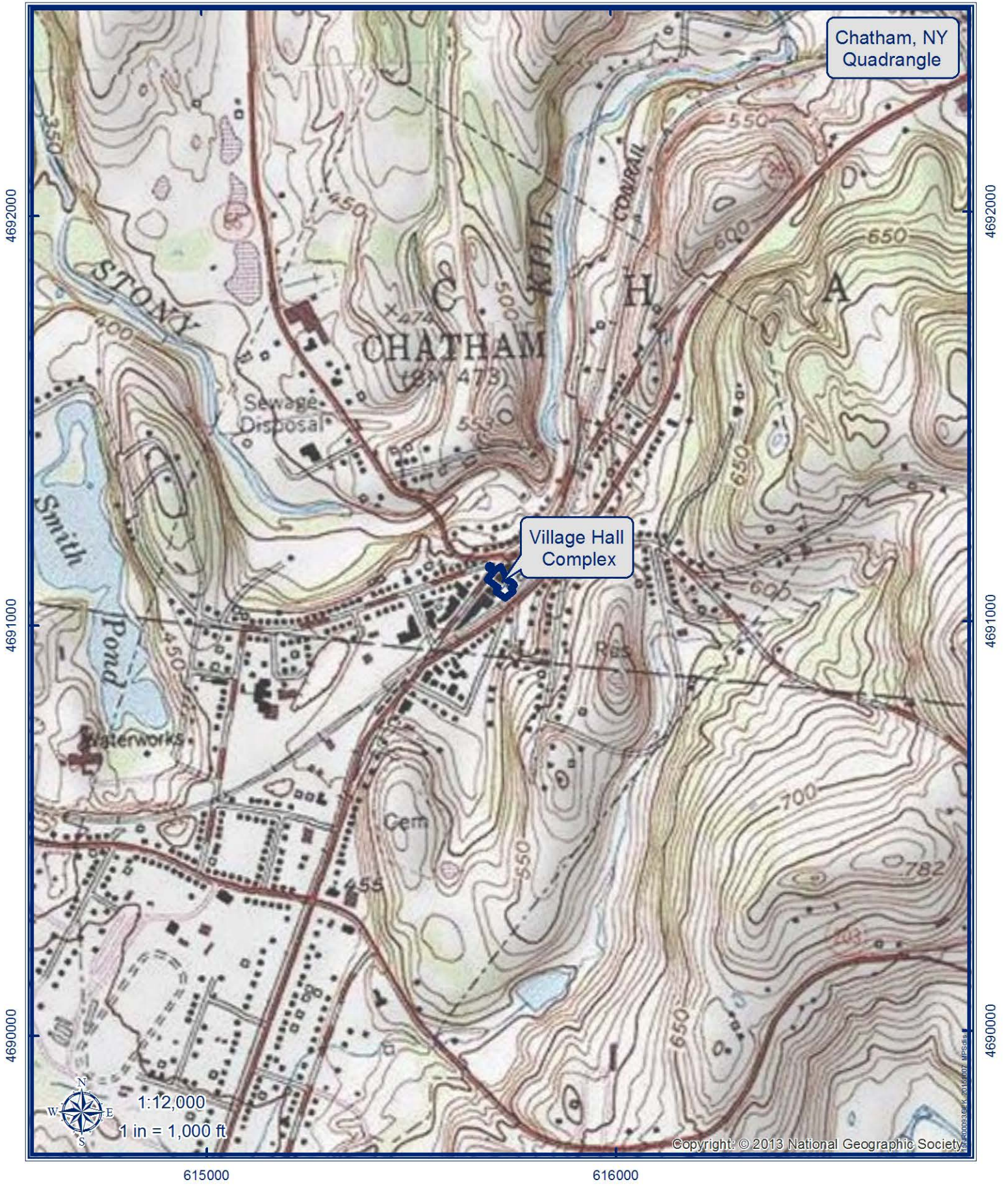


Hall Complex



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation





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



Hall Complex



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation





615600

615800

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



Hall Complex



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation





TRACY  
MEMORIAL  
VILLAGE  
HALL





TRACY MEMORIAL







A MEMORIAL TO  
ALBERT E. TRACY

Given to Chatham Village by  
his Mother, DELIA E. TRACY, and  
MARGARET T. TRACY, his Wife

BUILDING COMMITTEE

George M<sup>c</sup>Clellan  
Edgar M. Wilcox  
Isaac C. Washburn  
Willard R. Starks  
William H. Housman  
John C. Dardess

VILLAGE TRUSTEES

William B. Daley, President  
Sebastian Walker  
Reuben Moore

Horace W. Peaslee, Architect  
Toungton Building Company



SMOKING

















ONE WAY



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Tracy Memorial Village Hall Complex

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 11/20/15      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/24/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/08/16      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/05/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000953

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    1.5.16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

ROSE HARVEY  
Commissioner

RECEIVED 2280

NOV 20 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

13 November 2015

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

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

Tracy Memorial Village Hall Complex, Columbia County  
Jacob H. Patten House, Rensselaer County

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

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office